



pennsylvania

OFFICE OF OPEN RECORDS

2024 Survey of Agency Open Records Officers

An analysis of the Right-to-Know Law requests and appeals involving local and state government open records officers across Pennsylvania

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INTRODUCTION

Fifteen years ago, the overhaul of Pennsylvania’s Right-to-Know Law (RTKL) ushered in a new era of transparency and accountability. The biggest reform put the onus on the government agency to prove why it denies access to the record, rather than requiring the requester to make a legal case for records access. This burden shift created seismic waves across Pennsylvania, empowering requesters to file more requests and appeal denials. This impact is evidenced by the number of appeals to the Office of Open Records (“OOR”) which has increased 272 percent since 2009, from 1,155 to 3,147 in 2023.

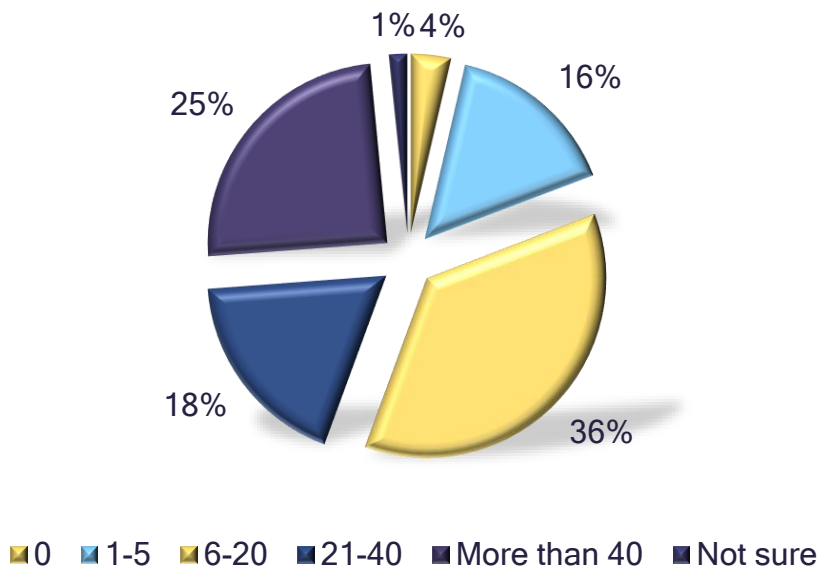
As part of its ongoing effort to better understand the impact on agencies, the OOR has conducted periodic surveys of Agency Open Records Officers (“AOROs”) ¹. The OOR’s latest survey covering calendar year 2023 was conducted from June 18, 2024 to July 2, 2024, garnered participation from 917 AOROs, the staff member at a local or state government agency responsible for responding to requests for records. In addition to the survey, the OOR conducted 30 in-depth interviews with respondents who indicated an interest in discussing their answers. A breakdown of respondents can be found in Appendix A.

¹ Previous surveys: [OOR - Reports and Surveys \(pa.gov\)](https://www.pa.gov/government/office-of-open-records/reports-and-surveys)

Most agencies average less than one request per week

Nearly three-in-four (73 percent) report averaging less than 40 requests in 2023. That includes 20 percent that report receiving less than twenty-one requests last year.

RTKL Requests Received in 2023

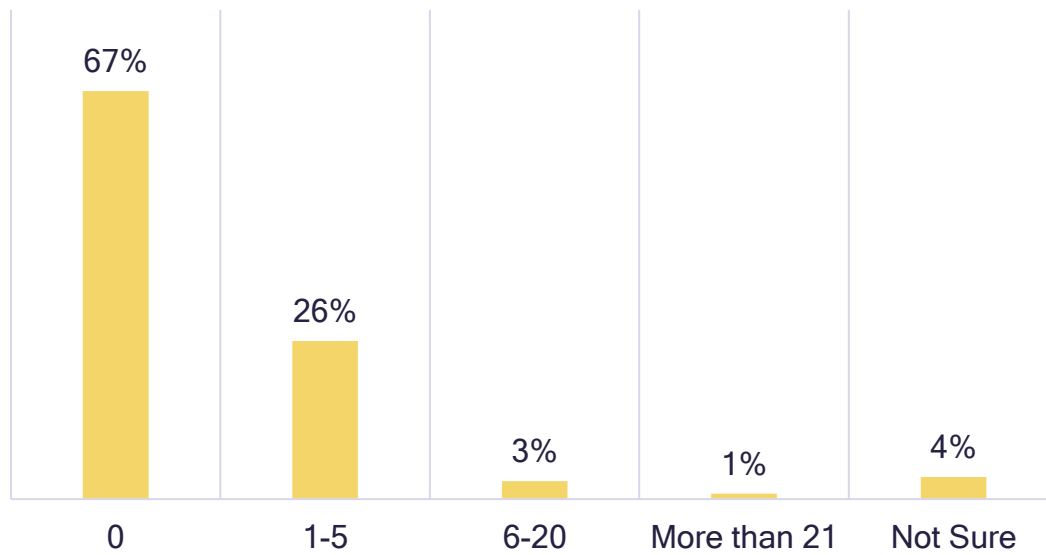


A majority report zero appeals to the OOR

If a requester appeals a denial of their records request, the agency must defend its decision to the OOR over a thirty-day period. This requires the submission of statements and evidence demonstrating the legal soundness of the denial and responding to inquiries from the OOR.

According to survey respondents, RTKL appeals are not a typical occurrence. Just thirty percent say any of the requests received by their office in 2023 were appealed to the OOR, with 67 percent reporting *no* appeals.

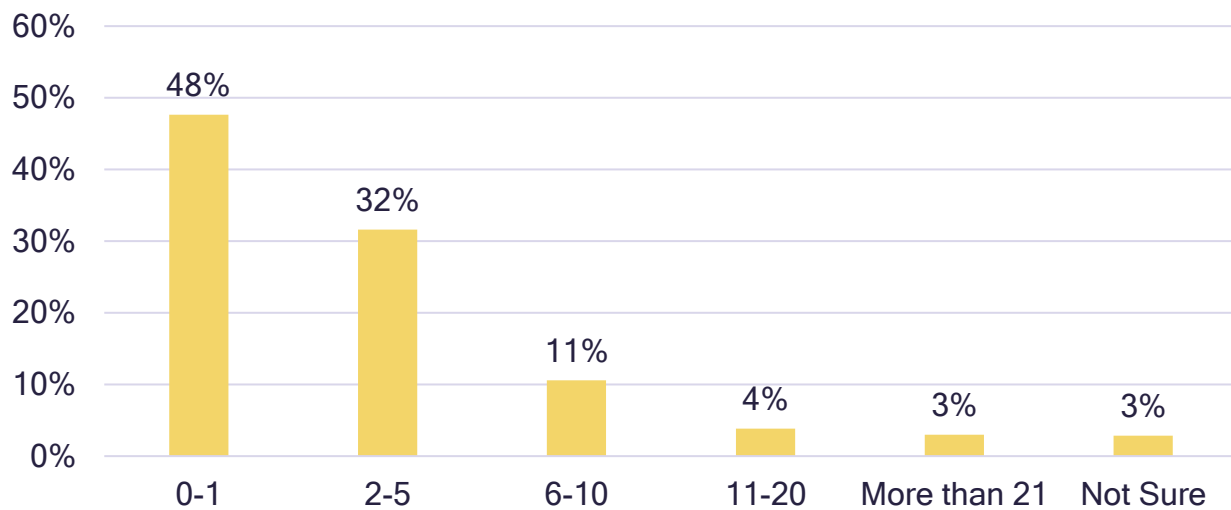
RTKL Appeals to OOR in 2023



Most AOROs spend less than six hours a week on RTKL requests

A plurality (48 percent) average one hour a week or less responding to RTKL requests.

Hours Spent Responding to Right-to-Know Requests



Though most do not report a significant number of hours per week, several AOROs remarked on how disruptive this duty can become:

“The standard five to seven business days creates unnecessary pressure, especially when the AORO has other duties within the agency.” Philadelphia County

“I have many other job responsibilities, so I had to put a lot of other important, time-sensitive work on hold to fulfill the mandated five day response deadline for those ten RTK requests that all came in on one day.” Bucks County

“I think people forget we have a job to do for our agency and that answering right to know requests take up a lot of our time and energy.” Lycoming County

Most agencies regularly take an extension

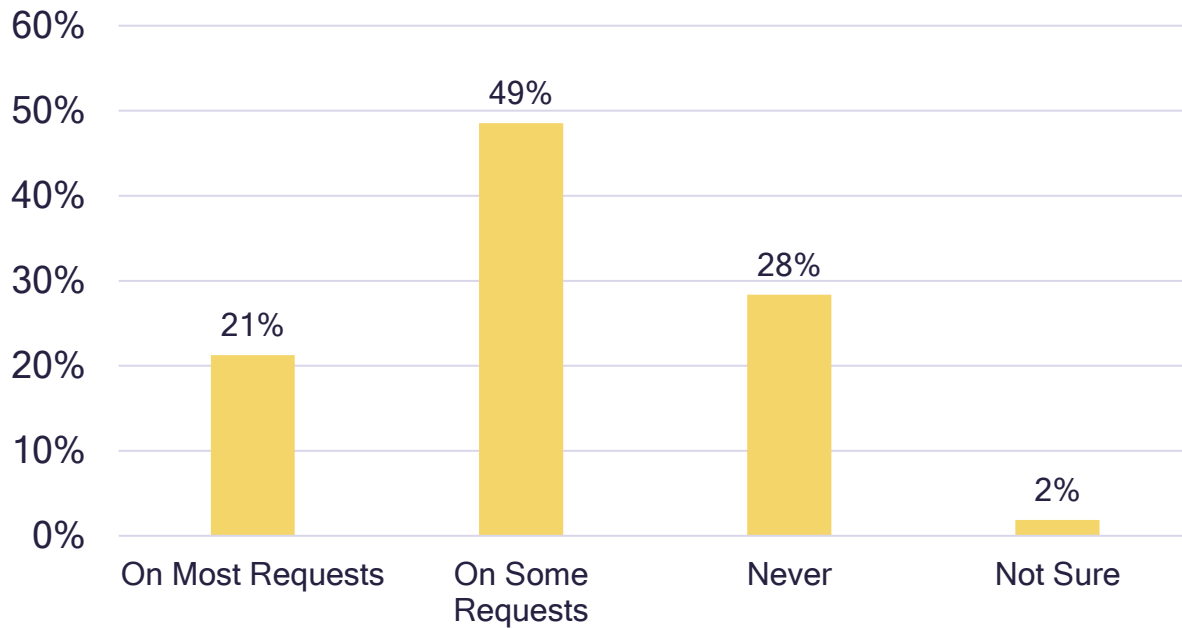
Agencies must respond to a RTKL request within five business days of receipt. If necessary, an agency may notify the requester in that response that a thirty-day extension is required to respond. An extension may be invoked for a variety of reasons.²

Three-quarters (75 percent) of AOROs utilize this option at least occasionally. Several AOROs cited being short staffed and having other time-consuming responsibilities as the main reasons for invoking the 30-day extension.

“We have to use the 30-day extension most of the time because we are short staffed. Most people in our office have other jobs to do so we don’t have enough staff, or staff time, to deal with some of the requests that come in when we have to contact third parties, or our solicitor...” Butler County

² 65 P.S. § 67.902(a).

