

1. Title

Policy on Transparency, Accountability, and Access to Information

2. Rule and Regulation

Sec. 1 The Board of Regents and U.T. System are committed to enhancing transparency, accountability, and access and disclosure of information to the public, the media, elected and appointed state and federal officials, and executive policy makers.

Sec. 2 To assist in achieving these goals, the Board wishes to provide maximum transparency to the public and its representatives to the fullest extent allowed by law while ensuring compliance with best governance practices and appropriate protection of confidential information and personal privacy.

Sec. 3 Importance of Communication. To assist the Board of Regents in its duties and responsibilities, the Board and the Chancellor expect to be informed of significant matters within the U.T. System Administration and at each U.T. institution. Significant matters include those matters, which in the exercise of individual best judgment, reflect a significant achievement, present a substantial concern or interest, or have the potential to impact the reputation of the institution in a substantial manner.

Sec. 4 Importance of Data Collection, Retention, and Analysis. The U.T. System recognizes and supports the importance of data collection, retention, and analysis for purposes such as reviewing System operations and policies, guiding decision-making, improving productivity and efficiency, and evaluating performance outcomes. The U.T. System is committed to continually enhancing the performance of its institutions, to supporting access and success for all students, to improving educational outcomes, and to remaining a national leader in providing access to data.

Sec. 5 Processing Information Requests.

5.1 Requests by Members of the Public. To enhance transparency, U.T. institutions and U.T. System Administration must act in strict compliance with the Texas Public Information Act (TPIA) and applicable state

and federal law in providing public access to governmental records.

- 5.2 Requests by Representatives of the Media. In addition to the public right of access to information through the TPIA, representatives of the media may utilize U.T. System Administration and institutional offices of external relations as an additional resource for questions.
- 5.3 Requests by Members of the Texas Legislature. The TPIA provides members of the Texas Legislature a special right of access to information needed for legislative purposes. U.T. System Administration and institutional offices of governmental affairs serve as additional resources for questions from members of the Legislature.
- 5.4 Requests by Members of the Board of Regents.
 - 5.4.1 A member of the Board of Regents may utilize U.T. System resources to access information or data necessary for the Board member to fulfill his or her official duties and responsibilities.
 - 5.4.2 Requests for information by an individual Regent shall be submitted to the General Counsel to the Board, be tailored to information needed to assist the Regent in fulfilling his or her official duties and responsibilities, and provide a requested deadline for response if the request is time-sensitive.
 - 5.4.3 All U.T. System Administration and U.T. institutional employees should respond thoroughly and appropriately to requests for information from a member of the Board, without undue delay. However, some requests may require further discussions to determine the appropriate scope of the request and timing of the response to avoid inefficiencies and duplication of effort.
 - 5.4.4 After consultation with the Chairman of the Board, the Chancellor may adopt reasonable procedures with regard to the timing, copying, and process for review of records by a Regent, including prohibiting the copying of any confidential material.

In addition, the Chancellor, in consultation with the Vice Chancellor and General Counsel, shall determine whether State or federal law restricts compliance with the request. Accordingly, the Chancellor, in consultation with the Vice Chancellor and General Counsel, shall determine whether a Regent may review information that is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([20 U.S.C. §1232g](#); [34 CFR Part 99](#)), by constitutional privacy, or by other state or federal law.

3. Definitions

None

4. Relevant Federal and State Statutes

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): [20 U.S.C. Section 1232g](#)

[34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 99](#) – Family Educational Rights and Privacy

Texas Government Code [Chapter 552](#) – Public Information

5. Relevant System Policies, Procedures, and Forms

Regents' Rules and Regulations, [Rule 10101](#) – Board Authority and Duties

Regents' Rules and Regulations, [Rule 10403](#) – Conduct of Meetings of the Board

Regents' Rules and Regulations, [Rule 10901](#) – Statement of U.T. System Values and Expectations

The University of Texas Systemwide Policy [UTS 139](#), *Texas Public Information Act*

6. System Administration Office(s) Responsible for Rule

Office of the Board of Regents

7. Dates Approved or Amended

[Regents' Rules Revision History](#)