**ALABAMA**

Public records are defined by the Code of Alabama as "all written, typed or printed books, papers, letters, documents and maps made or received in pursuance of law by the public officers of the state, counties, municipalities and other subdivisions of government in the transactions of public business and shall also include any record authorized to be made by any law of this state belonging or pertaining to any court of record or any other public record authorized by law or any paper, pleading, exhibit or other writing filed with, in or by any such court, office or officer."[[12]](https://ballotpedia.org/Alabama_Public_Records_Law#cite_note-Law31240-12)

### Exemptions

Exemptions to the definition of public records include the records of library materials checked out by library patrons (except in the case of minors, whose parents may request records) and records relating to the security of individuals and infrastructure.[[12]](https://ballotpedia.org/Alabama_Public_Records_Law#cite_note-Law31240-12)

**Public Records Act:**

**Section 36-12-40**

**Rights of citizens to inspect and copy public writings; exceptions.**

Every citizen has a right to inspect and take a copy of any public writing of this state, except as otherwise expressly provided by statute. **Provided however, registration and circulation records and information concerning the use of the public, public school or college and university libraries of this state shall be exempted from this section.** Provided further, any parent of a minor child shall have the right to inspect the registration and circulation records of any school or public library that pertain to his or her child. Notwithstanding the foregoing, records concerning security plans, procedures, assessments, measures, or systems, and any other records relating to, or having an impact upon, the security or safety of persons, structures, facilities, or other infrastructures, including without limitation information concerning critical infrastructure (as defined at 42 U.S.C. §5195c(e) as amended) and critical energy infrastructure information (as defined at 18 C.F.R. §388.113(c)(1) as amended) the public disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to be detrimental to the public safety or welfare, and records the disclosure of which would otherwise be detrimental to the best interests of the public shall be exempted from this section. Any public officer who receives a request for records that may appear to relate to critical infrastructure or critical energy infrastructure information, shall notify the owner of such infrastructure in writing of the request and provide the owner an opportunity to comment on the request and on the threats to public safety or welfare that could reasonably be expected from public disclosure on the records.

***(Code 1923, §2695; Code 1940, T. 41, §145; Acts 1983, No. 83-565, p. 866, §3; Act 2004-487, p. 906, §1.)***

# Alabama Code Title 36. Public Officers and Employees § 36-12-41

Every public officer having the custody of a public writing which a citizen has a right to inspect is bound to give him, on demand, a certified copy of it, on payment of the legal fees therefor, and such copy is admissible as evidence in like cases and with like effect as the original writing.

# Alabama Code Title 36. Public Officers and Employees § 36-12-64

Any officer or employee of the State of Alabama who violates any of the provisions of this article shall be subject to impeachment and removal from office and shall also be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished in the manner provided by law for such offenses.

To obtain a public records request, go to:

<https://sos.alabama.gov/sos-office/request-public-information>

For information or assistance:

**Alabama Center for Open Government**

University of Alabama Journalism Department  
Box 870172  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487  
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