

JLARC Public Records Data Reporting

# Public Records Reporting System Guidance

Provided by staff to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee

Last updated: January 2025

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## PUBLIC RECORDS REPORTING SYSTEM GUIDANCE

In 2017, the state Legislature directed certain state and local agencies to report annually on performance metrics related to public records retention, management, and disclosure. The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) is responsible for providing a method for reporting, and for establishing standardized metrics for these reporting requirements.

Pursuant to this legislative directive, JLARC, in consultation with state and local agencies, has created guidance for agencies to follow when reporting their public records data. JLARC is providing this comprehensive handbook to be used by the public records professionals and others in state and local agencies who will be responsible for documenting the information that is submitted to JLARC annually.

A companion document titled Public Records Metric Guidance is also available. It provides detailed guidance on what metric data is needed to report to JLARC. This companion document, along with additional agency resources, can be found on [JLARC's website](#).

### WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE THE LAST REPORTING CYCLE?

January 2025 - no changes to reporting.

### WHICH AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT?

Each state and local agency with at least \$100,000 of staff and legal costs associated with fulfilling public records requests in the preceding calendar year is required to report; state and local agencies that spent less than \$100,000 may voluntarily submit reports. [[See RCW 40.14.026\(5\)](#)]

#### What is an “agency”

According to the Public Records Act (PRA), "State agency" includes every state office, department, division, bureau, board, commission, or other state agency. "Local agency" includes every county, city, town, municipal corporation, quasi-municipal corporation, or special purpose district, or any office, department, division, bureau, board, commission, or agency thereof, or other local public agency. [[RCW 42.56.010\(1\)](#)]

In most cases, it is clear whether an organization is considered an “agency” for the purposes of the PRA. In some cases, however, it may be less apparent. For example, each city is considered a separate agency. However, a county may include several “agencies” as each separately elected official may control an independent department that would qualify as an agency. In that case each of the separate county agencies would make its own determination about whether it meets the \$100,000 threshold for required reporting.

### NEED HELP?

Please review our Public Records Metric Guidance document for detail on reporting metrics. Additional questions may be directed to [JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov](mailto:JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov).

## PUBLIC RECORDS REPORTING SYSTEM GUIDANCE

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### HOW TO FIND THE REPORTING SITE

You can find JLARC's online reporting system at <http://app.leg.wa.gov/PublicRecordsReporting>.

### LOGGING INTO TO THE REPORTING SITE

You will need a Washington State Legislature (WSL) public account to access the Public Records Data Collection Reporting System

If you have a WSL Public Account, skip to page [6](#).

### If you do not have a WSL public account, follow these steps

Screenshots are on the next page.

1. Access the reporting site at <http://app.leg.wa.gov/PublicRecordsReporting>.
2. Click the **Log In** button.
3. Select **Create a new WSL account**.
  - a. Enter your name, work email, and a password to create a Washington State Legislature (WSL) public account.
  - b. Click the **Create Account** button.
4. You will receive an email with a link to activate your account.
5. Follow the link to activate your WSL account.
6. Navigate back to the reporting site (<http://app.leg.wa.gov/PublicRecordsReporting>) and use the WSL account to log in.
7. Use the WSL account to access the Public Records Data Collection Reporting System.

# PUBLIC RECORDS REPORTING SYSTEM GUIDANCE

WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

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Log in with your account from:

Public WSL Account

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View All Links

WSL Account Management: Create an Account

First Name:

Last Name:

Email:

Password:

Confirm Password:

email address is required

Password Requirements:

- At least 8 characters
- At least 1 upper case character
- At least 1 lower case character
- At least 1 special character (e.g. #, \$, etc.)
- Passwords must match

Create Account

WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

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WSL Account Management: Create an Account

Your account has been created, but before you may log in, you need to activate the account.

An e-mail has been sent to [redacted] with instructions for activating your account.

You may close this window at any time.

Subject: WslAccountManagement: Activate your account

Thank you for creating an account with the Washington State Legislature.