Frequency in Taking 30-Day Extension for RTKL Response

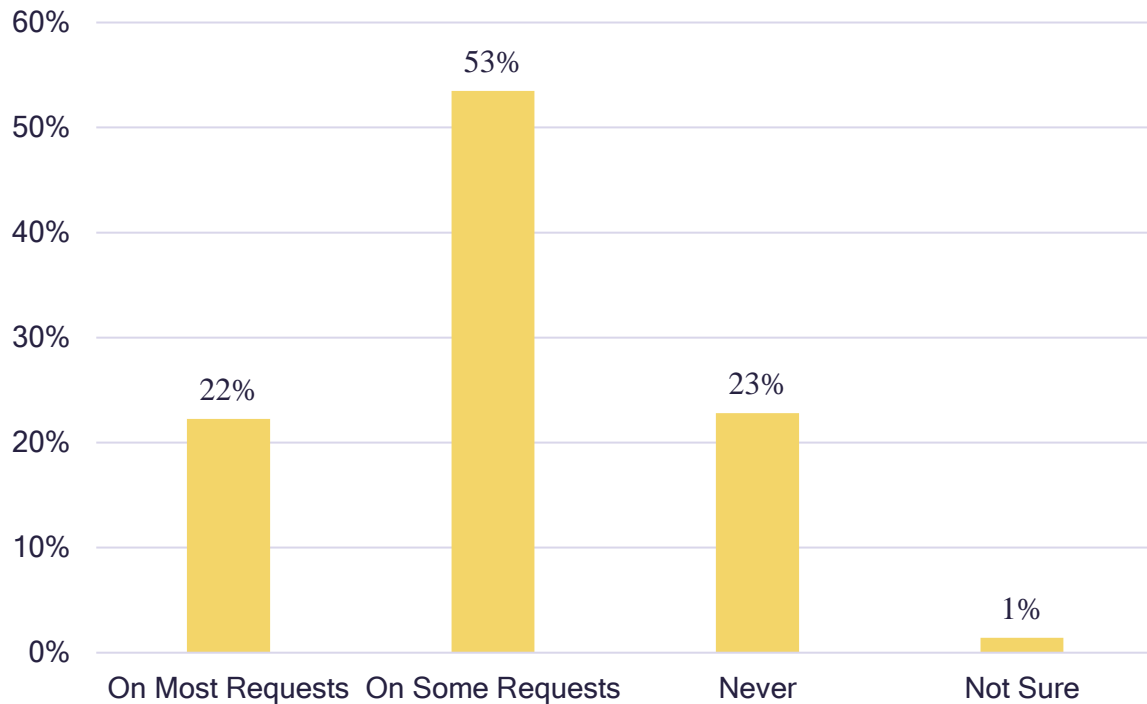


Agencies regularly consult an attorney for RTKL advice

Three-quarters (75 percent) of AOROs consult an attorney on at least some requests, including 22 percent who do so on most requests. Throughout the interviews and responses given in the survey, the need to consult a solicitor is apparent. Many AOROs attribute the need for a solicitor to commercial request obligations, which AOROs have claimed are becoming more complex and frequent.³ Other reasons for consulting an attorney have varied from needing clarity on the RTKL, to ensuring that school districts are not releasing sensitive information pertaining to minors.

³ A commercial request is defined as a request from a business entity, not an individual citizen. Often, but not exclusively, commercial requests are utilized in attempts to gain a competitive advantage in a specific industry.

Frequency in Consulting Attorney for RTKL Requests



The increasing need for solicitors' advice has raised concerns across many counties about the associated costs. Many AOROs express frustration that resident taxpayers are paying for the solicitor, but a majority of the requests are from non-residents.⁴

"We understand the intent of Pennsylvania RTKL, but there is an insane cost to taxpayers because of administrative time and legal reviews ... we paid \$1,300 for one attorney's legal review on one request this past month..." Allegheny County

"I think what most people don't realize is that our taxpayers are paying upwards of \$20,000 a month for me and our solicitor to be here answering requests and redacting piles of information." Bucks County

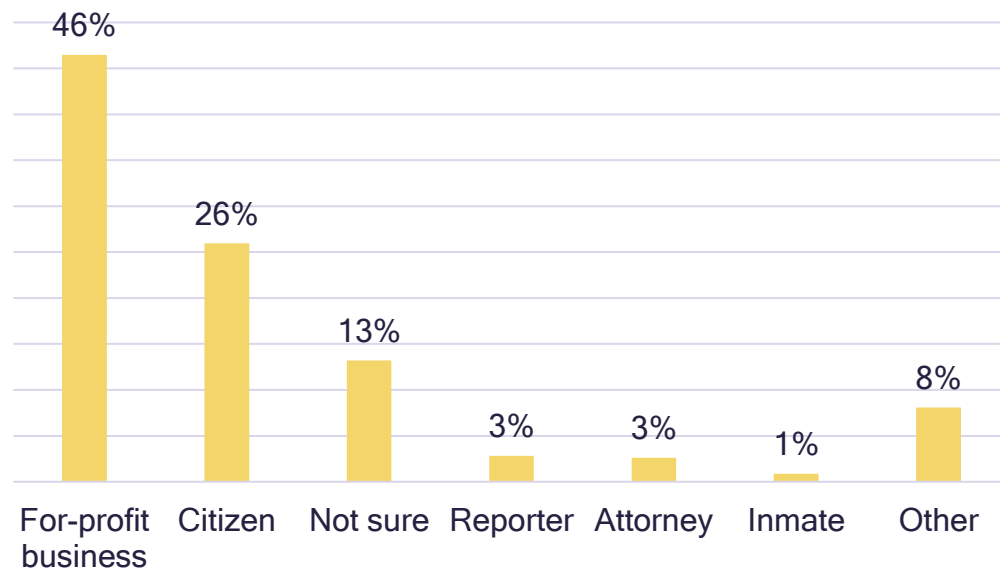
Agencies believe most requests come from commercial entities

Nearly 50 percent of AOROs report that for-profit businesses submit the most RTKL requests to their agency over any other group, including citizens. The types of commercial requests vary widely from real estate agencies, technology companies, and various law and

⁴ In interviews, agencies mentioned requests submitted by companies in states such as California, Florida, and Nevada.

insurance firms. These businesses submit requests around the country, as several states allow nonresidents to submit a request.⁵

Types of Requesters



Agencies welcome legislative changes that impact commercial, vexatious requesters

The Pennsylvania General Assembly is aware of many RTKL challenges cited by agencies. Recently, two significant bills to modify the RTKL were proposed, which has not been amended since its passing in 2008.⁶

The first proposal, which deals with repetitive requesters, is [Senate Bill 525](#) of the 2023-2024 session. SB 252 would allow the Office of Open Records to determine whether a citizen is filing requests with “vexatious intent”. If the OOR found that a requester is acted with “vexatious intent”, the OOR would be empowered to grant the agency a temporary release from responding to that requester.

The second proposal is outlined in [Senate Bill 210](#) of the 2023-2024 session. SB 210 defines a request for a “commercial purpose” is and would allow agencies to charge additional labor fees for the search, review, and redaction of those records.⁷ These additional fees would

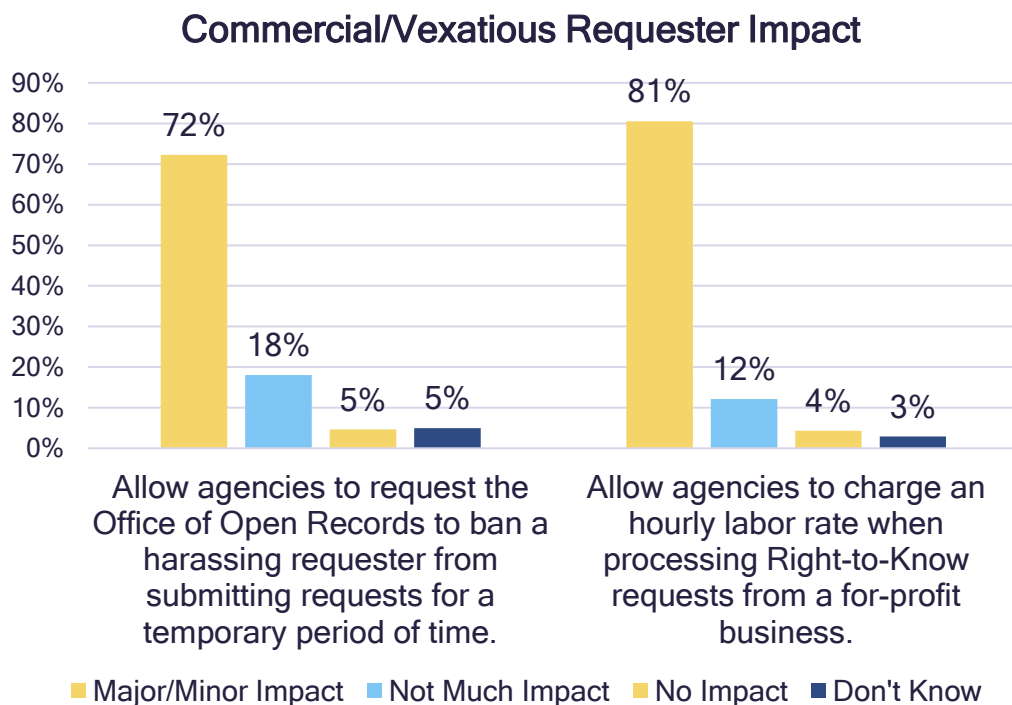
⁵ Other states limit requests to citizens who reside in their respective state. House Bill 767, recently passed in Louisiana, requires requestors to show proof of Louisiana residency to gain access to records from the governor’s office.

⁶ The full RTKL statute can be found here: https://www.openrecords.pa.gov/Documents/RTKL/PA_Right-To-Know_Law.pdf?pdf=20220418

⁷ New Jersey and Illinois both have specific laws pertaining to commercial FOIA/RTKL requests. New Jersey law allows agencies to take 14 business days to respond to commercial requests and permits charging up to twice the

be calculated to the hourly wage of the lowest-wage employee who would be capable of fulfilling the request.

AOROs from across the Commonwealth believe that both proposed reforms to the RTKL would have a positive impact on their agency. Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) say that regulating vexatious requesters will make an impact; even more (81 percent) say the same for charging commercial requesters labor fees.



Some AOROs have given specific examples of how one requester can delay the work of an entire agency:

- Two AOROs reported that one requester made up a sizeable portion of all requests; this was cited by Philadelphia County (35 percent from one requester) and Montgomery County (25 percent from one requester).
- One AORO from Northampton County mentioned the negative financial implications one repeat requester could have on an agency: “In 2023, our agency spent over \$60,000 in fees managing a serial requestor. This continues into 2024.”
- A Schuylkill County AORO shared that “there has to be a reasonable limit on the number of RTK requests that one person can submit at the same time. For example, we received 41 requests in 1 day from the same person.”

Others express great frustration regarding how much time they spend helping for-profit entities gain free information.

“I must report the taxes every month to an agency from Florida. All for profit agencies need to be eliminated.” Perry County

*“The RTK Law has been weaponized by for-profit requesters, and I think the agency should be permitted to charge such individuals accordingly.”
Montour County⁸*

In open-ended questions outlined in the survey, several AOROs proposed alternative changes to the law which they believe would help their agency. Some of the most frequently desired and proposed changes include:

(1) Limiting requesters to residents of Pennsylvania or respective municipalities and school districts.⁹

- A *Dauphin County* AORO made the following statement: *“Eliminate out of state requests - [I’m] not sure why we use PA taxpayer resources to acquiesce out of state residents.”*
- An AORO from *Chester County* shared similar sentiments: *“We also see a lot of requests from outside of the US, but without requiring the requestor to provide an address, we are not able to enforce requirements that the requestor is a legal resident of the US.”*

(2) Prohibiting anonymous requesters.¹⁰

- A frequent complaint regarding anonymous requests is echoed by a *Union County* AORO: *“Requesters should not be allowed to submit anonymously through third-party vendors.”*

⁸ Some agencies believe that a fee requirement alone would deter the volume of commercial requests.

⁹ Several agencies have mentioned the idea of adding a “Proof of Identification” section on the RTKR form where the requester would need to provide some sort of identifying information.

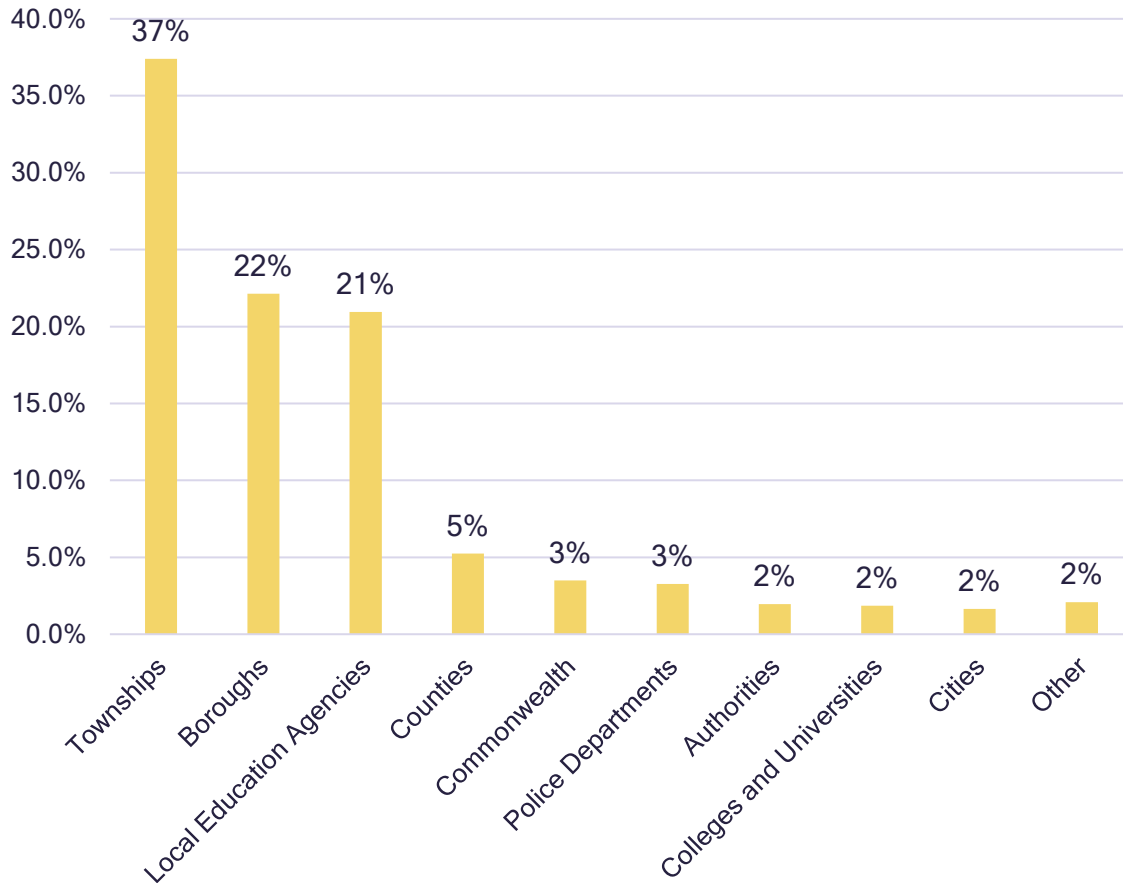
¹⁰ Currently, agencies have the autonomy and discretion to decide whether to respond to anonymous requests. The OOR strongly encourages agencies to post their policies regarding anonymous requests on agency websites.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research and drafting of this report was spearheaded by the OOR's two summer interns of 2024, Ethan Lown and Kaitlyn Ponessa.

