

# PUBLIC RECORDS METRIC GUIDANCE

---

## METRIC 4

### Total number of public records requests for which the agency formally sought additional clarification from the requester

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

To respond to this metric an agency will be asked to provide the number of requests for which the agency formally sought additional clarification from the requester.

- For the purposes of responding to this metric, include in your count only those requests where, without further guidance from the requester, you would not be able to fulfill the request in part or in full.
  - In some cases, one portion of a request may be clear, and the agency proceeds to fulfill it. But another portion may require clarification before the agency can proceed. Requests like these should be included in the count because the agency cannot fulfill some portion of the request without further clarification.
- The count provided for this metric should include any request for which the agency formally sought additional clarification made during the reporting period, regardless of when the request was received.
- The count provided for this metric should not include requests for which the agency contacted the requester in order to provide further direction (as opposed to asking for further clarification).
  - For example, if a requester has asked for a list of names, and the agency follows up with the requester notifying them they are required to complete a form indicating the names will not be used for commercial purposes, this would be considered providing the requester additional direction, not seeking clarification.
- When a request is received that is unclear, some agencies will communicate to the requester that the agency is interpreting the request to mean a certain thing and is fulfilling the request based on that interpretation. If that interpretation is inaccurate or incomplete, the requester is asked to clarify. In an event such as this, if the agency continues to attempt to fulfill the request based on the assumed interpretation it should not be included.
- In most cases, “formal” request for clarification will be a written communication (e.g., email or letter.) There may be some cases where formal clarification will be documented in some other way. For example, if a requester provided only a phone number (no email address or physical address), the request may be made orally and documented in a log. In such cases, please include in the count for this metric.

An agency may seek clarification on a single request one time, or the agency may need to ask for clarification multiple times. For the purposes of responding to this metric, it is only counted once regardless of the number of times the requester is contacted for further clarification.