

Chapter 50

PUBLIC RECORDS, INSPECTION OF & FEES

§ 50-1.	Right to inspect; copies; exceptions; definitions.	§ 50-2.	Fees for copies.
		§ 50-3.	Review of requests for documents.

§ 50-1. Right to inspect; copies; exceptions; definitions. [Ord. #2002-17, § 1]

- A. In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq., the Township Clerk, as the custodian of government records, shall permit a government record to be inspected, examined and copied by any person during regular business hours unless a government record is exempt from public access. Copies of government records may be made under the supervision of the custodian, or his/her representative, upon payment of the price established by law.
- B. Notwithstanding the provisions of Subsection A, where it shall appear that the records which are sought to be inspected, copied or examined pertain to an investigation in progress by any public agency, the right of access may be denied if the inspection, copying or examination of the records is inimical to the public interest, provided that this provision shall not be construed to allow any public agency to prohibit access to a record that was open to public inspection, examination or copying before the investigation commenced.
- C. Prior to allowing access to any government record, the Township Clerk shall redact from that record any information which discloses a social security number, credit card number, unlisted telephone number, or driver license number of any person; except for use by any government agency, including any court or law enforcement agency, in carrying out its functions, or any private person or entity acting on behalf thereof, or any private person or entity seeking to enforce payment of court ordered child support; except that a social security number contained in a record required by law to be made, maintained or kept on file by a public agency shall be disclosed when access to the document or disclosure of that information is not otherwise prohibited law.
- D. The terms used in this chapter shall have the same meaning as contained in N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 which definitions are incorporated herein by reference.

§ 50-2. Fees for copies. [Ord. #93-12, § 1; Ord. #95-04, § 1; Ord. #2002-17, § 2; Ord. #2004-10, § 1; Ord. #05-04, §§ 1—9; Ord. #2006-10, § 1; Ord. #2006-15, § 1; Ord. #2008-01, § 1; Ord. #2010-01; Ord. No. 2010-07 ; Ord. No. 2011-05]

- A. The following fees shall be charged for copies of public documents and records:
 - (1) Certified death certificate: ten dollars (\$10) for the first copy, four dollars (\$4) for each additional copy.
 - (2) Certified marriage certificate: ten dollars (\$10) for the first copy, four dollars (\$4) for each additional copy.
 - (3) Certified birth certificate: ten dollars (\$10) for the first copy, four dollars (\$4) for each

additional copy.

- (4) Vital statistics search, if exact year is known: two dollars (\$2) each, plus fifty cents (\$0.50) for each additional year if unknown.
- (5) Notary public fees: three dollars (\$3).
- (6) Duplicate tax bills: five dollars (\$5) each.
- (7) Zoning maps: ten dollars (\$10) each.
- (8) Police photographs:

Police photographs will be photocopied at the rates established in § 50-2A(23). If requests are made for duplicative photographs, the actual cost of making the photographs shall be charged.
- (9) Copies of Land Use and Development Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance: fifty dollars (\$50) each or the cost to the Township for purchasing copies of the ordinance from the code publisher, whichever is greater.
- (10) Tax map (full bound): one hundred dollars (\$100).
- (11) Tax map (one-half bound): fifty-five dollars (\$55). **[Ord. #2017-09]**
- (12) Tax map (per sheet): five dollars (\$5).
- (13) Road map: five dollars (\$5) each.
- (14) Election district maps: five dollars (\$5) each.
- (15) Flood certification letter: five dollars (\$5) each.
- (16) Subdivision Ordinance, Zoning Ordinance or Mobile Home Ordinance: twenty-five dollars (\$25) each.
- (17) Ordinance book: seventy-five dollars (\$75) each.
- (18) All other documents:
 - (a) (i) \$0.05 per page for letter sized pages and smaller.
 - (ii) \$0.07 per page for legal sized pages and larger.
 - (b) On any item that cannot be photocopied on the Township copy machine, or is not otherwise provided for in this schedule, the actual cost incurred in making the copy or copies shall be charged.
 - (c) For records assessed fees pursuant to paragraph (a) above and then mailed, the cost of postage plus twenty-five cents (\$0.25) for stationery related expense shall be added to the above-listed fees. If the actual cost of the stationery cost to mail the item will exceed twenty-five cents (\$0.25), then the requestor shall be advised of such cost in advance of the preparation of the item. The requestor shall have the opportunity to review and object to the charge prior to its being incurred.
- (19) Certificate of tax sale redemption: twenty-five dollars (\$25).

