

# TOWN of MIDDLEFIELD, CONNECTICUT



Office of the First Selectman

## **PROCEDURE FOR COMPLYING WITH A FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST**

1. **FOI Requests.** Requests made under the Freedom of Information Act must be in writing on the Town's **Freedom of Information Act Request Form**.
2. **Written Response.** When a written request for review or copies of documents is received, a written acknowledgement should be sent back to the requesting party.

The written acknowledgement should indicate that the First Selectman will coordinate with the department having the requested documents. The requesting party should also be told that it may take more than four (4) business days from receipt by the Town of the request (otherwise after 4 days without a response may be taken as refusal under the Freedom of Information Act).

3. **Requests to First Selectman.** The written request should go to the First Selectman and the department head whose department is the keeper of the requested records, and to the Town Attorney. The department head should send the written acknowledgement out without delay with a copy to the First Selectman and Town Attorney.
4. **Simple Request.** If the department head determines that the request can be complied with by copying a letter or a few documents then a copy should be made and the requesting party should receive it according to their request (i.e. by mail, email, etc.).

If however, the department head determines that compliance with the request would require some investigation by the department head, a review of other department files, or requests for documentation that is not kept in the same

format that the requesting party is asking for, then a written response to the requesting party should be sent along the following lines:

*"The Freedom of Information Act does not require the Town or its employees to be 'research librarians'. The Act simply allows for inspection and/or copying of public records or documents. The Town is not required to compile information and answer questions that may not be in the form requesting party wants. The requester is however welcome to review the records and gather the information from those records during normal business hours."*

They should be given the name of the department head and her/his contact information in order to schedule a mutually convenient time, for the requesting party to come in and review and/or obtain copies of the records.

5. If the town decides to comply with the request and it involves copying existing documents, the town should estimate the time it will take and give the requestor that information in writing. If the date cannot be met for any reason, a follow-up letter explaining the progress to date and establishing a new date should be given to the requestor.
6. The statutory rate of \$0.50 per page should be standard so all parties are treated equally. Prepayment for large (over 20 pages) documents may be requested. All waiver requests should be submitted to the First Selectman.
7. Please see Middlefield's **Schedule of Fees and Costs** for information on the cost for the documents requested.