

Letter Requesting Records

A Plain-Language Template for Document Requests

This template is designed to help you formally request records from an agency, organization, or opposing party. A clear, formal request is the first step in obtaining the documents you need for your case.

Header (Your Information)

Field	Guidance
Name	Your full legal name.
Address	Your current mailing address.
Phone/Email	Your preferred contact information.
Date	The date you are sending the letter.

Recipient Information

Field	Guidance
Office/Agency Name	The full, correct name of the office or agency (e.g., “City Police Department Records Division”).
Address	The official mailing address for records requests. (Often found on the agency’s website).

Subject Line

The subject line should be brief but informative. It immediately tells the recipient what the letter is about.

- **Example:** Records Request — John Doe, Case No. 2024-CV-1234

Body: The Request

1. Identify the Records

Be as specific as possible. Do not ask for “all records.” Ask for documents that are clearly identifiable.

- **List of Records:** Use a bulleted list to clearly itemize each document or type of record you are seeking.
 - Example: “All police reports filed on [Date] regarding the incident at [Address].”
 - Example: “Copies of all maintenance records for the property at [Address] from 2022 to present.”

2. Specify the Date Range

If you do not specify a date range, the agency may send you too many documents or none at all.

- **Date Range:** Clearly state the start and end dates for the records you need (e.g., January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023).

3. Preferred Format

Let the recipient know how you would like to receive the records.

- **Format:** State your preference (e.g., “I would prefer to receive these records by email as a single PDF file” or “Please mail paper copies to the address listed above”).

Closing

- **Thank You:** A simple “Thank you for your assistance” is professional.
- **Signature:** Sign the letter and print your name below your signature.

Best Practices for Sending

- **Send by Certified Mail:** If the records are critical to your case, send the letter via certified mail with a return receipt requested. This provides proof that the agency received your request and the date they received it.
 - **Keep a Copy:** Keep a copy of the signed letter and the certified mail receipt for your records.
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Important Notice:

This template is for educational and clerical support only. We do not provide legal advice, legal interpretation, or attorney services, and we cannot represent anyone in court. Requirements and fees for records requests vary by agency — adjust as needed.
