Published on *University of Colorado* (https://www.cu.edu)

Questions about the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) [1]

May 15, 2025 by facultycouncil@cu.edu [2]

Open records laws ensure public access to government record and meetings. As employees of the university, your communications could fall subject to an open records request under the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA). Here's a brief introduction to what you should know about CORA.

CORA Definitions:

What are “public records?”

- “All writings made, maintained, or kept” by the University (or any state entity) “for use in the exercise of functions required or authorized by law … or involving the receipt or expenditure of public funds”. “Writings” includes “all books, papers, maps, photographs, cards, tapes, recordings, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics.”
- Includes digitally stored data and electronic mail.

What types of communication may be requested?

(The following are examples from prior CORA requests.)

- Emails and text messages
- All electronic correspondence, be it email, text/SMS/MMS message, or on an app such as Signal, WhatsApp and/or Telegram
- All electronic communications
- Any correspondence or emails
- Any communications or correspondence, including but not limited to letters, emails, texts, instant messages, and faxes

Records subject to disclosure:

- If it’s a record for use in the exercise of CU business, it is likely subject to CORA (unless an exception applies).
- The location of the record is immaterial (your cell phone, your tablet, your Google Drive, your garage, etc).

CORA’s Personnel Files Exception- What is excepted:

- Home addresses
- Telephone numbers
- Financial information

- Disclosure of an intimate relationship
- Other information maintained because of the employer-employee relationship

CORA's Personnel Files- What is NOT excepted:

- Severance payments
- Applications of past or current employees
- Performance ratings
- Compensation and benefits
- The fact that an employee is placed on administrative leave

CORA Resources:

- APS #2022 [3]
- Colorado Freedom of Information Coalition: Guide to Colorado's Open Records and Open Meetings Laws - Colorado Freedom of Information Coalition [4]
- Colorado AG Opinion: No.01-01 Colorado Open Records Act Nineteen Frequently Asked Questions [5]

Display Title:
Questions about the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA)
Send email when Published:
Yes

Source URL:https://www.cu.edu/blog/faculty-council-newsletter/questions-about-colorado-open-records-act-cora

Links
[1] https://www.cu.edu/blog/faculty-council-newsletter/questions-about-colorado-open-records-act-cora
[2] https://www.cu.edu/blog/faculty-council-newsletter/author/238514 [3] https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/2022
[4] https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcoloradofoic.org%2Fopen-government-guide%2F&data=05%7C02%7CJennifer.Mortensen%40cu.edu%7Ce1402cbb258041ab72e608dd917fb6da%7C
[5] https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcoag.gov%2Fapp%2Fuploads%2F2019%2F0
01-1-Colorado-Open-Records-Act-Nineteen-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CJennifer.Mortensen%40cu.edu%7Ce1402cbb258041ab72e608dd917fb6da