Town of Somers
Freedom of Information Policy
April, 2012

I. **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarification and guidance regarding Freedom of Information requests from members of the public. Except as otherwise provided by federal law or by state statute, the Freedom of Information Act, Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 14, guarantees public access to all public records maintained or kept on file by the municipality.

II. **Policy**

The goal of the Town of Somers is to courteously and promptly provide requested information in compliance with the law. Public records maintained in municipal offices are available for public inspection during regular business hours. Certain records such as payroll records, employment records, vital statistics and other documents that contain confidential and personal information, including Social Security numbers and personal bank account information, are not open for public inspection. Full or limited access to these records may be available in accordance with the disclosure requirements established in the statutes. Any concern regarding whether a particular item may be disclosed should be promptly addressed to the Town Clerk, and possibly then referred to the town attorney. Payment for copies of documents may be made as itemized on the Freedom of Information fee schedule of the Town of Somers.

The Town of Somers's Freedom of Information Request form must be completed for any requested documentation not readily available for public inspection within the municipality. The forms are available in the office of the Town Clerk and on the Town of Somers website at the following address: www.somersct.gov A completed request will be received in the office of the Town Clerk who will acknowledge receipt and then promptly forward to the appropriate department(s). The appropriate department will respond to the requester within four (4) business days of either providing the material, asking for clarification of the request if needed, or if the requested material is voluminous or other difficulty is encountered, by establishing a reasonable date upon which the documents will be made available.

When copies are not requested, individual departments may arrange (with the applicant) for public inspection of requested information subject to disclosure per statute. Public inspection of documents may be viewed in the Town Clerk's office. Copies of requested information shall be forwarded to the Town Clerk's Office. Payment must be received in the Town

Clerk's Office prior to the release of the documents.

The Town of Somers has no legal obligation to, and will not perform analytical work, studies, investigations, calculations or program reviews, or create any documents in response to a Freedom of Information request. If requested information exists in the form of a document and is not in draft form, it will be provided, but documents exempted by law from release or availability to the public per, for example, CGS 1-210(b), will not be released or made available. Again, in questionable instances, consultation should be made with the Town Clerk, who may refer the matter to the town attorney.

III. **Process**

IV.

1. All Freedom of Information requests are to be made in writing and submitted to the Town Clerk's Office.
2. Requests will be promptly disseminated to the appropriate department(s).
3. Any questions regarding the legality of disclosure must be promptly addressed for possible consultation with the town attorney.
4. Within four (4) business days, the department maintaining the requested records shall either provide the information, issue a letter to the requestor denying the request, ask for further clarification or inform the requestor of a reasonable date when the information will be available.
5. If no copy is requested, records subject to disclosure requirements as established in the statutes may be inspected at the office of the Town Clerk.
6. If hard copies are requested, they will be forwarded to the office of the Town Clerk for release upon payment or waiver of the legally required fees.

Board of Selectmen

Lisa Pellegrini, First Selectman
Kathleen Devlin, Selectman
Clyde G. Knorr, Jr, Selectman

Adopted: