

Van Buren Township FOIA- WEBSITE NOTICE Revised FOIA Response Procedure in light of Executive Order 2020-38

As a result of the Governor's April 5, 2020 Executive Order (Order) No. 2020-38 Van Buren Township ("Township") will continue to fulfill Freedom of Information Act requests to the extent possible due to the circumstances arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic and subject to the procedures set forth in this notice.

Pursuant to the Governor's Order, "strict compliance" with some of FOIA's response requirement has been temporarily suspended. The Township now has ten (10) business days to respond to a FOIA request or appeal received via mail, hand-delivery or fax, and the calculation of the new time period begins when a Township employee physically opens the correspondence containing the FOIA request and/or appeal, not when it is postmarked and/or dated. The Township will provide written notice to the requestor should compliance with any of the current COVID-19 emergency orders preclude the Township from providing a response within the new timeline.

Additionally, if the FOIA request requires "in-person efforts" to prepare the response, e.g. search, examination and copying of documents, then the Township may defer responding to that portion of the request until the expiration and/or any extension of the Order and will provide written notification to the requestor explaining the reasons for the deferral. If a requestor informs the Township in writing they want to revise their FOIA request to exclude the portions requiring "in-person efforts", then the Township will provide the records that would not require such effort within the time frames set forth in MCL 15.235. Finally, the Township will continue to respond to all public records request submitted and seeking records via email or website submission, that do not require "in-person" efforts within the statute's current guidelines set forth in MCL 15.235.

The Township will follow the above procedures and adhere to the Governor's Order through its effective date of **June 4, 2020** and/or any extension of the Order's duration.