

CHAPTER 1 – GUIDANCE FOR TRACKING DATA

► METRIC 2: Average time to respond to a public records request *[ESHB 1594, Sec. 6(5)(b)]*

This metric is asking for the average number of days it took your agency to respond to public records requests pursuant to RCW 42.56.520.

To respond to this metric an agency will need the following:

- Total number of requests received during the reporting period (this information will be provided with the baseline data.)
- Total number of requests open at the beginning of the reporting period (this information will also be provided with the baseline data.)
- Total number of days it took to respond to all requests. This is calculated by adding together the number of days it took the agency to respond to each request.
- The reporting system will automatically calculate the average time to respond based on the information provided.

Example: if an agency received 10 requests, three were responded to the same day received (counted as 1), five were responded to on Day 3, and two were responded to on Day 5:

$$3 \times <1 \text{ day} = 3$$

$$5 \times 3 \text{ days} = 15$$

$$\underline{2 \times 5 \text{ days} = 10}$$

$$\text{Total} = 28$$

28 total days divided by 10 requests = 2.8 days on average to respond to a public records request.

- For purposes of responding to this metric, the term “respond” is used consistent with RCW 42.56.520. That statute requires that within five days of receiving a public record request an agency must respond in one of five ways:
 1. Provide the record;
 2. Provide an internet address and link (or provide copies or a way to view copies);
 3. Acknowledge the request and provide a reasonable estimate of the time it will require to respond;
 4. Acknowledge the request and request clarification; or
 5. Deny the request.

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- Some agencies have not tracked the number of days between the date the request is received and the date of the agency's response, choosing instead to track only that a five-day response was sent out within the appropriate time. If your agency does not currently track the date the five-day response is sent out, please indicate that and provide the total number of requests for which a five-day acknowledgment letter was sent out after the five-day period expired.
- ▶ "Received" means being received within standard business hours. (Typically, standard business days are Monday through Friday, excluding holidays, and standard business hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. An individual agency's standard business hours may differ.)