

## Mississippi Department of Human Services

**Media Policy** *effective March 1, 2019*

### **Purpose**

The purpose of these policy guidelines is to establish the procedures the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) will follow in order to provide prompt accurate answers to all media inquiries.

### **How to File a Request**

It is MDHS Policy that all media related questions are to be directed to Staff Attorney, Witt Fortenberry, by email at [dewitt.fortenberry@mdhs.ms.gov](mailto:dewitt.fortenberry@mdhs.ms.gov). The requestor must include their name, contact information and questions they are needing answered. In order to quickly and most appropriately respond, MDHS urges all requestors to be as specific as possible.

### **Timetable**

Once a media request has been submitted, MDHS will respond within two (2) business days.

### **Exceptions**

Requestors should be aware of the following exceptions that restrict the availability of some answers that MDHS can give:

- (a) Academic records exempt from public access, see § 37-11-51.
- (b) Appraisal records exempt from access, see § 31-1-27.
- (c) Archaeological records exempt from public access, see § 39-7-41.
- (d) Attorney work product, examination, exemption, see § 25-1-102.
- (e) Birth Defects Registry, see § 41-21-205.
- (f) Bureau of vital statistics, access to records, see § 41-57-2.
- (g) Charitable organizations, registration information, exemption from public access, see § 79-11-527.
- (h) Concealed pistols or revolvers, licenses to carry, records, exemption, see § 45-9-101.
- (i) Confidentiality, ambulatory surgical facilities, see § 41-75-19.
- (j) Defendants likely to flee or physically harm themselves or others, see § 41-32-7.
- (k) Environmental self-evaluation reports, public records act, exemption, see § 49-2-71.
- (l) Hospital records, Mississippi Public Records Act exemption, see § 41-9-68.
- (m) Individual tax records in possession of public body, exemption from public access requirements, see § 27-3-77.
- (n) Insurance and insurance companies, risk based capital level requirements, reports, see § 83-5-415.
- (o) Judicial records, public access, exemption, see § 9-1-38.
- (p) Jury records exempt from public records provisions, see § 13-5-97.
- (q) Licensure application and examination records, exemption from Public Records Act, see § 73-52-1.
- (r) Medical examiner, records and reports, see § 41-61-63.
- (s) Personnel files exempt from examination, see § 25-1-100.
- (t) Public records and trade secrets, proprietary commercial and financial information, exemption from public access, see § 79-23-1.
- (u) Workers' compensation, access to records, see § 71-3-66.
- (v) Records subject to privilege, such as Attorney/Client, Physician/Patient, etc.

### **Public Records Request**

If you are requesting a specific document or material please complete a Public Records Request Form and email it to [public.records@mdhs.ms.gov](mailto:public.records@mdhs.ms.gov).