



# Data Practices Policy: Rights of the Public to Government Data

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Minnesota Zoological Gardens

November 2017

*This document is required by Minnesota Statutes, section 13.025, subdivision 2.*

## **Right to Access Public Data**

The Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13) presumes that all government data are public unless a state or federal law says the data are not public. Government data is a term that means all recorded information a government entity has created, collected, stored or maintained in order to do their work.

You have the right to look at (inspect), free of charge, all public data that the Minnesota Zoological Gardens (MN Zoo) keeps. You also have the right to get copies of public data. And you have the right to look at data, free of charge, before deciding to request copies. The Data Practices Act allow MN Zoo to charge for copies. You have the right to look at data, free of charge, before deciding to request copies.

## **How to Request Public Data**

To look at or request copies of data, make your request to the Data Practices Compliance Official (DPCO) at the following email address [datarequest@mnzoo.org](mailto:datarequest@mnzoo.org) . You may use the data request form provided but you are not required to use it. Send your request in writing by email, fax or letter and include the following information:

- that you, as a member of the public, are making a request for data under the Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13
- whether you would like to look at the data, get copies of the data, or both
- a clear description of the data you would like to inspect or have copied.

MN Zoo cannot require you, as a member of the public, to identify yourself or explain the reason for your data request. However, depending on how you want us to process your request e.g. to mail you copies of data, we may need some information about you. In addition, please keep in mind that if we do not understand your request and have no way to contact you, we might not be able to process your request.

## **How We Respond to a Data Request**

Upon receiving your request, we will work to process it.

- If it is not clear what data you are requesting, we will ask you for clarification.
- If we do not have the data, we will notify you as soon as reasonably possible.
- If we have the data, but the data are not public, we will notify you as soon as reasonably possible and state which specific law says the data are not public.
- If we have the data, and the data are public, we will respond to your request appropriately and promptly, within a reasonable amount of time by doing one of the following:
  - arrange a date, time, and place to inspect data, for free, if your request is to look at the data, or

- provide you with copies of the data as soon as reasonably possible. This depends on several variables like how many copies are requested, how many staff members are available to respond, and how many other data requests are being processed.

If you do not understand some of the data (technical terminology, abbreviations, or acronyms), please tell the person who provided the data to you. We will give you an explanation if you ask.

The Data Practices Act does not require us to create or collect new data in response to a data request. MN Zoo does not have to provide data in a specific form or arrangement if the data is not kept in that form or arrangement. If we agree to create data in response to your request, we will work with you on the details of your request, including cost and response time.

We are not required to respond to questions that are not about your data requests, or requests for government data.

We do not accept standing requests for public data.

### **Requests for Summary Data**

MN Zoo will prepare summary data if the requestor agrees to pay the cost of preparing the data. Summary data are statistical records or reports that are prepared by removing all identifiers from private or confidential data on individuals.

### **Copy Costs for Members of the Public**

The Minnesota Zoological Gardens charges members of the public for copies of government data under Minnesota Statutes, section 13.03, subdivision 3(c).

- You must pay for the copies before we will give them to you.
- We do not charge for copies if the cost is less than \$10.
- We do not charge to inspect data or to separate public from not public data.

### ***Charges***

**Paper Copies** (black and white, letter or legal size paper copies cost .25 cents for a one-sided copy, or .50 cents for a two-sided copy)

- For 100 or Fewer Paper Copies - .25 cents per page
- For 100 or More Paper Copies - Actual costs

**For All Other Copies** (data stored electronically, CDs, DVDs, maps, photographs, etc.)

- Actual Costs

### ***Actual Costs***

Actual costs include employee time to search for and retrieve, make, certify, and electronically transmit copies; material costs (CD, DVD, etc.); and mailing costs. The cost of employee time is calculated using the hourly salary of the lowest paid employee able to complete the task, plus 20% for fringe benefits.

Standing Requests - Charges accrued are due after three months and prior to renewal.

Requestors may be required to pay one-half of the estimated copy cost prior to search and retrieval. Considerations include the amount of data requested, number of locations data are kept, and number of staff required to conduct searches.

## **Data Practices Contacts**

MN Zoo Responsible Authority:

John Frawley, President/Director MN Zoo  
13000 Zoo Boulevard  
Apple Valley, MN 55124

MN Zoo Data Practices Compliance Official:

Missy Remick, Director Board & Legislative Affairs  
13000 Zoo Boulevard  
Apple Valley, MN 55124  
952.431.9299  
Fax: 952.431.9200  
[missy.remick@state.mn.us](mailto:missy.remick@state.mn.us)