1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to assist Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU) employees with compliance in regards to the Texas Public Information Act and to provide procedures to be used in the management of public information requests and compilations of responses. See Texas Government Code, Chapter 552. This procedure is required by and supports System Regulation 61.01.02 Public Information which establishes minimum procedures to be used in the receipt, referral, and response to public information requests.

2. PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 General

2.1.1 In accordance with the Texas Public Information Act and System Regulation 61.01.02 Public Information, the Chief Executive Officer of each system member has been designated as the Officer for Public Information. The President of PVAMU has assigned the responsibilities of Public Information Officer (PIO) to the Senior Vice President for Business Affairs.

2.1.2 The PIO will maintain a record of all public information requests in accordance with System Regulation 61.01.02 Public Information, paragraph 2.5. This record will be submitted to the Office of the Attorney General, electronically if possible, no later than the 20th of the subsequent month.

2.1.3 The PIO will submit a Public Information Act compliance certification to the Office of the General Counsel no later than the last business day of September for the prior fiscal year.

2.1.4 The PIO will notify the President of any public information requests within forty-eight hours of request. This notification will also outline any possible public relations significance.

2.1.5 All decisions regarding withholding or releasing records will be made in accordance with System Regulation 61.01.02 Public Information, Section 5.

2.2 Receipt of Public Information Requests

2.2.1 No official format is required for the request.
2.2.2 The request must be in writing; and can be delivered via email, facsimile, courier or in person and must contain the contact information of the requestor.

2.2.3 Employees of PVAMU who receive a request for information must forward the request to the PIO within twenty-four hours.

2.3 Response to Public Information Requests

2.3.1 The PIO should promptly forward a copy of the request and responsive documents to the Office of General Counsel (OGC) if the PIO has a question regarding the applicability of an exception to disclosure under the Act.

2.3.2 The PIO will distribute public information requests to the appropriate schools, departments or divisions within forty-eight hours of receipt for the purpose of gathering responsive information.

2.3.3 All schools, departments or divisions shall provide the requested information to the PIO within five business days. If the information cannot be produced within that time frame, the PIO will be contacted with a request for an extension of up to three business days.

2.3.4 Records shall be forwarded electronically whenever possible. If the documents to be forwarded internally contain confidential or sensitive information as defined in University Administrative Procedure (UAP) 29.01.03.P0.22 Encryption of Confidential and Sensitive Information, the encryption procedures described in that UAP shall be utilized.

2.3.5 A response to a public information request includes responsive documents that exist at the time of the request.

2.3.5.1 The University is not required to create new documents in response to a request for information.

2.3.5.2 A database, as it exists at the time of the request, is considered an existing document.

2.3.6 Responses to requests for public information shall only be distributed by the PIO to the requestor.

2.4 Cost of Copies

2.4.1 Cost estimates shall be provided to the requestor by the PIO no later than ten business days after a request is received.

2.4.1.1 Cost estimates should be determined by taking a sample section of the responsive information and multiplying the sample by the total number of sections.
2.4.1.2 Actual work should not be done until the requestor agrees to the cost estimate. However, public information should not be withheld for receipt of payment.

Contact Office: Office of Business Affairs 936-261-2150