APPENDIX A

Survey Respondents by Agency Type



In addition to the survey, the OOR conducted 30 in-depth interviews with AOROs who completed the survey and indicated an interest in discussing their answers. Below is the breakdown of the agency-type for those AORO's who were interviewed.

Authority (2)

- Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority and Lank Bank
- SEPA-COG Joint Rail Authority

Boroughs (1)

- Millerstown Borough

Cities (1)

- Lancaster City

Commonwealth Agencies (2)

- Pennsylvania Department of Health
- Pennsylvania State Ethics Commission

Counties and Row Offices (3)

- Butler County
- Cumberland County District Attorney's Office
- Mifflin County

Local Education Agencies (9)

- Bethlehem Area Vocational Technical School
- Big Beaver Falls School District
- Central Bucks School District
- Central York School District
- Loyalsock Township School District
- North Pocono School District
- Northgate School District

- Spring Cove School District
- Turkeyfoot Valley School District

PA State System of Higher Education (3)

- Indiana University of Pennsylvania
- Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
- West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Police Departments (1)

- Locust Township Police Department

Public Libraries (1)

- Scranton Public Library

Townships (7)

- Cheltenham Township
- Cumru Township
- Haycock Township
- Morris Township
- Stewardstown Township
- Tyrone Township
- Upper Merion Township

APPENDIX B

Q1. Which of the following best describes your agency?

| <u>Answer Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|--|------------------|
| Township | 37.4% |
| School District | 19.2% |
| Police Department | 3.3% |
| PA State System University (PASSHE) | 1.0% |
| Other | 2.1% |
| Intermediate Unit | 1.0% |
| District Attorney's Office | 0.6% |
| County Row Office | 0.1% |
| County Commissioners / County Government | 4.5% |
| Community College | 1.0% |
| Commonwealth (State) Agency | 3.5% |
| City | 1.6% |
| Charter School | 0.7% |
| Borough | 22.1% |
| Authority | 2.0% |
| Total | 100% |

Q2. In which county is your agency headquartered?

| <u>Answer Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Adams | 1.9% |
| Allegheny | 7.3% |
| Armstrong | 1.1% |
| Beaver | 1.5% |
| Bedford | 1.0% |
| Berks | 2.3% |
| Blair | 2.1% |
| Bradford | 0.8% |
| Bucks | 3.6% |
| Butler | 2.4% |
| Cambria | 1.0% |
| Cameron | 0.3% |
| Carbon | 1.2% |
| Centre | 1.7% |
| Chester | 3.4% |
| Clarion | 0.4% |
| Clearfield | 1.7% |
| Clinton | 0.7% |
| Columbia | 0.6% |
| Crawford | 1.2% |
| Cumberland | 2.4% |
| Dauphin | 4.9% |

| | |
|----------------|-------------|
| Delaware | 2.1% |
| Elk | 0.7% |
| Erie | 2.2% |
| Fayette | 0.7% |
| Forest | 0.3% |
| Franklin | 1.1% |
| Fulton | 0.4% |
| Greene | 1.2% |
| Huntingdon | 0.9% |
| Indiana | 0.9% |
| Jefferson | 1.0% |
| Juniata | 0.2% |
| Lackawanna | 1.5% |
| Lancaster | 4.0% |
| Lawrence | 0.4% |
| Lebanon | 0.9% |
| Lehigh | 2.4% |
| Luzerne | 2.5% |
| Lycoming | 1.7% |
| McKean | 0.8% |
| Mercer | 2.0% |
| Mifflin | 0.4% |
| Monroe | 1.7% |
| Montgomery | 4.4% |
| Montour | 0.1% |
| Northampton | 1.6% |
| Northumberland | 0.6% |
| Perry | 1.2% |
| Philadelphia | 0.9% |
| Pike | 0.6% |
| Potter | 0.7% |
| Schuylkill | 1.6% |
| Snyder | 0.9% |
| Somerset | 1.5% |
| Sullivan | 0.3% |
| Susquehanna | 0.4% |
| Tioga | 0.9% |
| Union | 1.1% |
| Venango | 1.1% |
| Warren | 0.8% |
| Washington | 1.0% |
| Wayne | 0.8% |
| Westmoreland | 2.8% |
| Wyoming | 0.9% |
| York | 2.6% |
| Total | 100% |

Q3. What's the name of your agency?

See Appendix C.

Q4. Now, I am going to ask you two questions about RTKL requests in the calendar year 2023. Based on records or to the best of your knowledge, please select how many Right-to-Know requests your agency received in calendar year 2023. If you don't know the exact number, that's okay - just give your best guess.

| <u>Answer Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 0 | 4% |
| 1-5 | 16% |
| 6-20 | 36% |
| 21-40 | 18% |
| More than 40 | 25% |
| Not sure | 2% |
| Total | 100% |

Q5. Based on records or to the best of your knowledge, please select how many of your agency's Right-to-Know responses were APPEALED to the Office of Open Records in the calendar year 2023. If you don't know the exact number, that's okay - just give your best guess.

| <u>Answer Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 0 | 67% |
| 1-5 | 26% |
| 6-20 | 3% |
| More than 20 | 0% |
| More than 40 | 0% |
| Not Sure | 4% |
| Total | 100% |

Q6. In an average work week, about how many hours does your agency spend responding to Right-to-Know requests?

| <u>Answer Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 0-1 | 48% |
| 2-5 | 32% |
| 6-10 | 11% |
| 11-20 | 4% |
| 21-40 | 2% |
| More than 40 | 1% |
| Not sure | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

Q7. In the last year, how often did you invoke a 30-day extension on Right-to-Know requests?

| <u>Answer</u> | |
|------------------|------------------|
| <u>Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
| Never | 28. % |
| On Some Requests | 49% |
| On Most Requests | 21% |
| Not sure | 2% |
| Total | 100% |

Q8. In the last year, how often did your agency consult an attorney when responding to Right-to-Know requests?

| <u>Answer</u> | |
|------------------|------------------|
| <u>Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
| Never | 23% |
| On Some Requests | 54% |
| On Most Requests | 22 % |
| Not sure | 1% |
| Total | 100% |

Q9. Which category of requester do you think submits the most Right-to-Know Law requests to your agency?

| <u>Answer Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| For-Profit Business | 42% |
| Citizen | 25% |
| Other | 14% |
| Not Sure | 13% |
| Reporter | 3% |
| Attorney | 3% |
| Inmate | 1% |
| Total | 100% |

Q10. Next, you'll see some proposed changes to the Right-to-Know Law. For each, please rate how much of an impact each change would make to your agency.

Allow agencies to request the Office of Open Records to ban a harassing requester from submitting requests for a temporary period of time.

| <u>Answer Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Major Impact/Minor Helpful | 72% |
| Not Much of an Impact | 18% |
| No Impact at All | 5% |
| Don't know | 5% |
| Total | 100% |

Allow agencies to charge an hourly labor rate when processing Right-to-Know requests from a for-profit business.

| <u>Answer Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Major Impact/Minor Helpful | 81% |
| Not Much of an Impact | 12% |
| No Impact at All | 4% |
| Don't know | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

Q11. Any changes to the Right-to-Know Law NOT mentioned that you'd like to see?

See Appendix D.

Q12. Finally, we are hoping to have brief, ten-minute one-on-one conversations with open records officers to ask some additional questions. If you don't mind being contacted to schedule such a conversation, please let us know the best way to reach you.

| <u>Answer Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Answered | 63% |
| Skipped | 37% |
| Total | 100% |

APPENDIX C

Q3. What's the name of your agency?

21st Century Cyber Charter School
A.W. Beattie Career Center
Abington Heights School District
Adams County
Adams Township
Albert Gallatin Area School District
Alburtis
Allegheny County Conservation District
Allegheny County District Attorney's Office
Allegheny County Sheriff's Office
Allegheny County Open Records
Allegheny County Treasurer's Office
Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Allegheny Township
Allegheny Township
Allegheny Township
Allegheny Valley School District
Allentown Parking Authority
Alsace Township
Altoona Area School District
Annville-Cleona School District
Apollo-Ridge School District
Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8
Archbald Borough
Athens Area School District
Auburn Borough
Avoca Borough
Avon Grove School District
Avonmore Borough
Bald Eagle Area School District
Baldwin Borough
Bangor Area School District
Beale Township
Bear Creek Community Charter School
Bear Creek Township
Beaver Area School District
Beavertown Borough
Beccaria Township
Bedford Area School District
Bedford County
Bedford Township Supervisors
Bell Acres Borough
Belle Vernon Area School District

Bellefonte Borough
Bellwood-Antis School District
Bendersville Borough
Benner Township
Benton Borough
Berks County District Attorney's Office
Berks County Intermediate Unit
Berlin Brothersvalley School District
Bernville Borough
Bethel
Bethel Park Municipal Authority
Bethel Park School District
Bethel Township
Bethlehem Area School District
Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School
Big Beaver Falls Area School District
Biglerville Borough
Blair County Conservation District
Blair County District Attorney's Office
Blair Township
Blakely Borough
Blossburg Borough
Boggs Township
Bolivar Borough
Bonneauville Borough
Borough of Akron
Borough of Avalon
Borough of Baden
Borough of Bath
Borough of Beaver
Borough of Bellwood
Borough of Berlin
Borough of Brownsville
Borough of Carlisle
Borough of Carnegie
Borough of Castle Shannon
Borough of Columbia
Borough of Coopersburg
Borough of Coplay
Borough of Coudersport
Borough of Denver
Borough of Dormont
Borough of East Greenville
Borough of Edgeworth
Borough of Elizabeth
Borough of Ellsworth
Borough of Ephrata

Borough of Ernest
Borough of Etna
Borough of Franklin Park
Borough of Greensboro
Borough of Hanover
Borough of Hollidaysburg
Borough of Jersey Shore
Borough of Lititz
Borough of Mechanicsville
Borough of Millvale
Borough of Mount Joy
Borough of Mount Pleasant
Borough of New Berlin
Borough of Newtown
Borough of Oakmont
Borough of Orwigsburg
Borough of Paint
Borough of Pen Argyl
Borough of Pitcairn
Borough of Plum
Borough of Port Matilda
Borough of Portland
Borough of Red Hill
Borough of Reynoldsville
Borough of Riegelsville
Borough of Rosslyn Farms
Borough of Royalton
Borough of Sewickley
Borough of Slatington
Borough of Somerset
Borough of State College
Borough of Strasburg
Borough of Sugarcreek
Borough of Tipton
Borough of West Middlesex
Borough of White Oak
Braddock Hills
Bradford County Commissioners
Bradford Township
Bradford Woods
Brady's Bend Township
Braintrim Township
Brecknock Township
Briar Creek Township
Bridgeville Borough Police Department
Bristol Borough

