

# 2023 Public Records Reporting

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## 2023 public records data dashboards

- Agencies report data each year to JLARC staff reflecting metrics in **RCW 40.14.026**.
- JLARC staff compile the data but do not independently verify the information submitted.
- Questions about an agency's data should be directed to that agency.

Click the links below to view the public records data in interactive dashboards.

- New this year: **Overview dashboard** allows users to choose a single agency or year for review.
- Dashboards include summaries and agency-level detail for each reporting metric from 2018 through 2023.
- View **instructions** for navigating the dashboards.
- Download the **full dataset** (Excel).

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Reporting compliance	Requests received and closed	Response time	Clarified, denied, abandoned	Response format	Time and cost	Court cases
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## Executive summary

### Statute requires agencies to report data about public records activities

**RCW 40.14.026** requires state, local, and other government agencies that are subject to the **Public Records Act** to report information about their public records activities.

- Agencies that spent over \$100,000 or more on public records requests in the prior fiscal year must submit data for 15 statutory performance metrics.
- Agencies that spent less can report data voluntarily.
- Each agency is responsible for determining if they met the \$100,000 expenditure threshold.

## JLARC staff directed to collect and report data from agencies

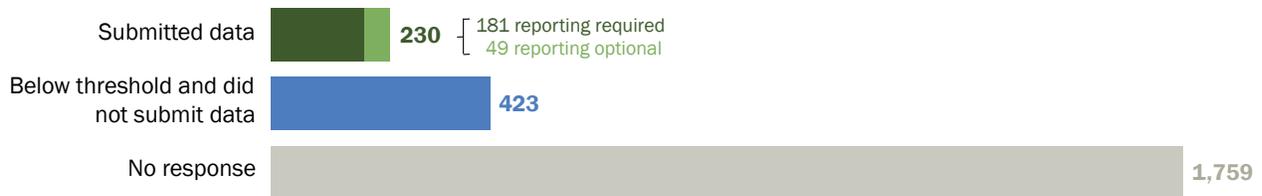
Statute directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) staff to standardize definitions for the statutory performance metrics and collect information from agencies. JLARC staff provide guidance, definitions, and an online reporting system, but do not verify the accuracy of the data reported by agencies.

## In 2023, 230 agencies submitted data about their public records activities

JLARC staff identified and reached out to 2,412 Washington agencies that were subject to the Public Records Act in 2023.

- It is unknown how many of these agencies met the \$100,000 expenditure threshold and were required to report.
- A total of 653 agencies (27%) responded to JLARC staff. Of these, 230 reported data related to performance metrics. Another 423 indicated that they were below the \$100,000 expenditure threshold and did not submit data.
- The response rate varied from 56% to 82% for state, local, and higher education agencies. School districts and special districts had lower response rates. Both chambers of the Legislature responded (100%).

**Figure 1: Of the 653 agencies that responded to JLARC staff, 230 reported data**



Source: JLARC staff analysis of reporting data.

## Agencies reported receiving 437,813 public records requests

The 230 agencies that submitted data to JLARC staff received 437,813 public records requests between January 1 and December 31, 2023. Agencies reported:

- Closing 240,127 (55%) requests within five days.
- Averaging 25 days from request receipt to closure.
- Spending \$137 million responding to requests.

Additional metrics include the number of requests that were denied, the format of records provided, time spent, and public records litigation.