- (20) The Township does not possess equipment with the capability of reproducing videotapes or audiotapes. Any requestor of a copy of a videotape or audiotape shall be assessed the actual cost incurred by the Township for contracting with an outside service to make the copy or copies. Any requestor may review a videotape or audiotape at no charge.
- (21) Notwithstanding paragraph (20) above, no criminal defendant shall be charged to review or copy a videotape or audiotape requested in connection with the charges against him or her.
- (22) Disposition of Municipal Court case:
 - (a) Certified copy: five dollars (\$5).
 - (b) Exemplified copy: ten dollars (\$10).
- (23) Police reports: Police reports shall be copied at the same rates as set forth for municipal court discovery with the exception police accident reports not requested in person and not part of municipal court discovery shall be charged an additional fee of five dollars (\$5) for the first three pages and one dollar (\$1) per page thereafter shall be charged to cover the administrative costs of the report pursuant to N.J.S.A. 39:4-131.
- (24) Fingerprints: fifteen dollars (\$15).
- (25) Certificate of official search for municipal liens:
 - (a) Initial certificate: ten dollars (\$10).
 - (b) Certificate of continuation search within three (3) years: two dollars (\$2).
 - (c) Certificate as to liability for assessment for municipal improvements: ten dollars (\$10).
- (26) Natural resource inventory: twenty-five dollars (\$25).
- (27) Landscape plan: twenty dollars (\$20).
- (28) Municipal Court discovery: First through 10th page, seventy-five cents (\$0.75) per page; eleventh page to twentieth page, fifty cents (\$0.50) per page, all pages over twenty pages, twenty-five cents (\$0.25) per page. Municipal Court discovery sent to requesting party via regular mail will require an additional fee for the actual cost of postage, plus twenty-five cents (\$0.25) for stationery related expense. Where the discovery must be obtained from an entity other than the Township, the actual costs paid to the other entity shall be paid by the requestor.
- (29) Handgun permit: two dollars (\$2).
- (30) Firearm's ID permit: five dollars (\$5).
- (31) Construction Department pamphlet: fifteen dollars (\$15).
- (32) Master plan: thirty dollars (\$30).
- (33) No fee for electronic files via email or fax.
- (34) Duplicate tax sale certificate: one hundred dollars (\$100).
- (35) Redemption calculations per calendar year: first (1st) two (2) redemptions are at no cost; each subsequent calculation: fifty dollars (\$50) each.

- (36) Police officer application: twenty-five dollars (\$25).
 - (37) The actual cost to provide records in another medium (i.e. computer disc, CD-ROM, DVD, etc.) will be charged.
 - (38) Tax lien calculation: fifty dollars (\$50) for the calculation of the amount due to redeem the tax lien. Any request for a redemption calculation shall specify the date to be used for the calculation, which shall be the date of the notice. Neither the Tax Collector nor the municipality shall be liable for an incorrect calculation. The fee paid to the municipality shall not become part of the lien and shall not be passed on to any party entitled to redeem.
- B. Whenever the nature, format, manner of collation, or volume of a government record embodied in the form of printed matter to be inspected, examined, or copied is such that the record cannot be reproduced by ordinary document copying equipment in ordinary business size or involves an extraordinary expenditure of time and effort to accommodate the request, the Township may charge, in addition to the actual cost of duplicating the record, a special service charge that shall be reasonable and based upon the actual direct cost of providing the copy or copies. The requestor shall have the opportunity to review and object to the charge prior to its being incurred.
 - C. The Township Clerk may require a deposit for anticipated duplication costs in excess of five dollars (\$5).
 - D. In the event an extraordinary expenditure of time and effort is needed by the Township to accommodate a request to inspect, in addition to any fees for actual duplication and copying incurred by the requestor under this chapter, the Township shall assess a special service charge based upon the cost incurred for such extensive use of information, technology resources and/or the labor cost of the personnel providing the service that is actually incurred or attributable to the Township for the clerical and supervisory assistance required, or both. The manner by which such special inspection service fee is calculated shall be kept on file with the Township. The requestor shall have the opportunity to review and object to the charge prior to its being incurred.

§ 50-3. Review of requests for documents. [Ord. #2002-17, § 3]

The following procedure shall be utilized in regard to a request by an individual for copies or inspection of government records in the possession of the Township of Plumsted:

- A. All record requests must be made on the request form adopted by the Township Clerk and addressed to the Township Clerk's office.
- B. The Township Clerk will compile the documents known to be accessible to the public and will determine and collect the appropriate copy fee at the time the copies are to be picked up by the individual requesting the documents or arrange for prepayment if documents are to be mailed to said individual.
- C. Some government records will be immediately available and some records will require time to compile and to make the copies requested, but will generally be available during normal business hours and within seven (7) business days. If any document or copy which has been requested is not a public record or cannot be provided within the seven (7) business days, the requestor will be provided with a response with that information within seven (7) business days.
- D. If the Township Clerk is unsure as to whether the certain documents are public information, the opinion of the Township Attorney shall be obtained as to whether the document requested is a

government record subject to review and copying by the public. In the event the Township Attorney determines that the document is not subject to review or copying by the public, the Township Clerk will advise the individual requesting said government record.

- E. The Clerk may require that routine requests from a taxpayer or property owner for documents pertaining to one's own property, such as duplicate tax utility bills, rental C.O. or violation notices, etc., can be handled directly by the person responsible for these files, provided the individual responsible for the files obtains a written request and the payment of the required fee as provided above and otherwise complies with the directives of the Clerk.
- F. Under no circumstances will any employee permanently remove documents from any files without written authorization from the Township Clerk.
- G. The Clerk may direct that police reports be obtained from the Plumsted Township Police Department from the individual directed by the Clerk to handle such requests.