



# County of Monterey's California Public Record Act Request Management Policy

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24-264



# California Public Records Act (“CPRA”)

- The CPRA, which appears in both statute and the State Constitution, declares that “access to information concerning the conduct of the people’s business is a fundamental and necessary right of every person.” Gov’t Code, § 7921.000.
- A recent survey conducted by the Office of County Counsel indicated the County has responded to **14,406** requests since 2018. During that time, staff spent approximately **563,169 hours** on those requests.
- The CPRA is an unfunded mandate.



# NextRequest

- To better assist staff in facilitating the County's CPRA obligations and to automate several functions the County is implementing an internet-solution called NextRequest.
- NextRequest also tracks the volume of requests and the number of days the County takes to complete a request.
- The adoption of a policy would assist staff and departments in understanding their obligations under the CPRA and their obligations in NextRequest.



# Policy

- The proposed policy was drafted with the assistance of the Chief Administrative Office and the Office of County Counsel.
- Some of the highlights of the policy include:
  - All CPRA requests must be uploaded into NextRequest, regardless whether the request comes in through phone, mail, or e-mail.
  - Departments must generally appoint two staff members to work within NextRequest to serve as the department's interface to the Requestor.
  - Departments should notify the Office of County Counsel when a request is made by a law firm, and departments should notify the appropriate Public Information Officer (“PIO”) when there is a media request.



# Policy

- Some of the highlights of the policy include:
  - The CAO's Office will monitor NextRequest to ensure Departments are meeting their deadlines and assisting staff with issues.
  - The Office of County Counsel will provide trainings, including on this policy, to staff.
  - When a Request concerns more than one Department, the CAO's Office will form responses to the Requestor on behalf of the Departments, but Departments will conduct their compilation, review, and redaction of records in NextRequest. Departments will keep the CAO's Office updated on their efforts.
  - The policy provides direction on best practice and common legal issues under the CPRA.



# Board of Supervisors Action

- The Office of County Counsel seeks to add this policy to the Board's Policy Manual in order to maintain the policy in perpetuity and for the policy to enter the normal cyclical workflow of the Board's Policy Manual.



# Questions?