You need to activate your account before it can be used. To activate your account, click on [redacted link].

If you have any questions about your account, please contact the Legislative Information Center at [support@leg.wa.gov](mailto:support@leg.wa.gov) or (360) 786-7573.

JLARC Public Records Reporting

RCW FAQ

Welcome to the Public Records Request Reporting System

Please review the [instructions for reporting](#). If you are reporting for the first time, you will need to create a Washington State Legislature public account. Follow the link below to create this account. Once you have created this account, register with your phone number, job title, agency, city, county, and legislative district.

If you have any questions, please email [JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov](mailto:JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov).

Log In

## If you have a WSL public account

1. Access the reporting site at <http://app.leg.wa.gov/PublicRecordsReporting>.
2. Click the **Log In** button.
3. Select **Public WSL Account**.
4. Provide your email and password, and click the **Login** button.

**NOTE:** If your email has changed, you will need to create a new WSL account. If you get a message saying you are not authorized, please email [JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov](mailto:JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov) so we can associate the new email domain with your agency.

## Logging in with your WSL public account

The first time you log in, you will be prompted to create a JLARC Profile. This profile creation is a onetime step, although you may edit it at any time.

**NOTE:** You cannot edit your email address. If your email address has changed, you will need to create a new WSL account. If you get a message saying you are not authorized, please email [JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov](mailto:JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov) so we can associate the new email domain with your agency.

1. Enter your name, work email, phone number, and job title.
2. Provide location information for your agency, including city/cities, county/counties, and legislative districts. Select the statewide checkbox if your agency operates statewide.
3. Select **Register** to be taken to the landing screen of the Public Records Request Reporting System.

The screenshot shows the 'Create Your JLARC Profile' form. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'JLARC Public Records Reporting', 'RCW', 'FAQ', and user options 'Hello, Test!', 'Log Out', and 'Edit Profile'. The form fields are as follows:

- First name:** Text input field with placeholder 'First Name'.
- Last name:** Text input field with placeholder 'Last Name'.
- Email address:** Text input field with placeholder 'name@email.com'.
- Phone number:** Text input field with placeholder 'XXX-XXX-XXXX'.
- Extension:** Text input field.
- Job title:** Text input field with placeholder 'Job Title'.
- Agency:** Labeled 'Agency ABC'.
- Statewide Agency:** A checkbox labeled 'Statewide Agency' is checked and highlighted with a red box.
- Cities:** A dropdown menu with 'Agency ABC' selected and a search prompt 'Select below or type to search'.
- Counties:** A dropdown menu with 'County ABC' and 'County ABC' selected and a search prompt 'Select below or type to search'.
- Legislative Districts:** A dropdown menu with a search prompt 'Select below or type to search'.
- Register:** A green button with white text, highlighted with a red box.

## DECLARING YOUR REPORTING STATUS

### Declare Your Reporting Status – Not Reporting (Did not meet threshold)

To indicate the agency will not be reporting:

1. Select **Declare Your Reporting Status**.
2. A pop-up will prompt you to select which statement applies to your agency for the current reporting period.
3. Select **Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold and will not report** and save.
4. Click the button **Submit reporting status to JLARC**.
5. A pop-up will ask if you want to submit the information to JLARC, click **OK**.
6. Log out of the system.

You may change your reporting status any time before the reporting deadline by logging in and selecting **Change reporting status**.

The screenshot shows a pop-up window titled "Declare Your Reporting Status" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. It contains three radio button options: "Met the \$100,000 threshold and will be reporting", "Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold and will voluntarily be reporting", and "Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold and will not report". The third option is selected and highlighted with a red box. At the bottom right, there are "Save" and "Cancel" buttons.

