Procedures for the
Retrieval and Release of Information

Purpose:

- The procedures described in this document are for the members of Virginia Tech’s Information Technology organization to provide guidance in the retrieval and release of information.
- The procedures are aimed at extraordinary requests for information.
- The procedures cover data for which Information Technology staff members have primary roles as data trustees, data stewards, data managers and/or data experts (See Policy 2005). They also cover situations in which the expertise and skills of IT personnel may assist other data custodians or individuals in retrieving and/or releasing information.
- This document is not intended to cover those situations in which the ordinary business processes of the university require IT staff to provide information to other university offices. Examples of the latter include data used internally to assure the integrity of the systems maintained by Information Technology; new copies of routine business reports; and ad hoc reports that fulfill business needs for authorized users of the data in question.

Key premises:

- Within the context of state and federal laws and regulations and consistent with University business needs, privacy of individual data will be protected to the extent possible;
- Business needs—of the university as employer, and of the university as a public agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia—drive retrieval and release of information;
- Legal instruments (search warrants, subpoenas, other court orders) and requests that fall under the scope of Virginia’s Freedom of Information Act will also drive the release of information;
- Workload and appropriate division of labor will determine the level of assistance in retrieving information that Information Technology staff can provide.

 Procedures:

- The work done by Information Technology staff to retrieve and/or release information about individuals beyond routine business operations must be authorized by the Vice President for Information Technology (or written designee).
- Information Technology may provide services to retrieve information, but IT does not provide comprehensive services to retrieve information from every type of device or under every condition.
- Standing procedures. The Vice President for Information Technology may authorize, in writing, blanket procedures for routine or recurring circumstances.
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- It is the responsibility of any IT personnel assigned to do the work of retrieval and/or release of information to treat the information as confidential, and release it only to the designated recipient(s).

Procedure:

- Any IT personnel receiving requests for the retrieval and release of information beyond normal, routine business practices should immediately inform their supervisor, who will, in turn, seek authorization from the Vice President for Information Technology (or written designee).

- Personnel who are the appropriate data experts for a given body of data and who are served with search warrants will comply with the warrant and also notify their Associate Vice President (or designee) immediately. The Associate Vice President is responsible for seeing that the Vice President is informed as quickly as possible.

Definitions: From Policy 2005—

- **Data Trustees** – Senior university officials who have planning and policy-making responsibilities for university data.

- **Data Stewards** - University directors who oversee the capture, maintenance and dissemination of data for a particular operation.

- **Data Managers** - Information technology staff in a functional area with day-to-day responsibilities for the capture, maintenance, and dissemination of data for a particular operation.

- **Data Experts** - Operational managers in a functional area with day-to-day responsibilities for managing business processes and establishing the business rules for the production transaction systems.