



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Law

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: August 18, 2025

Re: Amending Chapter 2 of the City Code Relating to Closed Records

Executive Summary

An ordinance has been prepared to amend City Code Sec. 2-25.3 - Closed Records consistent with amendments to Section 610.021, RSMo, recently enacted through HB 145 & 59 (2025), and other statutory amendments since Sec. 2-25.3 was last updated.

Discussion

The Missouri legislature has enacted amendments to the open records law, in Section 610.021, RSMo, authorizing public governmental bodies to close records relating to specified matters. City Council has previously adopted many, but not all, of the statutory reasons to close records. The proposed amendments to Sec. 2-25.3 would incorporate all of such amendments to state law which are applicable to municipalities into the City Code, with the exception of the 2023 exemption for utility customer usage and billing records. The edits to the City Code sections mirror the changes which have occurred over time to state law.

Also of note, the newly authorized exception related to individually identifiable information of a minor under 18 years of age has been added as a permissible exemption, as opposed to mandatory (i.e., "may be closed" vs. "shall be closed"). All of the other categories for closed records were previously established in the City Code as being mandatory.

Among the reasons the exception for records relating to minors has been drafted as being permissive are the existence of minors on boards and commissions, attendance of minors at public meetings, minors employed by the city, participation of minors in youth sports, and permissive use of information and photographs of minors in various other capacities – all of which would be a violation if closure of all records containing individually identifiable information of a minor is mandatory. That said, it will be the intent of the city to protect and prevent disclosure of individually identifiable information of minors to unrelated third parties to the greatest extent possible.

The language regarding closure of utility customer usage and billing records authorized by the state legislature in 2023 is set forth below:

"Individually identifiable customer usage and billing records for customers of a municipally owned utility, unless the records are requested by the customer or authorized for release by the customer, except that a municipally owned utility shall make available to the public the customer's name, billing address, location of service, and dates of service provided for any commercial service account".



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In 2023, the City Council chose not to consider closure of customer usage and billing records to ensure access to financial data which relates to the cost of housing could be obtained by potential renters and/or purchasers of a housing unit.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: Not applicable.

Long-Term Impact: Not applicable

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

[Strategic Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Organizational Excellence, Secondary Impact: Safe Community, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

[Comprehensive Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action
09/20/2004	Ordinance No. 018249 (B309-04): Amending Chapter 2 of the City Code as it relates to public records, meetings and votes.
09/16/2002	Ordinance No. 017456 (B322-02): Amending Chapter 2 of the City Code as it relates to closed records.
09/08/1998	Ordinance No. 015733 (B264-98): Amending Chapter 2 of the City Code as it relates to meetings, records and votes of public governmental bodies.
09/21/1987	Ordinance No. 011642 (B320-87): Amending Chapter 2 of the City Code relating to meetings, records and votes.

Suggested Council Action

Passage of the amendments to Chapter 2 of the City Code consistent with statutory changes.