

# PUBLIC RECORDS METRIC GUIDANCE

## METRIC 14

**Estimated costs incurred by the agency with managing and retaining records, including staff compensation and purchases of equipment, hardware, software, and services to manage**

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

Costs reported for this metric should be related to managing and retaining public records. Costs associated with responding to public records requests should be reported in [Metric 11](#). To respond to this metric, an agency will need to provide estimated costs associated with managing and retaining records.

Costs should be broken down into three categories as follows:

- Cost of agency staff whose primary duties involves the managing/retaining of records (such as records officers/managers, data custodians, etc.)
- Costs associated with the purchase, lease, and maintenance of agency systems whose primary function involves the managing/retaining of records (such as enterprise content managements (ECM) systems, email storage/vaulting systems, social media capture tools, recording systems, etc.)
- Costs associated with services purchased in relation to managing/retaining records (such as hosted/software as a service (SaaS) services, Public Records Efficiency, Preservation, and access central services charges for state agencies, records destruction services, etc.)

Costs associated with systems/services whose primary/major function involves the fulfillment of public records requests (such as records request tracking systems, redaction software, etc.) should be reported in [Metric 11](#) and not included here.

For purposes of responding to this metric, please include costs associated with systems specifically or predominantly designed to assist with managing and retaining records.

- **Staff costs** should include base wages plus benefits, plus the agency's overhead, calculated for the portion of time they spend on relevant activities.
- **System costs** may include the costs incurred during the reporting period on the purchase or lease, and maintenance of hardware, software, software licenses, vendor staffing for implementation and servicing relevant systems.
- **Service costs** may include payments made to third-party vendors during the reporting period for records management and retention services.

Some agencies apply an "overhead" rate to the cost of an employee. The Washington 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 provide 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.

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***Example:***

Staff Member A is designated as the agency's Records Manager and Public Records Officer and is compensated at \$100,000 per year inclusive of base wages and benefits.

The agency's overhead rate is 35%, bringing the total full-time cost of Staff Member A to \$135,000.

If Staff Member A devotes 50% of her time to Records Management activities during the period of this report, the cost would be reported as \$67,500 ( $\$135,000 \times .5$ ). The remaining 50% of Staff Member A's time is devoted to responding to public records requests. That time is not calculated in here, but instead is reflected in [Metric 11](#).