

RCW 42.56.080 Identifiable records—Facilities for copying—Availability of public records. (Effective until June 30, 2024.) (1)

A public records request must be for identifiable records. A request for all or substantially all records prepared, owned, used, or retained by an agency is not a valid request for identifiable records under this chapter, provided that a request for all records regarding a particular topic or containing a particular keyword or name shall not be considered a request for all of an agency's records.

(2) Public records shall be available for inspection and copying, and agencies shall, upon request for identifiable public records, make them promptly available to any person including, if applicable, on a partial or installment basis as records that are part of a larger set of requested records are assembled or made ready for inspection or disclosure. Agencies shall not deny a request for identifiable public records solely on the basis that the request is overbroad. Agencies shall not distinguish among persons requesting records, and such persons shall not be required to provide information as to the purpose for the request except to establish whether inspection and copying would violate RCW 42.56.070(8) or 42.56.240(14), or other statute which exempts or prohibits disclosure of specific information or records to certain persons. Agency facilities shall be made available to any person for the copying of public records except when and to the extent that this would unreasonably disrupt the operations of the agency. Agencies shall honor requests received in person during an agency's normal office hours, or by mail or email, for identifiable public records unless exempted by provisions of this chapter. No official format is required for making a records request; however, agencies may recommend that requestors submit requests using an agency provided form or web page.

(3) An agency may deny a bot request that is one of multiple requests from the requestor to the agency within a twenty-four hour period, if the agency establishes that responding to the multiple requests would cause excessive interference with other essential functions of the agency. For purposes of this subsection, "bot request" means a request for public records that an agency reasonably believes was automatically generated by a computer program or script. [2017 c 304 § 2; 2016 c 163 § 3. Prior: 2005 c 483 § 1; 2005 c 274 § 285; 1987 c 403 § 4; 1975 1st ex.s. c 294 § 15; 1973 c 1 § 27 (Initiative Measure No. 276, approved November 7, 1972). Formerly RCW 42.17.270.]

Finding—Intent—2016 c 163: See note following RCW 42.56.240.

Intent—Severability—1987 c 403: See notes following RCW 42.56.050.

RCW 42.56.080 Identifiable records—Facilities for copying—Availability of public records. (Effective June 30, 2024.) (1)(a) A public records request must be for identifiable records. A request for all or substantially all records prepared, owned, used, or retained by an agency is not a valid request for identifiable records under this chapter, provided that a request for all records regarding a particular topic or containing a particular keyword or name shall not be considered a request for all of an agency's records.

(b) A request for a recording required to be maintained by a school district board of directors under RCW 42.30.035(2) shall only be considered a valid request for an identifiable record when the date of the recording, or a range of dates, is specified in the request. When searching for and providing identifiable recordings, no search criteria except date must be considered by the school district.

(2) Public records shall be available for inspection and copying, and agencies shall, upon request for identifiable public records, make them promptly available to any person including, if applicable, on a partial or installment basis as records that are part of a larger set of requested records are assembled or made ready for inspection or disclosure. Agencies shall not deny a request for identifiable public records solely on the basis that the request is overbroad. Agencies shall not distinguish among persons requesting records, and such persons shall not be required to provide information as to the purpose for the request except to establish whether inspection and copying would violate RCW 42.56.070(8) or 42.56.240(14), or other statute which exempts or prohibits disclosure of specific information or records to certain persons. Agency facilities shall be made available to any person for the copying of public records except when and to the extent that this would unreasonably disrupt the operations of the agency. Agencies shall honor requests received in person during an agency's normal office hours, or by mail or email, for identifiable public records unless exempted by provisions of this chapter. No official format is required for making a records request; however, agencies may recommend that requestors submit requests using an agency provided form or web page.

(3) An agency may deny a bot request that is one of multiple requests from the requestor to the agency within a twenty-four hour period, if the agency establishes that responding to the multiple requests would cause excessive interference with other essential functions of the agency. For purposes of this subsection, "bot request" means a request for public records that an agency reasonably believes was automatically generated by a computer program or script. [2023 c 67 § 1; 2017 c 304 § 2; 2016 c 163 § 3. Prior: 2005 c 483 § 1; 2005 c 274 § 285; 1987 c 403 § 4; 1975 1st ex.s. c 294 § 15; 1973 c 1 § 27 (Initiative Measure No. 276, approved November 7, 1972). Formerly RCW 42.17.270.]

Effective date—2023 c 67: See note following RCW 42.30.035.

Finding—Intent—2016 c 163: See note following RCW 42.56.240.

Intent—Severability—1987 c 403: See notes following RCW 42.56.050.