

Alabama – State Public Record Laws

Citations	<p>Code of Alabama, Title 41, Chapter 13 and Code of Alabama, Title 36, Chapter 12, Article 3 (Section 36-12-40)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of citizens to inspect and copy public writings; exceptions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/alison/codeofalabama/1975/36-12-40.htm • Destruction/Preservation of state records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/alison/codeofalabama/1975/41-13-21.htm ○ http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/alison/codeofalabama/1975/41-13-5.htm
Exemptions to Disclosure	<p>Exempted records include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records the disclosure of which presents potential security risks, or danger to public safety or welfare • Pending criminal investigations • Sensitive personnel records [e.g. personnel records with identifying information [§ 41-13-7] • Registration and circulation records in college and university libraries • Not just public safety but also “records the disclosure of which would otherwise be detrimental to the best interests of the public.” § 36-12-40.
Access Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burden and expense of copying the writings and taking the copies must be borne by the citizen or his or her agent as provided by law . . . or as required by such reasonable safeguards as the custodian may impose • Policy in favor of access • Every citizen
Destruction of Public Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • § 41-13-5 – “insignificant” records can be destroyed, w/ authorization of Commission