

PUBLIC RECORDS METRIC GUIDANCE

METRIC 11

Estimated total costs incurred by the agency in fulfilling records requests, including staff compensation and legal review and average cost per request

[RCW 42.14.026\(5\)\(k\)](#)

To respond to this metric an agency will need to provide the agency's total estimated costs incurred in fulfilling public records requests during the reporting period for staff compensation, legal review, and supplies and services.

Please provide the total costs only. The JLARC system will be designed to generate the average cost per request, using the cost data provided here and the baseline data provided previously (total open requests at start of the reporting period, plus the number of requests received during the reporting period).

- Please provide the total estimated costs for staff compensation, legal review, and any supplies or services procured for the purpose of responding to public records requests during the reporting period. If your agency does not currently maintain detailed data on staff time and costs associated with public records, you may use reasonable estimating techniques to determine the amount of time (captured in [Metric 10](#)) and the associated cost of that staff time. Care should be taken to develop cost estimates that are as accurate as possible.
- Supplies and services may include items such as external services (e.g., printing services, large format printing), mailing costs, supplies (CDs, DVDs, USB sticks, etc.), recurring software licensing, and other professional services (non-litigation related). A worksheet is available to help you determine these costs for reporting purposes. This worksheet is available on JLARC's website. You are not required to use or submit the estimation worksheet. It is provided solely as a tool to use at your agency's discretion. Agencies using this worksheet should include in the total cost reported here the sum of:
 - Agency staff costs (cell C6)
 - Legal costs – non-litigation (cell C7) and
 - Supplies and services
- Costs of staff time associated with invoicing and collection should be included. Costs associated with staff time spent in public disclosure training, setting up policies or procedures, etc., may also be included.

Some agencies apply an “overhead” rate to the cost of an employee. The Office of Financial Management defines overhead as “those elements of cost necessary in the production of a good or service which are not directly traceable to the product or service. Usually, these costs relate to objects of expenditure that do not become an integral part of the finished product or service, such as rent, heat, lights, management, and supervision.” Agencies who have established an official overhead rate may include that cost in calculating this metric and will be asked to report their overhead rate. Agencies that have not established an overhead rate are not required to establish one in order to respond to this metric.

In some circumstances an agency may have incurred costs for supplies or services that could be reported under [Metric 11](#) (costs incurred to fulfill public records requests) and [Metric 14](#) (costs to manage and retain records). In these cases, determine the primary purpose of the supplies or services and report the costs under the appropriate metric. If the supplies or services are used for both equally, report 50% of the cost under Metric 11 and 50% under Metric 14. Please do not double count the cost by including it in both metrics.

Do not include costs associated with public records requests litigation as these costs will be captured separately in [Metric 13](#).