

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF STATE COURTS  
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

**ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORD ACT GUIDELINES**

*In accordance with Rhode Island General Laws § 38-2-3(c), the Rhode Island Administrative Office of State Courts has instituted the following procedures for the public to obtain records under the Access to Public Records Act:*

1. To request records from the Rhode Island Administrative Office of State Courts, you may reach us by telephone at (401)222-4580, by email at [cberke@courts.ri.gov](mailto:cberke@courts.ri.gov) or by fax at (401) 222-8632. Requests by mail should be mailed to:

Mr. Craig Berke  
Office of Community Outreach and Public Relations  
250 Benefit Street  
Providence, Rhode Island, 02903

In order to ensure that you are provided with the public records you seek in an accurate and expeditious manner, we ask that you complete the attached form entitled **“Request to Inspect and/or Copy Documents or Records or Request for Electronic Information or Report”** which is also available online at <http://www.courts.ri.gov/PublicResources/media/PDF/APRA-informationrequestform.pdf>, or otherwise submit your request in writing.

2. You are not required to provide identification or the reason(s) you are seeking the information, and your right to access will not depend upon providing identification or reasons.

3. Please be advised that Rhode Island General Laws Title 38, Chapter 2 entitled “Access to Public Records” (APRA) applies only to the Judiciary’s *administrative functions* (those matters that pertain to the administration of the Judiciary) and does *not* apply to its judicial functions (those matters that pertain to litigants and their proceedings before the court). *See* § 38-2-2(4)(I), § 38-2-5(3); and Rhode Island Judiciary “Policy Regarding the Request for and Production of Electronic Information” effective December 19, 2006. As a result, court cases and electronic reports derived from court case files do not fall under APRA. In addition, there are other exceptions to APRA that may apply to your request.

**If you are interested in obtaining a court case file or a document contained in a court case file, they are available for inspection in the respective Clerk’s Office during normal business hours. Requests for court case files or information or reports derived from court case files are not governed by the Access to Public Records Act.**

4. If your request falls under APRA, a public body has ten (10) business days to respond which can be extended for an additional period of twenty (20) days for “good cause”.

5. If you feel that you have been denied access to records that fall under APRA, you have the right to petition the State Court Administrator for a review of the determination. You may also file a lawsuit in Superior Court.



## REQUEST TO INSPECT AND/OR COPY DOCUMENTS OR RECORDS OR REQUEST FOR ELECTRONIC INFORMATION OR REPORT

Rhode Island General Laws Title 38, Chapter 2 entitled "Access to Public Records" (APRA) governs the public's access to certain records. APRA applies only to the Judiciary's *administrative functions* (those matters that pertain to the administration of the Judiciary) and does *not* apply to its judicial functions (those matters that pertain to litigants and their proceedings before the court). *See* § 38-2-2(4)(I), § 38-2-

5 (3); and Rhode Island Judiciary "Policy Regarding the Request for and Production of Electronic Information" effective December 19, 2006. As a result, court cases and electronic reports derived from court case files do not fall under APRA. In addition, there are other exceptions to APRA that may apply to your request. You are not required to provide identification or the reason you seek the information, however, in order to fulfill your request in an expeditious manner, we ask that you fill out this request form. If your request falls under APRA, a public body has ten (10) business days to respond. If you feel that you have been denied access to records that fall under APRA, you have the right to petition the State Court Administrator for a review of the determination.

**If you are interested in obtaining a court case file or a document contained in a court case file, they are available for inspection in the respective Clerk's Office during normal business hours. Requests for court files are not governed by the Access to Public Records Act and cannot be obtained by use of this form.**

**REQUEST TYPE:**             Inspect Documents/Records             Obtain Copies of Documents/Records  
 Obtain Electronic Information/Report (Non APRA Request)             Other

**REQUESTOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME OF BUSINESS** (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**TELEPHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_            **FAX:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**INFORMATION OR REPORT REQUESTED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FORMAT:**     Paper             Fax             E-mail (if available)     CD-ROM     Other: \_\_\_\_\_

SUBMIT THIS COMPLETED FORM TO:

Mr. Craig Berke  
Office of Community Outreach and Public Relations  
250 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02903  
Tel: (401) 222-4580 Fax: (401) 222-8632  
Email: [cberke@courts.ri.gov](mailto:cberke@courts.ri.gov)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF REQUESTOR

**OFFICE USE ONLY:** Request received by \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM