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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 22, 2022
TO: Whatcom County Councilmembers
FROM: Jill Nixon, Legislative Coordinator
SUBJ: Redacting personal information on boards and commissions applications

Before a Council Meeting

County Council is asked to choose how it would like to receive meeting packet materials for Council appointments. Options for presenting boards and commissions applications before meetings include:

- Option 1. Do not include applications in the published packet. Distribute unredacted applications to councilmembers separately.
- Option 2. Include the applications in the packet with exempted information redacted
- Option 3. Include the entire application in the packet, and remove online access after appointment

Applications are public documents subject to release under the Public Records Act. Once appointed, applicants become volunteers for Whatcom County and their personal information becomes exempt from public inspection and copying per RCW 42.56.250(4), including:

"...the residential addresses, residential telephone numbers, personal wireless telephone numbers, personal electronic mail addresses..."

After a Council meeting

County Council is asked to choose whether not redacted applications should remain available on the website after appointment. Options are:

- Option 1. Upload redacted application for all applicants
- Option 2. Upload redacted applications only for those who are appointed and subject to RCW 42.56.250(4)
- Option 3. Remove all applications from the website

Other jurisdictions have chosen to either redact this information from the application or remove their applications entirely from their websites after appointments are made.