The screenshot shows the main interface of the "Public Records Request Reporting System". It includes a "Previous Reports:" section with a dropdown menu labeled "Select Previous Report". Below this is a notice: "Each agency will submit a single report. Reports are due by Monday, July 1, 2024." followed by explanatory text and a link to "Why is this required?". There are two dropdown menus: "Agency" (with "Example Agency" selected) and "Reporting Year" (with "2023" selected). A yellow banner displays the message "Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold. Not reporting." At the bottom, there is a "Submit reporting status to JLARC" button (highlighted with a red box) and a "Change Reporting Status" link.

The screenshot shows a confirmation pop-up window titled "Submit reporting Status to JLARC" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. The text inside reads: "Submitting this form will send this information to JLARC. You may come back at a later date to make edits and re-submit this form." At the bottom, there are "Cancel" and "OK" buttons, with the "OK" button highlighted by a red box.

# PUBLIC RECORDS REPORTING SYSTEM GUIDANCE

## Declare Your Reporting Status – Reporting

The reporting period is January 1 – December 31 each year.

To declare that you will report and begin entering data:

1. Select **Declare Your Reporting Status**.
2. A pop-up will prompt you to select which statement applies to your agency for the current reporting period.
3. Select either **Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold and will voluntarily reporting** OR **Met the \$100,000 threshold and will be reporting**.
4. Click **Save**.
5. Click **Begin with Baseline Data** to start the data entry.
6. If you are not ready to begin entering data, log out. You may enter/edit data and change your reporting status up until the reporting deadline (statutory deadline is July 1 of each year).

**Attestation** ×

**Met the \$100,000 threshold and will be reporting**

**Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold and will voluntarily be reporting**

**Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold and will not report**

**Save** **Cancel**

### Public Records Request Reporting System

Previous Reports:

Select Previous Report ▼

**Each agency will submit a single report. Reports are due by Monday, July 1, 2024.**

You may enter and save data until the due date. The system will save your entries between multiple visits. If you have any questions, please review the [Agency Guidance](#), the [FAQ](#), or email [JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov](mailto:JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov).

**Agency** Example Agency ▼ **Reporting Year** 2023

**Begin with Baseline Data** [Change Reporting Status](#)

**Why is this required?**



# PUBLIC RECORDS REPORTING SYSTEM GUIDANCE

## ENTERING METRIC DATA

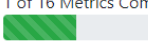
### Navigating the data entry

Metrics can be completed in any order. There are two ways to navigate through the forms:

1. Select **View Next Metric** at the top and bottom of the page to go to the next metric.
2. Select **View Summary Page** to view a list of all the metrics and their status.
  - a. Select **Edit** to the right of the metric status to add or change information.

**NOTE:** Be sure to save your entries. If you save, you can also log out of the system without losing any information.

1 of 16 Metrics Complete



[Next Metric >](#) [Return to Summary Page](#)

**Each agency will submit a single report. Reports are due by Monday, July 1, 2025**

You may enter and save data until the due date. The system will save your entries between multiple visits. If you have any questions, please review the [Agency Guidance](#), the [FAQ](#), or email [JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov](mailto:JLARCPublicRecStudy@leg.wa.gov).

Why is this required?

**Agency** **Reporting Year**

Example Agency 2024

This form still needs to be submitted to JLARC before the process is complete.

[Review and Submit](#) [Change Reporting Status](#)

1 of 16 Metrics Complete

Metric	Description	Status	
0	Baseline data	Complete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
1	Number of requests closed within five days	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
2	Number of requests where an estimated response time beyond 5 days was provided	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
3	Average and median number of days from receipt to final disposition	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
4	Number of requests for which additional clarification was sought	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
5	Number of requests denied in part or in full.	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
6	Number of requests abandoned by requesters	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
7	Number of requests, by type of requesters	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
8	Percent of requests fulfilled electronically compared to percent fulfilled by physical records	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
9	Number of requests where records were scanned	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
10	Average estimated staff time spent on each request	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
11	Estimated total costs incurred	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
12	Number of claims filed alleging a violation of Chapter 42.56 RCW	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
13	Costs incurred litigating claims alleging a violation of Chapter 42.56 RCW	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
14	Estimated costs incurred managing and retaining records	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>
15	Expenses recovered from requesters	Incomplete	<a href="#">Edit</a>

# PUBLIC RECORDS REPORTING SYSTEM GUIDANCE

## General instruction for entering data

1. Respond to all questions on each form.
2. Some fields are automatically calculated from baseline data.
3. Optional comment boxes are available for each metric if you wish to provide additional explanation about the data being reported.
4. Select **Save**. Choose either **Next Metric** or **Return to Summary** to continue. You can choose **Previous Metric** to go back.