Bristol Borough School District
Bristol Township
Bristol Township School District
Brockway Borough
Brookfield Township
Brookville Area School District
Brothersvalley Township
Brown Township
Bucks County Commissioners and Administration
Bucks County Technical High School
Buffalo Township
Burnside Township
Burnside Township
Butler County
Butler County Airport Authority
Caln Township
Caln Township Police Department
Camp Hill Borough
Canaan Township
Canonsburg Borough
Canton Borough
Carbon Conservation District
Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit
Carlisle Area School District
Carmichaels Borough
Cascade Township
Castanea Township
Catharine Township
Cecil Township
Center for Rural Pennsylvania
Center Township
Centerville Borough
Central Bucks School District
Central Greene School District
Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology
Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit
Central Susquehanna Regional 911
Central York School District
Centre County District Attorney's Office
Centre County Government
Centre Township
Chadds Ford
Chadds Ford Sewer Authority
Chalfont Borough
Chambersburg Area School District
Chanceford Township

Chapman Borough
Chartiers Township
Cheltenham Township
Cheltenham Township Police Department
Cherry Township
Chest Township
Chest Township
Chester County
Chicora Borough
Churchill Borough
City of Allentown
City of Altoona
City of Butler
City of Chester
City of Connellsville
City of Erie School District
City of Lancaster
City of Nanticoke
City of New Castle
City of Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services
City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health
City of Pottsville
City of Sharon
City of Warren
City of Williamsport
Clay Township
Clearfield County Career and Technology Center
Clifton
Clymer Township
Coal Township
Coaldale Borough
Coatesville Area School District
Cocalico School District
Cochranton Borough
Codorus Township
Cogan House Township
Colerain Township
Collier Township
Colonial Intermediate Unit 20
Colonial Regional Police Department
Colonial School District
Columbia County
Commissioners Office
Commonwealth Charter Academy Charter School
Commonwealth University Bloomsburg
Community College of Beaver County

Concord Township
Connellsville Township
Connoquenessing Township
Conoy Township
Conrad Weiser Area School District
Conyngham Borough
Cooke Township
Coolbaugh Township
Cooper Township
Cooper Township
Cooperstown Borough
Corry Area School District
County Government
County of Blair
County of Cameron
County of Carbon
County of Clarion
County of Elk
County of Elk
County of Indiana
County of Lebanon - Commissioners
County of Lehigh
County of Union
County of Venango
Cranberry Township
Cranberry Township
Cranesville Borough
Crescent Township
Cromwell Township
Cumberland County District Attorney's Office
Cumru Township
Curwensville Area School District
Cussewago Township
Daisytown Borough
Daniel Boone Area School District
Darlington Township
Dauphin Borough
Dawson Borough
Deer Creek Township
Deer Lakes School District
Delaware County Community College
Delaware County District Attorney's Office
Delaware Valley School District
Department of Corrections
Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs
Department of Education
Department of Environmental Protection

Department of Human Services
Department of the Auditor General
Dept of Banking and Securities
Derry Borough
District Township
District Township, Berks County
Donegal Borough
Donegal School District
Dorrance
Dover Area School District
Dover Borough
Doylestown Township
Driftwood
Driftwood Borough
Drumore Township
Dunmore School District
Durham Township
Eagles Mere Borough
East Berlin Borough
East Buffalo Township
East Butler Borough
East Caln Township
East Cocalico
East Dunkard Water Authority
East Earl Township
East Fairfield Township
East Hanover Township
East Hempfield Township
East Marlborough Township
East McKeesport Borough
East Mead Township
East Norriton Township
East Penn School District
East Pennsboro Township
East Pikeland Township
East Stroudsburg Area School District
East Stroudsburg Area School District
East Stroudsburg Borough
East Stroudsburg University
East Wheatfield Township
East Whiteland
Eastern Regional Mon Valley Police Department
Eau Claire Borough
Edgmont Township
Elk Township
Elk Township

Elmhurst Township
Ephrata Area School District
Everett Borough
Exeter Township
Fairfield Borough
Fairfield Township
Fairfield Township
Falls Township
Fannett-Metal School District
Fawn Township
Fawn Township
Fayette County
Felton Borough
Ferndale Area School District
Findley Township
Forbes Road Career & Technology Center
Forbes Road School District
Ford City Borough
Forest Area School District
Forest City Borough
Forest City Regional School District
Forest County
Fort LeBoeuf School District
Forty Fort Borough
Franklin County Career and Technology Center
Franklin County Pennsylvania Government
Franklin Township
Franklin Township
Franklin Township
Freedom Township
Freeport Area School District
Fulton County Center for Career and Technology
Gaines Township
Germany Township
Gettysburg Area School District
Girard Township
Glen Rock Borough
Goldsboro Borough
Graham Township
Grampian Borough
Greater Johnstown School District
Greene Township
Greene Township
Greene Township
Greene Township Board of Supervisors
Greenwood Township

Grove City Area School District
Gulich Township
HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College
Halfmoon Township
Halifax Township
Hamilton Township
Hamilton Township
Hamiltonban Township
Hampden Township
Hampton Township School District
Hanover Area School District
Hanover Township Lehigh County
Harford Township
Harrison Township
Hartleton Borough
Hastings Borough
Haverford Township
Haycock Township
Hazleton Area School District
Hector Township
Hempfield School District
Hempfield Township
Herrick Township
Hickory Township
Highland Township Board
Hilltown Township Police Department
Honesdale Borough
Honey Brook Township
Hopewell Area School District
Hopewell Township
Hopewell Township
Horton Township
Hughesville Borough
Hummelstown Borough Police Department
Huntingdon Area School District
Hyndman Borough
Indiana County Technology Center
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Industry Borough
Irvona Borough
Jackson Township
Jackson Township
Jamestown Area School District
Jefferson County
Jefferson Hills
Jefferson Township

Jefferson Township
Jenkintown
Jim Thorpe Area School District
Johnsonburg Borough
Jones Township
Jonestown Borough
Juniata Township
Juniata Township
Juniata Valley School District
Karns City Area School District
Kelly Township Supervisors
Keystone Central School District
Kidder Township
Kingston Township
Kiski Area School District
Kiskiminetas
Knox Township
Koppel Borough
Kulpmont Borough
Kutztown University
Labor and Industry
Lackawanna County Commissioners
Lackawanna Trail School District
Lakeview School District
Lancaster County Conservation District
Lancaster Township
Langhorne Borough
Langhorne Manor Borough
Lansford Borough
Laporte Borough
Lawrence County Conservation District
Lawrence Park Township
Lebanon County Commissioners
LeBoeuf Township
Legislative Data Processing Center
Lehigh Carbon Community College
Lehigh Township
Lehigh Township
Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Lehighon Borough
Lehman Township
Leidy Township
Letterkenny Township
Lewisburg
Lewisburg Area School District
Liberty Borough

Liberty Township
Ligonier Borough
Ligonier Township
Limerick Township
Limestone Township
Little Britain Township
Littlestown Area School District
Liverpool Borough
Local Government Commission
Locust Township Police Department
Lower Allen Township
Lower Dauphin School District
Lower Gwynedd
Lower Macungie Township
Lower Merion School District
Lower Moreland Township School District
Lower Nazareth Township
Lower Pottsgrove Township
Lower Pottsgrove Township Police
Lower Providence Township
Lower Salford Township
Lower Windsor Township
Lower Windsor Township Police Department
Loyalsock Township School District
Lurgan Township
Luzerne Conservation District
Luzerne County Community College
Lycoming County Commissioner's Office
Lykens Borough
Lynn Township
Madison Borough
Madison Township
Mahaffey Borough
Mahanoy Area School District
Managing Director's Office
Manchester Borough
Manheim Township
Mann Township
Manor Borough
Mansfield Borough
Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School
Marklesburg Borough
Marlborough Township
Martic Township
Mastery Charter Schools
McCalmont Township

McGuffey School District
McKean Borough
McKean Township
McKeesport Housing Authority
McNett Township
Mercer County Career Center
Mercer Township
Middle Paxton Township
Middle Smithfield Township
Middlecreek Township
Middlesex Township
Middletown Area School District
Mifflin County
Mifflin County Academy of Science and Technology
Mifflin County Solid Waste Authority
Mifflin Township
Milford Borough
Milford Township
Millbourne Borough
Millcreek Township Police Department
Millcreek Township School District
Millerstown Borough
Millersville Borough
Millersville University
Moniteau School District
Monroe Borough
Monroe Career and Technical Institute
Monroe County Open Records Office
Monroe Township
Montessori Regional Charter School
Montgomery County
Montgomery County Community College
Montgomery Township
Montgomery Township
Montoursville Area School District
Morris Township
Moshannon Valley School District
Mount Jewett Borough
Mount Joy Township
Mount Pleasant Township
Mount Union Area School District
Mt. Lebanon School District
Muhlenberg Township Police
Municipal Authority Township of South Fayette
Municipality of Bethel Park
Municipality of Monroeville

Municipality of Mt Lebanon
Narberth Borough
Nazareth Borough Municipal Authority
Neshannock Township
New Brighton Area School District
New Sewickley Township
Newburg Borough
Newport Borough
Newtown Township Police Department
Nicholson Borough
Nippenose Township
North Buffalo Township
North Clarion County School District
North East Borough
North East School District
North Lebanon Township
North Manheim Township
North Middleton Township/North Middleton Township Police Department
North Newton Township
North Penn School District
North Pocono School District
North Union Township
North Versailles Township
North Wales Borough
North Whitehall Township
North Woodbury Township
Northampton Community College
Northampton Township Police Department
Northern York County School District
Northgate School District
Norwin School District
Noxen Township
Noyes Township
Oakland Township
Office of Administration (OA)
Office of the County Solicitor
Ohio Township
Oil City Area School District
Oil Creek Township, Crawford County
Old Forge School District
Oley Valley School District
Oliver Township
Oregon Township
Otter Creek Township
Otto-Eldred School District
Oxford Township

Oxford Township
Pa Cyber Charter School
PA Department of Banking and Securities
PA Environmental Hearing Board
PA Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA)
PA Historical & Museum Commission
PA Human Relations Commission
PA Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST)
PA Public Utility Commission
Packer Township
Palisades School District
Palmyra Area School District
Panther Valley School District
Paradise Township
PA's State System of Higher Education
Paxtang Borough
Penn Manor School District
Penn Township
Penn Township
Penn Township
Penn Township
Penn Township Board of Supervisors
Penn Township Police Department
Penn Township
Penndel Borough
Pennridge School District
Penns Manor Area School District
Pennsbury School District
Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing
Pennsylvania Department of Aging
Pennsylvania Department of Aging
Pennsylvania Department of Health
Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
Pennsylvania Game Commission
Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board
Pennsylvania Milk Board
Pennsylvania State Ethics Commission
Pennsylvania Treasury Department
Pequea Township
Perry
Perry County
Perry Township
Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development
Philadelphia Parking Authority
Philadelphia Regional Port Authority ("PhilaPort")
Phoenixville Borough

Pine Creek Township
Pine Grove Area
Pine Township
Pittsburgh School District
Pleasant Hills Borough
Pleasant Valley School District
Pleasantville Borough
Plum Borough School District
Plumstead Township Police Department
Plymouth Township
Pocono Mountain Regional Police Department
Pocono Mountain School District
Pocono Township Police
Port Allegany Borough
Potter County Commissioners
Pottstown School District
Pottsville Area School District
Price Township
Pringle Borough
Punxsutawney Area
Purchase Line School District
Quaker Valley School District
Quaker Valley School District
Quincy Township
Radnor Township
Rapho Township
Reading Area Community College
Red Lion Area School District
Rice Township
Richhill Township, Greene County
Richland School District
Richland Township
Richland Township Municipal Authority of Allegheny County
Richland Township Police Department
Richlandtown Borough
Richmond Township
Ridgway Township
Ridley School District
Robeson Township
Rockland Township
Rockwood Area School District
Rockwood Borough
Rome Township
Rose Tree Media School District
Ross Township
Ross Township Police Department

Rostraver Township
Rye Township
Sadsbury Township
Salem Township
Salem Township
Salisbury Elk Lick School District
Salisbury Township
Salisbury Township
Salisbury Township School District
Schlow Centre Region Library
School District of Haverford Township
School District of Jenkintown
Schuylkill Township Police Department
Schwenksville Borough
Scott Township Sewer and Water Authority
Scranton Public Library
Scranton School District
SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority
Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit 9
Seneca Valley School District
Sexual Offenders Assessment Board
Shaler Township
Shamokin Coal Township Joint Sewer Authority
Shamokin Dam Borough
Sharon City School District
Sharpsville Area School District
Shippensburg Township
Shippensburg University of PA
Shirley Township
Shoemakersville Borough
Shohola Township
Shrewsbury Township
Silver Spring Township
Slate Belt Regional Police Department
Slippery Rock University
Smithfield Township
Snow Shoe Borough
Snyder County
Snyder County Sheriff's Office
Solebury Township
Somerset Area School District
Somerset CTC
Souderton Borough Municipal Office
South Allegheny School District
South Annville Township
South Beaver Township Police Department

