

Medical Record Request Checklist

Forensic Record Review Toolkit — request the full picture in round one

Use this checklist at intake, before you touch the timeline. The goal is to request everything you might need in the first letter — a second, third, and fourth round of requests is what actually kills your turnaround time and your margin on a case.

Before You Send Anything

- Confirm you have a signed authorization/release (or subpoena) covering the exact provider and date range.
- Confirm the referral question with the attorney so you know which record categories are actually relevant.
- Log every request on the 'Records Received Log' tab of the Case Organization Tracker the moment it goes out.
- Set a 14-day follow-up reminder for every request. Providers do not follow up for you.

Core Medical & Rehabilitation Records

☐	Record Requested	Why It Matters
☐	Complete hospital chart (H&P, progress notes, D/C summary)	Establishes onset, acuity, and early clinical
☐	Nursing notes / flow sheets	Often contain the earliest and most detailed swallow/feeding observations — frequently omitted from a standard chart pull.
☐	Speech-language pathology evaluations and treatment notes	Core of the case; request every SLP encounter, not just the initial eval.
☐	Instrumental swallow studies (VFSS/MBSS, FEES) — reports AND raw video/images if available	The report alone often omits detail the video would show; request the study, not just the
☐	Physician orders (diet, NPO, feeding tube)	Ties clinical findings to the decisions actually made on the case.
☐	Physical therapy and occupational therapy notes	Functional status context; frequently cross-references swallow/communication status.
☐	Neuropsychological or psychological evaluations	Relevant to cognitive-communication claims and causation analysis.
☐	Radiology / imaging reports (CT, MRI relevant to injury)	Objective correlation for neurogenic communication or swallowing claims.
☐	Prior/baseline records (pre-injury or pre-incident)	Establishes baseline function — essential for any causation opinion.

Educational & Developmental Records

Pediatric / IEP-due process cases.

☐	Record Requested	Why It Matters
☐	Full special education file (IEP/504, evaluations, progress reports)	Documents baseline, present levels, and district's own data.
☐	School-based SLP evaluation and therapy logs	Direct comparison point for independent findings.
☐	Report cards / progress monitoring data	Corroborates or contradicts functional claims in the record.
☐	Prior independent evaluations (private SLP, OT, psych)	Shows whether findings are consistent across evaluators/time.
☐	Attendance and discipline records (if relevant to functional claims)	Occasionally relevant to causation or damages arguments.

Administrative & Legal Records

☐	Record Requested	Why It Matters
☐	Complete billing records / itemized statements	Corroborates frequency and dates of service claimed in the narrative record.
☐	Prior expert reports (all experts, both sides, if available)	Required for a complete, defensible review; flags what you may be asked about on cross.
☐	Deposition transcripts of treating providers, plaintiff/claimant, and family	Often contains functional detail not captured anywhere in the chart.
☐	Incident/accident report	Establishes mechanism of injury cited in your causation analysis.
☐	Employment records (if vocational/earning capacity is at issue)	Relevant to damages analysis involving communication-dependent job function.

Request Letter Essentials

- Name the exact record categories above — vague requests ('all records') get vague, incomplete responses.
- Specify the date range with a buffer on both ends (baseline period + full treatment period).
- Ask explicitly for raw instrumental study video/images, not just the interpretive report.
- Request records in electronic/searchable format when the provider offers it — it saves hours at the review stage.
- Copy the retaining attorney on all correspondence so the file stays clean if opposing counsel challenges the record.

Pair this checklist with the Case Organization Tracker's 'Records Received Log' tab to track every request through to receipt.