

**ORDER OF THE PANOLA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT  
ADOPTING THE PANOLA COUNTY PUBLIC INFORMATION POLICY  
AND ESTABLISHING TIME LIMITS UNDER TEX. GOV'T CODE § 552.275**

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code (the Public Information Act) grants every person the right to access government records, subject only to certain limited exceptions; and

**WHEREAS**, while transparency and access are critical to public trust, some individuals may submit requests that are excessive, repetitive, or overly burdensome, placing significant strain on county personnel and resources; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 552.275 of the Texas Government Code authorizes a governmental body to set reasonable monthly and annual time limits on the amount of personnel time that must be spent responding to requests for public information without recovering the associated personnel costs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Public Information Act allows governmental bodies to track the cumulative amount of personnel time required to respond to requests from a single requestor and to recover costs for time exceeding the adopted limits; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 552.275 requires that any limits established by a governmental body must be no less than 36 hours in a 12-month period corresponding to the county's fiscal year, and no less than 15 hours in a one-month period; and

**WHEREAS**, the statute further provides that requests made by members of the news media and by innocence projects affiliated with nonprofit organizations or law schools are not subject to these limitations; and

**WHEREAS**, it is in the best interest of Panola County to adopt the provisions of Section 552.275 in order to protect County resources while ensuring compliance with the Public Information Act;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED BY THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF PANOLA COUNTY, TEXAS, THAT:**

**Section 1. Policy Adoption**

This Order constitutes the Panola County Public Information Policy and governs every request for information received on or after its effective date. If a conflict arises between this Policy and the TPIA, the TPIA controls.

**Section 2. Record Custodians & Public Records Officer**

**1. Custodians.**

Each elected official (or, for non-elected departments, the department head) remains the official custodian of that office's records.

**2. Designation of Public Records Officer (PRO).**

The individual appointed by the County Judge and confirmed by Commissioners Court is hereby designated the Public Records Officer for Panola County.

**3. PRO Duties.**

The PRO shall:

- Serve as the single countywide contact for requesters;
- Maintain the electronic Panola County Public Records Center and the Attorney-General-prescribed signage;

- Receive, date-stamp, log, assign, and track all written TPIA requests;
- Coordinate with each custodian or their Records Liaison to gather, review, redact, and release responsive records;
- Monitor, by requestor, the cumulative personnel time spent as required by §552.275;
- Issue cost estimates, invoices, deposits, and notices;
- Seek Attorney General rulings, when necessary, in consultation with the District Attorney; and
- Provide annual TPIA training to Records Liaisons and newly elected officials.

### Section 3. How to Submit a Request

A request must be in writing and delivered by one of the following methods:

| Method               | Address                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Online portal</b> | Panola County PIA Request<br>tx-panolacounty.civicplus.com/1238/PIA-Request                                                                                |
| <b>Email</b>         | PIARequest@co.panola.tx.us                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>U.S. Mail</b>     | Public Records Officer, Rodger G. McLane, 110 S. Sycamore, Room 216, Carthage, Texas 75633                                                                 |
| <b>Hand-delivery</b> | County Judge's Office at 110 S. Sycamore, Room 216, Carthage, Texas 75633<br>8 a.m.-5 p.m., Mon-Fri (except holidays & court-designated non-business days) |

Verbal requests are not TPIA requests. Staff shall direct verbal inquirers to submit a written request.

### Section 4. Time Limits & Cost Recovery (Tex. Gov't Code § 552.275)

1. **Monthly Threshold.** When a requestor's cumulative requests exceed **15 personnel hours in a single calendar month**, the requestor must pay personnel costs for any additional time incurred that month.
2. **Annual Threshold.** When a requestor's cumulative requests exceed **36 personnel hours in the county fiscal year (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31)**, the requestor must pay personnel costs for any additional time incurred that fiscal year.
3. **Notice & Deposit.** Upon reaching either threshold the PRO shall notify the requestor in writing and, before further work, require advance payment or deposit of the estimated cost.
4. **Exemptions.** These limits do not apply to:
  - (a) a member of the news media acting in that capacity; or
  - (b) an innocence project affiliated with an accredited law school or qualifying nonprofit organization.

### Section 5. Charges & Fee Schedule

1. **Rate Source.** Panola County adopts and will apply the charge categories and maximum rates published by the Texas Attorney General in **1 TAC § 70.3** (or successor rule), including provisions for labor, overhead, programming or data manipulation, materials, and copies.
2. **Cost Estimates.** If anticipated charges exceed **\$15**, the PRO shall provide an itemized written estimate and suspend work until the requester accepts in writing.
3. **Deposits.** A **50% deposit** is required when the estimate exceeds **\$100** or when the requester has unpaid balances of **\$100 or more**.
4. **Waiver.** Charges totaling less than **\$15** may be waived when processing costs exceed the fee.

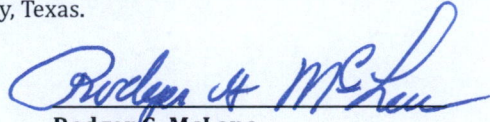
### Section 6. Severability

If any part of this Order is held invalid, the remainder remains in full force.

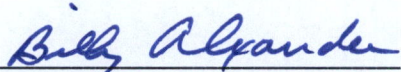
**Section 7. Effective Date**

This Order takes effect immediately upon adoption; cost-recovery thresholds in Section 5 apply to requests received on or after the passage of this Order.

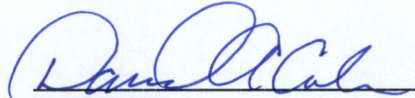
**PASSED AND APPROVED** this 28<sup>th</sup> day of July 2026, in a duly called and posted meeting of the Commissioners Court of Panola County, Texas.



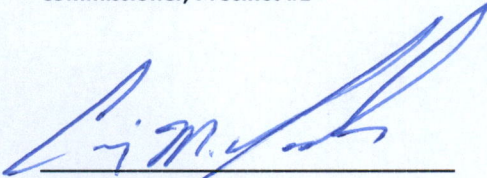
**Rodger G. McLane**  
County Judge



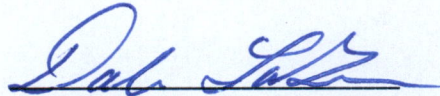
**Billy Alexander**  
Commissioner, Precinct #1



**David A. Cole**  
Commissioner, Precinct #2



**Craig M. Lawless**  
Commissioner, Precinct #3



**Dale LaGrone**  
Commissioner, Precinct #4

**Attest:**



**Bobbie Davis**  
County Clerk