South Coventry Township
South Eastern School District
South Huntingdon Township
South Middleton School District
South Park School District
South Park Township
South Pymatuning Township
South Western School District
South Whitehall
South Williamsport
South Woodbury Township
Southeastern Greene School District
Southern Fulton School District
Southern York County School District
Southmoreland School District
Southwest Greensburg Borough
Spring Brook Township
Spring City Borough
Spring Cove School District
Spring Garden Township
Springfield
Springfield Township
Springfield Township
St. Clair
St. Thomas Township
State College Police Department
State Employees' Retirement System
Steelton-Highspire School District
Sterling Township
Stewardson Township
Stonycreek Township, Cambria County
Sto-Rox School District
Straban Township
Strasburg Borough Police Department
Stroudsburg Area School District
Sugar Grove Borough
Sugarcreek Township
Sullivan County School District
Summit Hill Borough
Summit Township
Summit Township
Summit Township
SUN Area Technical Institute
Swatara Township
Swoyersville Borough
Telford Borough Police Department

Terry Township
The Borough of Clark
The Bradford Area School District
The Hempfield Area School District
Thornbury Township
Thornbury Township
Thornbury Township Delaware County
Tidioute Borough
Tionesta Borough
Titusville Area School District
Towamencin Township
Tower City Borough
Township of Abington
Township of Aleppo
Township of Ferguson
Township of Lower Merion
Township of Pine
Township of South Strabane
Township of Upper St. Clair
Transportation
Tredyffrin Township
Tredyffrin Township PD
Triumph Township
Tunkhannock Area School District
Tunkhannock Borough
Tunnelhill Borough
Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District
Tuscarora Township
Tuscarora Township
Tyrone Area School District
Tyrone Township
Tyrone Township
Union City Area School District
Union County Conservation District
Union Township
Union Township
Union Township
Union Township
Unionville-Chadds Ford School District
Upper Adams School District
Upper Allen Township
Upper Allen Township Police Department
Upper Bucks County Technical School
Upper Darby Township
Upper Gwynedd Township
Upper Merion Township

Upper Milford Township
Upper Moreland Township School District
Upper Moreland-Hatboro Joint Sewer Authority
Upper Nazareth Township
Upper Perkiomen School District
Upper Pottsgrove Township
Upper Providence Township
Upper Salford Township
Upper Saucon Township
Utica Borough
Uwchlan Township
Valley Township
Venango Conservation District
Venango Technology Center
Venango Township
Vision Academy Charter School
Walker Township
Warren County Commissioners
Warrington Township
Warriors Mark Township
Warwick School District
Warwick Township
Warwick Township
Washington Township
Washington Township
Washington Township
Waterford Borough
Watts Township
Wattsburg Area School District
Wattsburg Borough
Wayne County
Wayne Township
Wayne Township
Wayne Township
Waynesburg Borough
Weatherly Area School District
West Bethlehem Township
West Branch Area School District
West Brandywine Township
West Brandywine Twp Police
West Chester University
West Cocalico Township
West Deer Township
West Donegal Township
West Earl Township
West Franklin Township

West Grove Borough
West Hazleton Borough
West Keating Township
West Mead Township
West Nantmeal Township
West Penn Township
West Salem Township
West Vincente Township
West Whiteland Police Department
West Whiteland Township
West Whiteland Township
Western Wayne School District
Westfall Township
Westfield Borough
Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority and Land Bank
Westmoreland Intermediate Unit 7
Westtown Township
Whitpain
Wilkes Barre Area School District
Williams Valley School District
Willistown Township
Wilson School District
Wind Gap Borough
Windber Area School District
Windber Borough
Womelsdorf Borough
Woodbury Borough
Woodbury Township
Woodward Township
Worth Township
Worthington Borough
Wright Township
Wyalusing Borough
Wyoming Borough
Wyoming County Courthouse
Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority
Wysox Township
Yardley Borough
York City School District
York Suburban
York Township
Yough School District
Youngsville Borough
Youngwood Borough

APPENDIX D

Q11. Any changes to the Right-to-Know Law NOT mentioned that you'd like to see?

| <u>Answer Choices</u> | <u>Responses</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Answered | 38% |
| Skipped | 62% |
| Total | 100% |

- I would like to see a prohibition on requests from for-profit business located outside the state of PA.

- I would like to be able to charge for the legal costs incurred to review, redact, and draft responses to RTK requests (Last year we incurred \$25,000 in legal expenses responding to 2 RTK requests - a terrible waste of scarce taxpayers resources).

- Strengthen ability to deny harassing requests (We have had people use RTK requests to harass employees involved in family litigation)

- increase fees for providing surveillance camera footage

- formally ban anonymous requests

- hourly rates for for profit businesses

• Allow agencies to have a longer initial response period (e.g. increase from five business days to ten business days).

• Allow an agency to take additional extensions beyond the initial 30-day extension in certain situations, with attestations if needed (e.g. records custodian not available; large number of responsive records that require review and redaction).

• Provide funding for AORO/Deputy AORO positions based on average number of requests received by an agency per year.

• A section or subsection could be added to give Commonwealth Court the ability to order 3rd party direct-interest participants to produce records, physically in its possession, because of litigation.

1) Allow longer extensions for requests requiring review of a substantial amount of records (hundreds to thousands of pages). 2) Allow agencies to charge an hourly labor rate for record reviews that require solicitor review or reviews that take longer than x number of hours. 3) Attorneys are also using the RTKL to request records that should have been requested during discovery during litigation. We have received a number of these types of requests, which have totaled hundreds of hours of review time between staff and our solicitor's office, with no labor charges required. This should not be allowed.

1. Mimic other states' RTKLs, which allows for actual cost reimbursement for ALL RTKRs. We understand the intent of Pennsylvania's RTKL, but there is an INSANE cost to taxpayers because of administrative time and legal reviews. The past two months, for example -- I started keeping track because it's gotten so bad -- we paid \$1,300 for one attorney's legal review, and over \$2,000 this past month for our solicitor and engineer's time ALONE (not including administrative time). Last month was from for-profit business, and this month was for vindictive resident requests.

2. Make RTKRs a SECOND step to information requests, with informal requests being the first step. It is much easier, more expedient, and much less expensive to give people information informally. When the RTKL gets invoked, it becomes a much different game.

3RD PARTY SUBMISSION OF REQUESTS AND NOT KNOWING WHO HIRED THE 3RD PARTY, ETC.

A better understanding of what is allowable and not allowable.

A complete ban on requests from for-profit organizations. We were never meant to be their business lead provider. Ability to request documentation proving identity and/or rationale.

A decision on anonymous requests. Right-to-know law has reached the point where lawyers are getting rich based on what is asked for in the request. Most Right-to-Know officers are not lawyers or versed in law; thus, lawyers have to be consulted, and depending on the magnitude of the request, tens of thousands of dollars are spent on lawyer fees.

A limit to the number of items requested with one request or per month by the same requester.

A longer agency response time on appeals would be extremely helpful. The standard 5-7 business days creates unnecessary pressure, especially when the AORO has other duties within the agency.

A way to manage requests that are gathering information for their data bases for profit.

Ability to charge Commercial Businesses using the RTK request for marketing purposes or ban them altogether. Not sure that was the purpose for the RTK requests.

Ability to deny a request for a record that is already posted on the Township website (e.g. monthly permits issued).

Additional funding via Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the form of grants awarded to public agencies to improve their management of RTK process and/or increasing staffing capacity or offsetting costs related to salaries of existing RTK Attorneys and RTK Unit staff.

Adjust fees for inflation from last adoption.

Agencies performing background environmental studies asking us to determine relevant information from the file.

Businesses asking for permit data for profit.

Allow agencies to charge an hourly labor rate when processing Right-to-Know requests from a for-profit business, and so-called "public service" agencies requesting municipal data such as employee names, salary position address, etc..

Allow agencies to charge an hourly rate when processing RTK requests for organizations just collecting municipal data.

Allow agencies to charge for labor for all requestors and for attorney fees in certain instances.

Reexamine time frames given by the OOR for information requested on appeals.

Support AOROs regarding requests that are overly broad, for example, requests for 25 years worth of information or worded as "any and all" or other information that jeopardizes the safety of our employees.

Allow agencies to charge hourly rates for requests from non-residents/non-property owners.

Allow agencies to request the Office of Open Records to ban a harassing requester from submitting requests for a temporary period of time.- Major Impact (I was not able to select it on the above)

Allow agencies to request the Office of Open Records to ban Right-to-Know requests from a for-profit business who scrape data and sell access to it.

allow more communication on appeals (we have this issue for 2024)

Allowing a fee to be charged when citizens submit multiple RTK requests within a certain period of time.

Allowing agencies to charge an hourly rate to all non-resident requests may be helpful. There have been requests from companies claiming to be a not for profit agency outside our community making large requests and then they do not send for the copies or pick them up when notified there is a fee because the files are not emailed.

Allowing organizations & agencies to not respond to anonymous requestors.

Allowing the temporary ban would have a major impact, but form would not allow me to provide the same response twice. It would be helpful to have a limitation on the number of requests from the same requestor/business within a period of time.

An expanded time frame to respond, as we, and I'm sure many agencies, don't have the resources to have a dedicated open records officer that doesn't have there main job to do.

Annual submission limits per requester

Anonymous Requests should not be allowed for all agencies, whether they have adopted a policy or not.

Anonymous requests. They should be declined immediately.

Any law that would prevent data harvesting.

Anything you can to stop local people from using it as a form of harassment to government officials and employees that they simply don't like.

Are we allowed to bill the attorney fee we get charged, to the requestor?

Areas of concern: AI-generated requests, more time to respond to appeals

As it pertains to the charge of an hourly rate for requests from a for-profit business, there would be an easy work around from the requester as they could use a personal email account making difficult for agencies to prove the requester is a for-profit business.

Assessing fines or charges for harassing requesters

Ban anonymous requestors who use services such as FOIA Buddy.

Ban for profit requests.

Ban frivolous requests that are just a waste of time. I spend so much time responding to requests that are ridiculous and should not be allowed under the RTK Law. For instance, I have two local citizens who are related and have an issue with each other and one of them is sending me requests every couple months to search all emails that mention his name because the relative is constantly emailing county employees/officials talking trash about him. It's a huge waste of time and should not be allowed.

Ban out-of-state requestors (which are the majority of corporate requesters).

Ban RTK electronic clearing houses that mask the individual requestor's identity and contact information. We have no way of knowing if the requests are legitimately from a U.S. resident or coming from another country. See FOIA Buddy info below from LinkedIn:

Welcome to FOIA Buddy, your ultimate resource for navigating the complexities of obtaining public information from government agencies. FOIA Buddy is designed to serve as the electronic "Swiss Army knife" for citizens and professionals alike, seeking transparency and accessibility in government data.

Our platform simplifies the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request process, ensuring you can easily access the information you need from any level of government. With our intuitive interface and robust support system, FOIA Buddy empowers you to unlock the gates of information seamlessly. Join us in our journey to make government data accessible to all, reinforcing our belief that information should be by the people, for the people.

Ban RTK requests from for profit companies.

Ban vexatious requestors for a specific timeframe. Charge for-profit requests for time taken to respond.

Bank account identifying information should be expressly added to the list of exemptions of data we do not have to provide.

Banning the Law from being used to obtain information to be sold to telemarketing agencies. Answering a request should not lead to a bombardment of solicitation calls.

Bar out of state entities from submitting RTK requests.

Bar requestors that threaten physical harm. Bar requestors that utilize the process for election ammunition.

Being allowed to publicly post a list of requests, requestors and staff time taken up in fulfilling requests so the taxpayers can see the burden (both financially and in staff time) this puts on the entity and for the often frivolous reasons.

Block third party agencies from doing data mining for a client. For example the bulk request that came from Frank Curry of FOIABuddy.

Both above. #10 would only allow me to give feedback on one-not both.

Bulk requests-we had one entity make 8 requests in one day. It was a for profit group.

Business seeking information on their competitors should not be permitted.

Businesses should not be able to file a RTK to gain business under the RTK laws. That is not what the RTK is for.

Change in fees that are allowed to be charged

Change the time to respond from 5 days to 10 days for all request. Change the time limit to respond to an appeal to 30 days. Appeals Officers are given time to issue a ruling but the ORO are only given limited time to respond. Allow agencies to charge an hourly labor rate to all requestors after a certain number of request in a week/month/year.

Changed to in state requests only. Stop allowing out of state companies to request information.

Charge more for copies than just .25 cents a page. The price of paper has gone up.

