

HALF HOLLOW HILLS COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) Policy

Section 1. Purpose and Scope

The people's right to know the process of government decision-making and to review the documents and statistics leading to those determinations is fundamental in a democratic society. Access to such information should not be impeded by secrecy or confidentiality except as permitted by law.

This policy provides the procedures by which members of the public may request and obtain records of the Half Hollow Hills Community Library ("Library"). Library personnel shall make available all records required to be disclosed under the New York Freedom of Information Law ("FOIL"), as well as records otherwise available by law. Any conflicts among laws governing public access to records shall be construed in favor of the widest possible availability of public records.

Section 2. Designation of Records Access Officer

- A) The Board of Trustees of the Half Hollow Hills Community Library is responsible for ensuring compliance with FOIL and hereby designates the following individual as **Records Access Officer**:

Records Access Officer:

Library Director

Half Hollow Hills Community Library
55 Vanderbilt Parkway
Dix Hills, NY 11746
Email: adminoffice@hhhllibrary.org
Phone: 631-498-1212

- B) The Records Access Officer is responsible for ensuring an appropriate response to public requests for access to records. This designation shall not prohibit other Library officials previously authorized to make records available from continuing to do so.

The Records Access Officer shall ensure that Library staff:

- i. Maintain an up-to-date subject matter list of all Library records.
- ii. Assist requesters in identifying records sought and, when appropriate, describe how records are maintained to help reasonably describe the request.
- iii. Communicate with requesters when a request is voluminous or locating records requires significant effort, in order to narrow the scope if possible.
- iv. Upon locating records, either:
 - o Make the records available for inspection; or
 - o Deny access in writing, stating the reasons.

- v. Upon request for copies:
 - o Provide copies upon payment or offer to pay any applicable fees; or
 - o Permit the requester to make copies.
- vi. Upon request, certify that a record is a true copy.
- vii. Upon failure to locate records, certify that either:
 - o The Library is not the custodian of such records; or
 - o The records cannot be found after a diligent search.

Section 3. Location of Records

Records shall be available for inspection and copying at:

Half Hollow Hills Community Library
55 Vanderbilt Parkway
Dix Hills, NY 11746

Section 4. Hours for Public Inspection

Requests shall be accepted and records produced during the Library's regular business hours:

- Monday–Friday: 9am – 5pm.

Section 5. Requests for Public Access to Records

1. Requests should be in writing; however, oral requests may be accepted when records are readily available.
2. If records are accessible online, the requester shall be informed of the website location and offered printed copies upon request.
3. The Library shall respond to a FOIL request within **five (5) business days** by doing one of the following:
 - o Granting or denying access in whole or in part;
 - o Indicating that the request does not reasonably describe the records sought;
 - o Acknowledging receipt and providing a reasonable approximate date for a response; or
 - o If more than twenty business days are needed, providing a written statement explaining the delay and specifying a date certain for completion.
4. Failure to comply with these time limits constitutes a denial and may be appealed as provided in Section 6.

5. In determining a reasonable response time, Library personnel shall consider factors such as the volume of the request, difficulty locating records, need to review records for exemptions, and overall request volume.

Section 6. Denial of Access and Appeals Process

1. Denials of access shall be in writing, state the reasons, and advise the requester of the right to appeal.
2. Any failure to respond as required under Section 5 shall be deemed a denial.
3. The Library Board of Trustees is hereby designated as the Appeals Body under FOIL.

Appeals should be submitted in writing to:

Board of Trustees

Half Hollow Hills Community Library
55 Vanderbilt Parkway
Dix Hills, NY 11746
Email: boardoftrustees@hhhlibrary.org

4. Appeals must be filed within thirty (30) days of the denial.
5. The Board of Trustees shall respond to an appeal within ten (10) business days by either:
 - Granting access to the requested records; or
 - Fully explaining the reasons for continued denial.
6. A copy of each appeal and the determination shall be transmitted to the Committee on Open Government at:

Committee on Open Government
Department of State
One Commerce Plaza
99 Washington Avenue, Suite 650
Albany, NY 12231

Section 7. Fees

1. No fee shall be charged for:
 - Inspecting records;
 - Searching for records;
 - Certification of records.
2. Copy fees shall not exceed:
 - **\$0.25 per page** for photocopies not exceeding 9" × 14";
 - Actual cost of reproduction for larger documents or electronic media.

3. Actual cost may include:
 - Hourly salary of the lowest-paid qualified employee after two hours of work;
 - Storage devices or media provided to the requester;
 - The cost of an outside service if the Library's equipment cannot reproduce the record.
4. The Library shall provide an estimate of costs in advance when fees are expected to apply.
5. Fees may be required to be paid in advance.
6. The Library may waive fees in whole or in part.

Section 8. Public Notice

A notice identifying the Records Access Officer, Appeals Body, and record inspection locations shall be made available to the public, upon request, and by other methods as in the discretion of the Library Administration.

Section 9. Severability

If any provision of this policy or its application is adjudged invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall not affect other provisions or their application.

Adopted by Board of Trustees: 1/20/2026