Detailed data descriptions are in the [Metric Guidance](#) document.

## REVIEWING AND SUBMITTING YOUR REPORT

When you have completed all metrics in the report:

1. Select **Review and Submit** from the summary page.
2. Review the report. If all of the information is correct, select **Submit Form to JLARC**.
  - a. If the information is incorrect, return to the summary page and select **edit** to the right of the metric that needs correction.
  - b. You may print the report for your records by selecting **Print**.
3. Select **OK** to submit the report to JLARC.

Your report has been successfully submitted. You will want to print the confirmation screen using your browser's print button.

**Public Records Request Reporting System**  
Each agency will submit a single report. Reports are due by Sunday, July 01,  
You may enter and save data until the due date. The system will save your entries between multiple visits. If you have any questions, please review the [Agency Guidance](#), the [FAQ](#), or email [JLARC@publicrecordsstudy@leah.wa.gov](mailto:JLARC@publicrecordsstudy@leah.wa.gov).

Agency: Aberdeen Reporting Year: [ ]

This form still needs to be submitted to JLARC before the process.

**Review and Submit** (circled) [Why is this required?](#)

19 of 19 Metrics Complete 100% Complete

Metric	Description
0	Baseline data
1	Best practices
2	Average time to respond

**Public Records Requests Report for Example Agency**  
Please review the following information for accuracy. If any of this information looks incorrect, you can return to the [Summary Page](#) to make edits. If everything looks correct, click the submit button at the bottom of the page.

**Submit Form to JLARC** (circled) [Print this page](#) [Return to Summary Page](#)

**Baseline data**  
The baseline data will be used by the reporting system to automate some of the calculations included in the metrics.  
The reporting period for 2017 is July 23, 2017 to December 31, 2017.  
The reporting periods beginning in 2018 and onward will encompass a complete calendar year (January 1st to December 31st). [Click here](#) for guidance related to Baseline data.

**Baseline data**

Total number of open public records requests at the beginning of the reporting period: 234

Total number of public records requests received: 413

Total number of public records requests closed: 23

**Metric 1**  
Leading practices and processes for records management for guidance related to Metric 1.

**Submit to JLARC**  
Submitting this form will send this information to JLARC. You may come back at a later date to make edits and re-submit this form.

[Cancel](#) **OK** (circled)

**Confirmation**  
Your report has been submitted successfully on 4/3/2020 at 11:40 AM. Please print this page for your records. It is also recommended that you print a copy of your submitted data as well.  
You may edit and resubmit your report until July 1

[Return to Summary Page](#)

### CHANGING THE REPORTING STATUS OR REPORT DATA AFTER SUBMISSION

The report may be edited and resubmitted until July 1 deadline. You also may change your reporting status.

Here's how:

1. Select **Change Reporting Status**.
2. A pop-up will prompt you to select which statement applies to your agency for the reporting period. Select either **Met the \$100,000 threshold and will be reporting**, **Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold and will voluntarily be reporting**, **OR Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold and will not report**. Select **Save**.
  - a. If you selected **Met the \$100,000 threshold and will be reporting**, **OR Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold and will voluntarily be reporting**, select **Begin with Baseline Data** to begin reporting.
  - b. If you selected **Did not meet the \$100,000 threshold and will not report**, select **Submit reporting status to JLARC**.
    - i. A pop-up will ask if you want to submit the information to JLARC. Select **OK**.
    - ii. Log out of the system.