Charging an hourly rate would be helpful

Charging for labor, limit to how many requests from an individual at a time, longer response time

Charging for requests. We are a small District and when we get like 10-20 requests at a time from FOIA buddy, it is so challenging and disrupts normal work.

Citizen's harrassment of supervisors employees for their own benefit in the community.

Come up with a workable solution to for-profit requests.

Simplify the appeal process to better understand that most of us are not Attorneys and don't treat appeals like a court hearing.

Commercial Requesters should have to disclose it is a commercial request. The length of response time should be extended to 60 days automatically. An hourly rate should be charges (the survey did not work for this item above). Second, the law should recognize an organization's need to confirm phishing attempts. An exception for denial of a good faith identification of a request as a phishing/cybersecurity should be added.

Computer/AI generated requests allowed to be denied

Data companies fishing for information to pass/sell on to vendors, they cause a lot of wasted time pulling invoices and information. Public inquiry is fine but not for profit as it costs our tax payers.

Definitely regulating for-profit businesses

Deny anonymous requestors who go through a third party.

DO NOT ALLOW ANONYMOUS REQUESTS

Due to limited staffing / workforce in most Municipalities a 30 business day response time would be more reasonable for all requests. RTK Officer's perform a multiple of tasks aside

from this duty and wear many "hats". This service is one of many that needs to be factored into the workday / workload.

Each time I selected major impact for each of the above-referenced questions, the prior checkmark disappeared. Please be advised that both would be major impacts upon our Township as we have a small administrative staff.

Eliminate out of state requests - not sure why we use PA taxpayer resources to acquiesce out of state residents.

Eliminate the anonymous requester. eg. Foia Buddy

Eliminating the charge of 25 cents per page when the citizen in most cases is only receiving 1 or 2 pages.

Ensure that there is proof of an individual requestor and not a BOT considering the ever-growing AI being utilized in various ways.

Even though things are mostly emailed, it does take time to gather all the information and put the email together. We should be compensated for that time.

Extend the 5 day response period to 10 days. This would cut down on the amount of 30 day extensions that are needed.

Extend the extension time to 45 days

Extend the initial response letter sent to the requester from 5 business days to 10 business days

Extend the response time requirement from 5 business days to 10 business days.

Find a way to write legislation so the process to gather records isn't so time intensive; can we limit the documents that are considered "public records." find a way to require the requester to have a legitimate reason for the request

For fairness and equality: townships should be able to prepare an invoice with a fee schedule advising requestor how much it would cost for the documents to be recovered and pay for a redaction fee when required

For profit business should not be able to use RTKL to obtain information. They sell our data and open us up to more cyber attacks (email addresses) and reduce our competitive bid positions (bid information and current payments for service) by selling the data.

For profit businesses requests have increased - from salary information for individual employees to approved fence permits. All of these requests are for personal gain which is not the purpose of the right to know law. Thank you for asking.

For profit businesses should not be able to submit requests period! They also tend to hire outsiders to do their work for them, so that tends to be an issue. While I may not receive many requests, them being able to interrupt our day, to assist them in their business without a charge should change. I do feel that only residents / businesses within the community should be able to request most of this information. It is after all, their tax dollars that provide the cash flow for the day to day operations.

For profit inquiries must have a different set of standards than a resident asking for Info. also, inquiries should only be addressed that are from constituents. Why should our residents have to foot the bill for some commercial operations inquiries that benefit their business.

For profit should be limited to the number of requests permitted. They should not be allowed to mass send the same message repeatedly and to every county.

For question #10, I am unable to respond to the second part with the same response (aka bubble); it is only allowing a different bubble to be chosen.

From a smaller organization standpoint, my opinion is all RTK requests should bear an hourly labor rate due to the fact that responding to the request pulls me from my primary job/duties (and because of the following). If only "for-profit business" are charged a fee, the "for-profit business" will most likely use a work-around to file the request as a citizen to avoid the fee. For example, if XYZ Company submits a request to CPI and we provide them an estimated labor cost of \$100, they may withdraw their request and file as a citizen, or possibly pay a citizen or not-for-profit company to have the same request filed and responded to free of labor charges.

Fully support charging for-profit business for RTK requests. It is frustrating to spend staff time responding to requests when the requester is just trying to solicit our business or solicit in our township.

Funding assistance for personnel to process all of the RTK submissions. This has grown significantly and, as a small agency, we are dedicating a lot of resources to stay in compliance.

Further limiting the scope of the requests, as many are burdensome and many are part of shotgun blasts to all counties.

FYI, it would not allow me to select the same answer for question #10, but both would be a "major impact" (in a positive way) for Salisbury Township. Additionally, ANY modifications that would 'ease' RTK regulations. We have a small staff (like many small municipalities), and it can be onerous to answer the requests received.

General online filings that are anonymous

Give agencies 10 business days to respond to a request.

Greater latitude in denying requests that could yield information used in cybersecurity/phishing/impersonation attacks - i.e. names and phone numbers of IT staff in a specific building.

HARASSMENT REQUESTS ON GOINGN AND REQUEST FROM OUT OF STATE LOOKING FOR INFORMATION

Have to think about this question.

I also believe a larger rate should be charged for citizens, not just for profit businesses. There are many individuals who purposely abuse the system.

I am new to this position so my history and knowledge are extremely limited.

I am new to this role and to local government. We have a particular group of residents that files repeated right to know requests that are broad in nature and require extended amounts of research, and then they want to ask questions about specific items. Our solicitor has made it clear that the intent of right to know is not to answer questions related to the information provided. One of the requestors in the group has been in litigation with the township for at least 8 years and seems to use the right to know law as part of the games that they play with the township. In my opinion they are taking advantage of the law, and putting undue hardship on the township staff, professional service providers and the township in the cost of legal expenses related to frequent right to know requests.

I believe that all right to know requests should be charged an hourly fee, along with document charges.

I believe there should be a fee if we have to involve our solicitor on the request. The Township spends a lot of time and money on redactions and solicitor costs associated with RTK.

I believe we should be able to charge an hourly rate on all requests that are coming from anyone except private citizens.

I do not feel it is appropriate that for profit agencies can use us to send junk mail to our residents who are building new homes.

I do not think people should be able to make anonymous requests or requests on behalf of another party.

I don't think that for profit businesses should be able to sell our information when they are asking for digital copies which we aren't allowed to charge for.

I must report the taxes every month to an agency from Florida. All for profit agencies need to be eliminated.

I received numerous RTK requests for financial/employment information from Florida; I'd like to see these requests banned unless they come from PA. (Smart Procure & Open The Books)

I think county's (or other agencies) should be permitted to charge a fee for requests.

I wish there was a way to limit a request from out of state individuals or agencies unless the information impacts a legal issue.

I would like a longer time to respond to complicated requests.

I would like to see a limit on the number of right-to-know requests a requester can send to one agency at a time and in a specific year. We have had one requester send us 7 requests at one

time. We have had another requester ask for the same information three times which we provided three times. The law should allow us to deny or state that the information has been provided on this date so this request has been partially fulfilled and the new information is provided instead of having to redo the whole request again three times.

I would like to see fees revised to allow for charging for staff time so taxpayer dollars don't have to go towards staff wages for reviewing, obtaining and responding to RTK requests.

I would like to see for profit commercial data centers excluded from the RTK law.

I would like to see providing information from a database clarified. As more and more information is maintained in various types of databases, information that an individual is scattered digitally. There is no document and the law is really not specific. There may be case law, ??? vs. PA Game Commission, but still open for interpretation.

I would prefer to eliminate for-profit businesses from making requests; especially if they're in another State.

I'd love to see one unified set of regulations regarding the release of information by law enforcement agencies in the Commonwealth. We have RTKL, CVRA, CHRIA, and CJIS all providing guidance. Some of it is in conflict. Then we get civil subpoenas that are not signed by a judge... It's a mess and confusing for both our staff and the public.

If a RTK appeal is decided in favor of the agency, legal fees expended by the agency should be paid in whole or part by the party that appealed.

If an individual has to pay a third party company to submit - that should not be allowed - that company is making money on assisting a citizen in their legal right to information. That to me is predatory as they fuel vulnerable people and charge them for the ask for the information. Also - real estate agencies who are purposely skipping the request for NO-Lien Letters for sale of property. They are getting paid to ensure property is free of delinquencies and are simply asking for this info in a "general" Right to Know - "please provide a list of all unpaid real estate taxes for the year XXXX",

I'm not sure if this is current law or not, however it is District policy. This is to require requestors to use the standard RTK form to file an official request rather than by generic email.

In 2024 (so far) the NSD has received/completed 72 Right to Know requests. The number of hours spent on these requests equates to a part-time salaried position. If RTK laws remain the same, specific funding should be provided to organizations/school districts/etc who receive X number (on average) of requests annually to help pay for a portion of (or a part-time) a position. Another suggestion would be to allow X number of "free" RTK per year and charge after that number is reached (although this isn't a perfect solution, and I'm happy to elaborate via a phone conversation). Additional topics to consider with RTK is not only the time spent by the RTK officer, but also the other departments involved in the request (technology, business office, etc). Requesting email records is a MAJOR issue and a HUGE time suck for organizations - something needs to change here.

In addition to allowing to charge hourly rates, the ability to charge legal fees for those request that are appealed to OOR. Our legal fees and representation to cover RTK have doubled in expenses compared to budget.

In cases where the requestor wants electronic records, the township is not charging a per page fee even though the conversion process requires me to copy each page for scanning. I'd like to see the per page fee apply to electronic files as well since they require the same amount of work and copying as paper files.

In e-portal it is unclear if the citizen has access to e-portal to view the agency's request on an extension to a submission.

Increase the copy fee to cover labor

Increase the current 5 day response time to 10 days for requests

Increase the deadline to respond to ten days.

Increase the response date from 5 days to 10 days for original requests. This would help very small agencies that only have one or two employees. Especially when someone is out of the office on vacation or illness.

Increase the response time from five (5) business days to ten (10) business days

Indicate why they are asking for it, so many times we have to provide an excessive amount of details especially relates to permits, I feel like businesses are using the info to solicit.

Instead of a 5 day window, should be 10. Then a 30 day extension.

Should be able to increase the copying fee to 50 cents per page.

Should not be able to be made anonymously. Should have to include a valid photo ID with request.

It is frustrating when non profit and profit companies can take hours of our time which equals tax payer money and the law requires we sit and provide them records that exists but have to be pulled individually. Especially when they are requesting this to silicate business or sell the information. A great example is a request to get a copy of all open building permits to include the cost of the project and the contractor information.

It would be helpful if agencies could deny a request if a requestor has an outstanding due balance with another agency. It would require a database (that the OOR could host?), but may help with for-profit companies that blanket requests dozens of townships at once

It would be helpful if the law explicitly stated that anonymous requests are not permitted.

It would be helpful if the requestor would just ask me for the information they want. Often I could verbally tell them and it would satisfy their request. A RTKL request forces me to take additional time to provide a paper copy. Just ask. If I can legally tell you I will.

It would be helpful if there was some type of limit to the requests, ex: one recent requester sent around 12 requests at the same time, and then a week later 12 more for another bldg., and some requests - they want to go back so many years.

It would be nice if we could charge for staff time for collecting documents when the documents requested reach a certain threshold - say over 100 pages. It would also be nice if we could charge for requests that come in from private companies being paid for their work - like law firms, engineering firms and contractors looking to grow their business lists. If a solicitor review is required based on certain requests that come in that look more like subpoenas that RTK requests, it would be nice if we could bill for solicitor time.

It would be nice to have the law updated to include all case law exemptions.

It would not allow me to mark both as "major impact" and they would both be major impacts. We have been harassed continuously in the past by past employees that were fired and it is stressful, intimidating, and time consuming.

It wouldn't let me click two answers up above. I think that we should be able to charge the requester the cost of our wages to answer the Right to Know request. That should include the Solicitor's fee that the Township has to pay as well. Then maybe the request wouldn't be so frequent...

Item 10 above would not let me also select 'Allowing agencies to charge an hourly labor rate when processing RTKRs from a for-profit business'.

RTKRs for solicitation purposes shouldn't be authorized.

Flexibility in handling a harassing requestor is a must. In 2023, our municipality spent over \$60,000 in fees managing a serial requestor. This continues into 2024.

OOR should play less of an activist role and follow existing rules and case precedence. OOR has created tremendous legal headaches for our Borough concerning a partial grant of

reconsideration and taking a dangerous position on disclosing purely factual information within otherwise attorney-client privileged communications. Bath is currently challenging this issue in the Northampton County Court of Common Pleas.

There needs to be some type of standing order on the use of generative artificial intelligence in the use of drafting a RTKR. Bath has experienced a Requestor using artificial intelligence to craft a RTKR in multiple sub-parts.

