

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOIA) GUIDE



Manhattan-Elwood
PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

ABOUT THE MANHATTAN-ELWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT (PUBLIC BODY)

The Manhattan-Elwood Public Library District (also known as MEPLD) serves a community of over 15,266 residents, as well as reciprocal borrowers from the PrairieCat consortia, along with any and all visitors who pass through the Library's doors.

The Manhattan-Elwood Public Library is a district library with a seven-member Board of Trustees elected by residents of the district.

We are required to report to and be answerable to: Illinois State Library, Springfield, Illinois. Its members are: State Librarian Alexi Giannoulas, Director of the State Library, and various other staff. The library is also part of the PrairieCat Consortia and the RAILS library system.

OUR MISSION

The general Library objectives of the Manhattan-Elwood Public Library District shall be:

- To assemble, preserve and administer, in organized collections, books and related educational and recreational materials in order to promote an enlightened citizenship and enrich personal lives.
- To serve the community as a center of reliable information.
- To support educational, civic, and cultural activities of groups and organizations.
- To provide opportunities and encouragement for children, young people, men and women to educate themselves continuously.
- To seek continually to identify community needs and work toward providing programs of service to meet such needs.
- To provide opportunity for recreation through the use of literature and other art forms as available funds permit.

In maintaining these objectives, the following policies should be observed by the Board and Staff: a high degree of accuracy in records maintained and information given, cooperation with other civic organizations, an open-minded attitude toward new methods and improvements for better service, a high degree of attractiveness attained through neatness, order, systematic arrangements, and a careful observation of ethics in relations between Board Members and Staff.

MANHATTAN-ELWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY'S WEBSITE

<https://www.mpld.org>

GENERAL FUND OPERATING BUDGET

The fiscal year budget for 2024-2025 is \$1,508,665.00. Budget documents, the most current Budget and Appropriation Resolution and Levy Resolution are available on the Library's website as well as in person at the Library's administration office.

MANHATTAN-ELWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY OFFICE

The administration office of the Manhattan-Elwood Public Library is at the following address: 240 Whitson Street, Manhattan IL 60442. The mailing address of the library is PO Box 53, Manhattan, IL 60442. The Library will have a second branch located at 111 E Mississippi Ave, Elwood IL 60421 later in 2024.

MANHATTAN-ELWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF

When fully staffed, the library employs 8 full time employees and 14 part time employees.

MANHATTAN-ELWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEES

The Library is governed by an elected, unpaid, seven-member Board of Library Trustees. Current Board Members are:

President: Tom Murray (tmurray@mpld.org)
Vice-President: Patti Blatti (pblatti@mpld.org)
Treasurer: Keri English (kenglish@mpld.org)
Secretary: Amanda Dearing (adearing@mpld.org)
Trustee: Sharon Gill (sgill@mpld.org)
Trustee: Jan Krekel (jkrekel@mpld.org)
Trustee: Julie Mason (jmason@mpld.org)

Board meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month at 4:30 PM, with the exception of the December where there is no meeting. The May meeting may be moved up a week due to Memorial Day. Meetings typically take place in the meeting room.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Library has standing committees whose membership is as follows:

Budget

Keri English (Board Treasurer)
Julie Mason (Secretary)
Sharon Gill (Trustee)

Village of Elwood

Patti Blatti (Vice President)
Julie Mason (Secretary)
Jan Krekel (Trustee)

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

The Manhattan-Elwood Public Library adheres to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140/1 et. Seq., which is the principal Illinois statute governing the inspection of public records. The Act requires that public bodies make available for inspection or copying all public records to any person.

MANHATTAN-ELWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY FOIA OFFICER

Library Director: Ashley Hopper (arhopper@mpld.org)

FILING A FOIA REQUEST

A request for records must be made in writing and can be submitted to the attention of the FOIA officer in the following ways:

- **Mail**
Attn: FOIA Officer
PO Box 53
Manhattan, IL 60442
- **Email**
questions@mpld.org
- **Personal delivery**
During regular business hours of the Manhattan-Elwood Public Library

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST FEES

Digital copies shareable via electronic means are provided free of charge.

The charge for copies of the records will be as follows:

- 1) First 50 pages black and white, letter size: Free
- 2) 15 cents per page for black and white, letter size, after 50 pages
- 3) 50 cents per page for color or oversized copies or electronic media

- 4) Reproduction saved to other media: actual cost of the recording media (flash drive, etc.) to which the information will be saved

RESPONSES TO REQUESTS FOR RECORDS

Responses to commercial requests can be expected within 21 business days of the receipt of a written request. If an extension is required, a FOIA officer from the library will reach out to the requestor.

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Responses for non-commercial requests can be expected within 5 business days of the receipt of a written request. If an extension is required, a FOIA officer from the library will reach out to the requestor.

PROCEDURE FOR APPEALING A DENIAL

If your request for information is denied, or denied in part, you have the right to have your request reviewed by the Public Access Counselor (PAC) at the Office of the Illinois Attorney General. 5 ILCS 140/9.5(a). You can file your Request for Review with the PAC by writing to:

*Leah Bartelt, Public Access Counselor
Office of the Illinois Attorney General
500 South 2nd Street
Springfield, IL 62701
public.access@ilag.gov
877-299-3642*

You also have the right to seek judicial review of your denial by filing a lawsuit in the State circuit court. 5 ILCS 140/11. If you choose to file a Request for Review with the PAC, you must do so within 60 calendar days of the date of this denial letter. 5 ILCS 140/9.5(a). Please note that you must include a copy of your original FOIA request and the denial letter when filing a Request for Review with the PAC.

RECORDS IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Please visit the library's website at www.mpld.org/library-governance for immediately available records including minutes, agendas, recent audit, and more.

The Manhattan-Elwood Public Library adheres to the guidance set out by the Local Records Commission through the state of Illinois for retaining records of business.

