

Barnegat Township Police
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BARNEGAT TOWNSHIP
POLICE
DEPARTMENT
SERVICE ♦ PRIDE ♦ COMMITMENT
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Requester,

This municipality is in receipt of your request for records under OPRA. After review, your request has been deemed to be very broad. With no specific dates listed, a multi-year time frame, specific event details provided, or personal named, much research would need to be conducted to gather the requested information.

Under OPRA, a custodian is not required to complete a request “if the request does not identify a specific job title or accounts to be searched, a specific subject matter, and is not confined to a reasonable time period, or if the custodian determines that the request would require research and the collection of information from the contents of government records and the creation of new government records setting forth that research and information. . .” N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(g). OPRA is intended to make identifiable government records “readily accessible for inspection, copying, or examination.” N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.

Requests for “all hearing recommendations/rulings” on a subject are generally considered “overly broad.” *Spectraserv, Inc. v. Middlesex Cnty. Utils. Auth.*, 416 N.J. Super. 565, 578 (App. Div. 2010). A custodian may reject a request that is overly broad or vague and prevents identification of the records sought. *N.J. Builders Ass’n v. N.J. Council on Affordable Hous.*, 390 N.J. Super. 166, 181-82 (App. Div. 2007). OPRA does not require a custodian to “conduct research among its records . . . and correlate data from various government records in the custodian's possession.” *Lagerkvist v. Off. of Governor of State*, 443 N.J. Super. 230, 237 (App. Div. 2015) (quoting *MAG Ent.*, 375 N.J. Super. at 546-47). In an unpublished decision, *Carter v. N.J. Dep’t of Cmty. Affairs, Div. of Local Gov’t Serv.*, 2019 N.J. Super. Unpub. LEXIS 2510 (App. Div. Dec. 10, 2019), the Appellate Division found a request to be invalid under OPRA because it lacked a case name, party name, or docket number and the records required the custodian “to search through thousands of cases to identify documents relevant to the request.”

This office is prepared to work with you to reach a reasonable solution that accommodates both your request and our agency's operational capabilities. If you have any questions or need further clarification, feel free to contact policerecords@barnegatpolice.us.

Thank you,
Barnegat Township Police Department