Just a note. @023 was an unusually light year for requests. Being a small boro, we don't have many requests, more likely 10 a year, but they are all for-profit businesses.

law that prohibits and/or penalizes solicitors trying to gain information for developing a sales list or competitors information.

Length of time. We are getting more and more requests (multiple at one time) seeking emails. It takes a great deal of time and energy to complete a search and then go through and redact all of the necessary information for responsive emails. We are needing more and more assistance from our Attorney who uses a third-party company to do the redacting. Even with that, we are often scrambling at the last minute to complete the redactions in a timely manner.

Limit FIOA Buddy

limit number of requests per year - as of late, I've received upwards of 10 or more from the same requestor

Limit of 1 (or 2 max.) parcels per RTK Request Form. It gets overwhelming when too many properties are asked about in the same RTK Request.

Limit requests to legitimate/credentialed media and residents of the municipality only. Prohibit for-profit requests altogether.

Limit RTK requests to taxpayers/residents of the municipality. Why is an agency in FL allowed to make annual requests for vendor information? Not the purpose of RTK.

Limit the number of requests by the same person

limit the number of requests per for-profit business per calendar year

Limit the number of Right-to-Know requests submitted for the same reason. Perhaps limit can be based on number of request rejections.

Limit the volume/ number of requests

Limitations on requests for vendor/accounts payable lists

Limiting the number of request forms allowed to be submitted by a single requester at one time. Limiting the number of items allowed to be requested on a single request form.

Longer extension of time to respond (ie 60 days) for requesters with an address outside of the District (non-residents of the District).

Longer extension period: not enough staff or staff time to deal with the RTK Requests that come that need to be coordinated with solicitor, third parties, etc.

Many of the requests my agency receives are from the same few individuals who believe they are being persecuted. No matter what baseless request they make (such as, I want a copy of the court order that says the county detectives are allowed to be rearrange the furniture in my house so my blind mother trips over it; or, why is the DA allowed to rape my daughter/neighbor/grandmother; or, where is the court order that allowed the DA to tell my car dealer to put a tracking device on my car's antenna so Homeland Security can follow me, etc.), I am still required to treat the request as valid and I am required to respond. Even if the requestors do not follow the proper procedures under the RTKL, they file appeals and I am required to submit a response to the OOR. My understanding is that I may only deny a request as being harassing if the requestor makes repeated requests for the same record. Even though these are baseless and disruptive requests my agency receives, I must still treat them as though they are valid requests. This requirement that the agency must respond to deranged crackpots' utterly ridiculous requests lends some kind of credence to the individuals' nonsensical beliefs and encourages them to continue to abuse the RTKL process. I would like

to see some changes to the RTKL that limit requests that are baseless, nonsensical, irrational, and harassing, even if they do not represent repeated requests for the same record. Also, I spend hours or days on most of the requests I receive. Requiring a 5-day response time is unreasonable in most cases, and giving the requestor the power to decline an extension beyond 30 days is also unreasonable in many instances, given the hours needed to go through volumes of papers, files, conferring with staff members, making off-site visits, etc. that go into responding to RTKL requests. Most of my agency's requests do not come from for-profit businesses, so an ability to charge for an hourly rate would not make much difference.

Many Right to Know Requests we receive are for profit businesses gathering information for their use and profit. These requests are obvious and we should be allowed to deal with them differently than a citizen's request.

Maybe an expansion of what is considered a harassing requester - broaden from someone sending the same request more than once (this is infrequent in my experience), to try to cover residents who are trying to exploit the Agency for personal gain. I am in full favor of the RTKL's role in transparency, but wonder if there's a nuance that can be set to preserve the rights of the public while setting boundaries for what may be a normal amount of requests. Most of my hours are spent answering requests (100+ over 3 years) from one resident for records that the Requester uses or tries to use against his neighbors and/or the Township in court, or to his own personal advantage in any way (e.g. free property survey, free tree removal, etc.).

More clear laws on anonymous requests or computer/mass generated requests such as FOIA Buddy. Such requests are not the intent of the law.

More fees regardless of response to recover time

More limitations on what requesters can ask for to protect the security of the school district

More response time allotted to agencies

More specific of what exactly they are asking for and why they want the information

More time to respond to initial requests, (7-10 business days instead of 5)

More time to respond to out of state requests. Higher fees for business requests and even higher fees for out of state requests.

My sense is that some individuals are using RTKL to gain a competitive market advantage when seeking contracts with public agencies. In some cases, they're trying to force public agencies to use their services and products, when it is not in the best interest of that agency. Additionally, others are weaponizing RTKL to seek records that present a view of a public agency that is without context or perspective. Others are making blanket requests to any and all agencies associated with a given governing body, without respect for that agency's potential for holding any records relevant to the requestor. As the ORO, the net effect of these behaviors causes a major distraction from the intent of RTKL and a distraction from my main responsibilities.

Narrow breadth of e-mail search obligation

need the anonymous request denied as a law and not just the individual policies.

Need to be allowed to charge an hourly rate to research and response to Right to Know Request. It can be very time consuming .

No 3rd party requesters. All requests must come directly from the person or agency submitting the request form.

No anonymous submissions, name and address must be disclosed.

No more anonymous requests

No opinion

No out of state businesses or organizations should be allowed to submit right to know requests.

No RTK requests should be submitted by a third party vendor.

No, although a lot of the time very small municipalities, don't really have all the operation and maintenance of a larger municipality and can't always answer all the questions the best

Non-residents requesting data when they don't even know where the district is located

Not accept any Out of State requests submitted to local government entities, especially from for-profit agencies

Not allowing anonymous requests through third party companies.

Not allowing for-profit businesses to have the right to have copies of records/information to benefit their business or to increase sales.

Not being able to request personnel records. It feels like an attempt to steal the employees identities with the amount of information they request. Also, limiting the companies/agencies who are requesting the same information each month to a certain number of times per year.

Not certain if it would be applicable or fall under the authority of the RTKL, but perhaps an exemption process for Municipal Officials in Home Rule Government for access to certain records, or a clarification on whether they need to file a RTK request where a citizen normally would be required to required to?

not for solicitation purposes

Not obligating the agency to provide electronic records other than .pdf.

Not they are covered

Not to allow repeated requests

Not to allow for profit businesses to make requests. That is not what the RTKL should be used for.

Not to permit anonymous requests

nuisance requests

Number 10 won't let me choose the same response for both proposed changes.

Requests sent through email should be viewable before downloading. FOIA Buddy is our only requester that doesn't let you preview the document before downloading. The request comes from a do not reply email address, and they don't give you any contact information in the email itself, so I can't even contact them without downloading an attachment from a suspicious looking email. The current regulations leave us wide open to cyber attacks through RTKL requests.

Of the 189 RTK requests we received in 2023, 20% were submitted by one inmate, Charles Hoyer. His requests consist of personnel information of county employees, some going back 40 years. His 38 requests, in 2023, were for the personnel information of 227 current and former county employees. This volume of requests are often repetitive and very burdensome to our agency. While we understand that the reason for the request isn't pertinent, we do know that Mr. Hoyer has used the information to create dossiers that he has mailed to county employees who previously investigated and prosecuted his crimes. On it's face, that appears to be intimidation and harassment. This burden has been going on for 15 years, resulting in, literally, hundreds of requests. The law should be amended to tighten language of repetitive and intended use of the records.

Only citizens of Pennsylvania permitted to make requests.

Only PA Citizens with a legal PA name and address should be able to request information. SO many requests come from agencies outside the state who ask for information that is cumbersome to a small Borough staff that takes away from our other duties. Mostly their requests are for information that is for them to solicit for their business such as Solar panel permits issued, construction permits issued, who is our IT Company, etc.

Only Pennsylvania requesters - and out of state not eligible. One third of the PUC's requesters are from out of state. Considering the PUC is funded by PA utilities and ratepayers, they are paying for out of state requests which are usually from think tanks and other research for profit companies.

Only people living in our District can make RTK requests.

Stop these automated to every district from FOIA Buddy or like services

Tax Services use in order to avoid tax cert fees that seems wrong

Only residents of PA should be allowed to request.

Out of State Business Opportunists should be limited in some capacity. Some try to utilize RTK for municipal lien requests that have fees applied to them.

Out of state commercial requests should be banned.

Out of state requests from for profit organizations or political organizations should not be subject to RTK.

Perhaps add to The Right to Know Request Form a question asking if they are a for-profit business, citizen, solicitor reporter etc. which would indicate and outline of the labor rate charge mentioned above.

Personal resumes and addresses for employees should not be allowed. I think people forget we have a job to do for our borough/township that answering right to know requests take up a lot of our time/energy.

Please stop the people who make the state WORSE by using RTKL. Pella Windows in particular. Jerks use the RTKL for the purposes of spam.

Possible limit on how many requests someone can put in for at once. FOIA for example- 6 different requests sent, all on the same day, asking for a lot of info that has to be researched.

Possibly charge not only the for-profit businesses but a citizen also for labor.

Proof of identification, drivers license.

Question 10 does not allow me to put "major impact" on both questions. I also have noticed an increase in requests aimed at an attempt to gather information by going around the proper channels for liens on properties. We had to add a something from our attorney to letters because of this.

Question 10 wouldn't allow me to choose "major impact" as my response for BOTH proposed changes to the RTKL, so please know that both my answers should be "major impact." As for additional changes in the RTKL I'd like to see these changes:

- Increase the mandated response time from five business days to either seven or ten business days. This would benefit smaller agency offices that are understaffed.
- Every month I get a RTK request from entities, including one from a union, for information that surely benefits them, so I hope union outfits will be clearly included in your definition of what constitutes a "for-profit business," so that unions would also be charged a labor rate for an ORO's time.
- I'd also like to see a limit on the number of requests that can be submitted from a single requester in a 24-hour period. On more than one occasion this year I got multiple RTK requests from FOIA Buddy (Frank Curry) on the same day that I received multiple requests from other separate requesters, which on one occasion resulted in ten RTK requests received on one day, but if there was a limit of one per-day, per-requester, it would have been only been a total of five received that day). In addition to being an ORO, I have many other job responsibilities, so I had to put a lot of other important, time-sensitive work on hold to fulfill the mandated 5-day response deadline for those ten RTK requests that all came in on one day, so a limit of perhaps one request per day, per requester in a 24-hour period would be helpful.
- Relating back to my first bullet point, I'd also like to see the RTKL changed so that agency's can definitely charge a labor rate to businesses (and unions!) from making requests to municipalities for permit logs and/or contractor lists, because we all know they use or sell these lists for marketing purposes and financial gain. I don't think they should be allowed to bother municipalities (especially small ones with limited staff) with these types of for-profit requests on the taxpayer's dime, they should have to pay a labor rate fee for this information which

ultimately benefits their bottom line.

- A requester should be required to use the Agency's Form for a request to that agency. That would cut down on the "rubber stamping" of forms submitted. Also FOIA Buddy has their own form they created and is it totally for their benefit in how it's laid out, plus they lock content so the agency can't even copy it (I like to copy the actual request wording paste it into my response letter and I couldn't even do that, I had to retype all of Frank Curry's request statements, which took up even more of my time.) If the requester was required to use each agency's own RTK request form, it would make things easier for the agency and would weed out some of the mass produced requests but not hinder any local residents seeking information from their own municipal agency. Right now it's a free for all that ties up a lot of my time, and a requester technically doesn't even need to fill out any forms.
- Instead of requiring a pre-payment only if the estimate for charges is over \$100 - give an estimate to the requester, and no matter what the estimated charge is, require payment upfront before the ORO even begins putting any more time into working on the response. Reason why: I've put together some responses that were in hard copy form (because that was the only format the record existed in) and let the requester know it was going to be around (for example) \$56 for the copies, and they agreed and told me to proceed. I made the copies and informed them that their documents were ready for pick-up only to have them never show up to retrieve them (they lived only a few blocks from our office and had come in person to make the request), resulting in no payment for all the paper & ink, and even though I can't currently charge for it, my time was also wasted.
- Someone else in my office has this suggestion: consider letting agencies decide what format they will provide their response in, regardless of the format that record currently exists in. Their thinking is that maybe if paying for hard copies and postage was the only option, more "nuisance" requesters would go away. (And if this isn't feasible, then definitely let agencies charge a labor rate for repeat "offenders" that request the same information every month.)

Problems I can foresee:

- 1) Any change to the wording of the RTKL that would be just vague enough where someone could find a loophole. If changes are going to be made to the RTKL, they have to be written so well that loopholes are non-existent, because problematic requesters will find any loopholes and they will exploit them.
- 2) Not defining things well enough in the changes made to the RTKL that could result in an ambiguous interpretation to that part of the law, basically rendering the change to the law useless. For example, giving a well-defined explanation/definition of "for-profit business" to specifically include the word "union." Maybe you either specify that or change the wording from "for-profit business" to "for-profit entity" (not really sure what exact word would be to prevent exploiting a statement or definition that is too vague/left open to interpretation.)
- 3) Small agencies, like in a borough with limited/restricted budgets, sometimes face high legal costs due to fulfilling RTK requests and this can really be a problem. Small municipalities have pre-set budgets that don't usually have a lot of wiggle room for added expenses. Legal counsel for RTK requests is sometimes unavoidable, and unfortunately, it is always expensive. This is definitely a real problem, but I'm not sure if there is a viable solution. Maybe in a perfect world the PA OOR would have a dedicated legal team for AOROs to use, but alas, for a myriad of reasons that will probably never come to fruition. So maybe just making some practical changes to the RTKL will result in fewer requests overall needing to be reviewed by counsel, thereby saving somebody (somewhere) some time and money.

Refusal to accept anonymous requests

Request for the same information multiple ways and multiple times.

Requester must identify themselves.

requester should be know (not bogus agency name)

Requesters should be required to provide some type of reason why they are requesting the information. Requests need to be very verbiage specific and not so broad. The costs that are incurred for IT personnel for word searching and attorney fee's continues to grow and there are no limits to the amount of information wanted by requesters.

Requesters should not be allowed to submit anonymously through thrid-party vendors

Requestor should be limited to residents. Media requests should only be for specific current item of discussion, no broad timeframe requests. Companies looking for work should not be able to submit requests

Requestors should not be allowed to request records; have the public entity spend time, money and resources sending those records; And then those requestors putting the documents behind pay walls for the public to pay for those records.

Requests must verify an actual person is making the request. Allow repeat requests for information already provided to be denied.

Requests should be required to be on the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records Standard Right-to-Know Law Request Form.

Require a physical address.

Require an explanation about why requester wants the information, especially in cases where crime victims are involved.

Limit requests to a finite number within a period of time (i.e. 2 requests within 30 days).

Require more specificity and shorter time frames. Those requests asking for a 'record' such as a contract are pretty quick. The issue is going through emails and trying to find the records. This is where the time and expense add up.

Require requester to be more specific. Blanket requests cost the Township immense amounts of time to complete.

require requestor to provide their name and contact info (NO ANONYMOUS REQUESTS)

Limit requestor's to residents or those with legal rationale to make requests.

Requiring the correct form to be submitted; requiring the name of the agency seeking information; requiring the requester to divulge the reason for the request; setting time frames allowed per each request (i.e. permitting 3 or 5-year period for each request) allowing quicker replies by reducing overly broad requests

Restrict anonymous RTKs

Restrict requestors from using the RTKL to circumvent already established process for acquiring information. For example, lien letter requests.

RTK request should always be a the correct form not just an email. If there is a question the requestor should respond.

RTK Should NOT be used for profit companies looking for solicitation addresses in our Borough.

RTK should not be used for solicitation purposes.

Separate timeline for requests for zoning/code information from for-profit businesses.

Should apply to residents and taxpayers. Get too many for-profit requests that are too lazy or cheap to gather their own data, so we have to do the work for them for cents on the dollar.

Since PHRC cases are confidential, it would be beneficial to our complainants if the appeals were not made a public record. We may not confirm nor deny the filing of a complaint of discrimination to anyone who is not a party to the case.

Specific subject parameters need to be refined and required. This year I had a requester ask for all RTK requests and their responsive records over the course of a year. For an agency with approximately 75-85 records that is a huge burden and disruptive to municipal operations, regardless of 30-day extension or longer.

There should be some quantified submission limit for a requester withing a 90 days or a year.
 Stoop the for profit business requesting the same information each month and wasting my time
 Stop allowing requests for marketing and or personal benefit.

Stop broad request for purchasing information that is then sold to other organizations. Stop
 contact information requests for students and employees.

Stop businesses from asking for the same information every quarter.

Stop businesses from requesting information so that they can use it to create business, i.e.
 building permits for addresses.

Tax Services and Realtor Services & Employee information services. These aspects definitely
 inhibit my time in the office.

That is the RTK Officer that must prove documents don't exist, even if it is explained where the
 requestor must go for the information.

that the person themselves would put in the RTK request instead of an outside company.

The 5 day response. If a response is received when the RTK Officer is on vacation or out sick.

The above mentioned ideas would be welcomed. Additionally, with the rise of FOIA Buddy, we
 are seeing unpreceded amounts of requests with uncertainty to the legitimacy of the requester,
 with the group continuously threatening to send more.

The appeal process needs to be examined in depth. Often the RTK appeals come from Pro
 Se inmates no longer in county prison and this has to be paid for by the county taxpayers. The
 RTK law was not intended to replace the public defenders or private defenders. The use of
 RTKs is being abused not only by Pro Se inmates but other individuals attempting to subvert
 the judicial process. A majority of the repeat RTK customers we have border on harassment.

the current fee reimbursement are completely absurd considering the amount of time
 necessary to compile the documents, redact (when necessary) as well as the time preparing
 denials and/or affidavits.

In addition, I would like to see more consistency the the OOR officers accepting attestations
 versus insisting on sworn affidavits which is an additional time drain.

The definition of anonymous requests. Mandated that all requests contain physical address
 and phone number of requestor.

The frivolous requests that are specifically done to harass us are the biggest concern

The harassing citizens should be charged a fee for filing RTK requests. The borough has the
 same person filing one after another and we are a small borough and all PT employees. This
 same person has filed at least 17-20 in 2024.

The initial 5-Day response time extended.

The intent of the law is admirable. We all want transparency; however, the vast majority of
 requests are coming from two distinct groups.

1.) An unhappy community member that is unhappy about something (i.e. - Lost a lawsuit and
 is now endlessly sending requests for information - which all has to be reviewed by our
 lawyers. This is becoming very expensive.)

2.) Groups/Individuals blasting requests across the state.

In both cases, this has resulted in a tremendous amount of time, resources, and funding that is
 being pulled away from other priorities. Any changes to the law that would limit the amount of
 harassment and financial burden to districts would be most sincerely appreciated.

The listed changes are both needed

the need to put meeting changes or special meetings in a published paper, when we live in an
 area without a nightly paper it is hard, more of our residents use facebook or our website

The no fee law for electronic copies.

The RTK law, although well intended, has gotten out of control. Many commercial enterprises such as consultants, attorneys, political action groups have overwhelmed the system. It is apparent that they are using this data for beneficial commercial gain or to advance a political cause. An enhanced fee schedule should be available to offset costs. Limits on requests. I have absolutely no issue with providing information to those residents, or taxpayers who wish to have a transparent government - perfect. Responding to the high volume of requests, sometimes 3-4 at a time is a major distracts to office staff and our productivity (primarily me, the Chief Clerk, our Office Administrator, a Department Head, and often our Solicitor). I would be happy to follow-up with any person on proposed changes to this abused system. Change is long overdue. Thank you.

The survey would not allow me to select "Major impact" for both options in question 10., but that is our response.

There are so many redundant and harassing requests.

There has been a trend over the last few years of "weaponization" of the RTKL. Requesters who are upset with actions of neighbors sending multiple requests in, often asking for the same things repeatedly. Additionally, law firms sending requests to municipalities in which they may have litigation with. AOROs should not have to do discovery for law firms. It takes time away from other job duties. It would be helpful to have more support for AOROs against repeat requests and law firms. (Additionally, in question 10, it does not allow me to select "Major Impact" for both questions. I would like to confirm that these both would have a major impact on our agency.)

There has to be a reasonable limit on the number of RTK requests that one person can submit at the same time. For example, we received 41 requests in 1 day from the same person.

There needs to be a better procedure for nuisance requests and for requestors that just don't understand the information once it is given to them.

There should be at least a minimum charge of \$10 with every request. Discontinue For-profit businesses seeking information used for their marketing and sales. I do not think that is what RTK was created for.

They should have to state a reason for the request (even though they will lie), they should have to do more work.

Third Parties requesting information to have on hand in case someone would like to have it

This entire law has placed a burden on municipalities. The Commonwealth created a department but none of us have! It is all somewhat confusing. We as municipalities continue to struggle with the same staffing to keep up with these requests. It is out of control! I am sorry but I have work to complete while stopping continuously to respond to RTK requests. The ones that pushed for it rarely request anything. (newspaper association) It is mostly out of town people, prisoners, attorneys, businesses, groups that think they are saving the world by posting all of our info online. It is utterly ridiculous! Since this will most likely never go away - we should be able to charge for EVERYTHING FOR EVERY GROUP including emailed info. Reports should be for a fee - no matter what size. We should be charging non-profit businesses and organizations/groups as well. It will cut down on the number of requests. They act like we owe them something! They aren't even associated with our municipalities. They are requesting monthly reports - the same companies every month. We also need more time to respond. 5 days is sometimes not enough. Our departments struggle at times when they are short staffed. We should not have to ask for extensions by sending letters. Extend the initial response time. I feel that the Commonwealth created a monster. Sorry to be so harsh but I am only speaking the truth. The appeals process is a whole other rant!

This is a comment in response to item 10: While the for-profit requests annoy me, it wouldn't be worth my time and energy to charge them an hourly rate for providing the information they're requesting. It really doesn't take long to fulfill most of what we receive. For us a flat fee, adopted by Resolution, would be better. Even just a \$10 fee would be nice! That way we could require that payment accompany the request and be done with it.

This is a time consuming task that takes resources away from the school and costs tax payers money. The current process is broken.

This year, we have received an abundance of requested from FOIA Buddy, and there would be a bunch all at the same time. It just started to seem a little outlandish and unnecessary.

Those proposed changes would be impactful. Note, I am the AORO for this Township but I am the solicitor for at least 7 other public agencies. The RTK Law has been weaponized by for-profit requesters, and I think the agency should be permitted to charge such individuals accordingly.

Time frame of documents requested per request - limit to no more than 6 month time frame (or less)

timeframe for the first response could be more than 5 days

Timing of returning an answer, broadening exceptions

Update Fees, since not everything is electronic in a small Borough.

When a requester doesn't pick up \$80.00 worth of printed documents!! I wish we could get the \$ back.

Valid proof of identity, to know the right to know request is legitimate or not.

We are seeing an increasing amount of AI generated requests. We also see a lot of requests from outside of the US, but without requiring the requestor to provide an address, we are not able to enforce requirements that the requestor is a legal resident of the US. Could we change the law to require that requests are submitted by a specific person at a US mailing address?

We have a resident whose main goal is to disrupt the office with numerous RTK's for no reason but to disrupt. I would love to see where we can charge for admin time for all RTK's not just for-profit business which are not a problem in Yardley Borough.

We have recently received RTK requests that could be misused and cause harassment or fraud against police officers personally. There should be more protections for employees and personal information. Additionally, there should be strict penalties for harassing requesters and nuisances (more than just banning for a short time). They will just wait and continue after the ban is lifted.

We receive requests from the same requestors over and over again. There needs to be a way to address harassing requests being made by the same person or organization.

We should be able to charge even if we send through email.

We should be able to charge for our time on all requests. It is not fair for our tax payers to have to pay for someone wanting information. They already get taxed enough in PA

We think the definition of "harassing requester" should be defined in the RTKL so that agencies can make the determination themselves and the requester can appeal those determinations to the OOR.

We think the RTKL should allow agencies to charge for additional staffing or overtime required to fulfill a request.

The RTKL should be updated to allow an agency to deny a request as overly burdensome if fulfilling the request would shut down the operations of an agency.

The RTKL should limit anyone from requesting public records if that person's intent is to substantially interrupt government function.

When a RTK is denied they can't ask for the same item again

When receiving over 130 RTK requests a year, we rely on the Act to provide guidance. There are our following recommendations:

Clarifications to Anonymous Requesters (currently on in appeal cases).

Definitions on records regarding data reports within systems better worded (don't create a record but access to record is from a state system that county has access to; who is proper responder).

Election updates to reflect Election Code to their records.

Would like to control folks who are requesting information just to cause us grief.

Yes, please overhaul, revise, refine, and clarify the RTKL statute including the definitions to the point that (1) AORO can understand it without having to call the OOR, (2) if you do call the OOR, they can actually provide clear instructions other than "contact your solicitor" (that happens almost every time I call), and (3) the need to consult a solicitor is rare. Prime example: the use of the term "response". The common/dictionary definition differs than the RTKL Statue where "response" actually means to provide the responsive record(s) if available and not subject to exemption. Whereas, by true definition, if I said, "leave me alone, I don't have time for this" is in fact a "response".