

Wisconsin Department of Justice: Office of Open Government reports mid-year performance statistics

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MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today announced the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Open Government's (OOG) mid-year performance statistics for the first six months of 2019.

“At the Wisconsin Department of Justice we strive to be responsive and set best practices for government openness and transparency,” said Attorney General Kaul.

Completed Activities

Responded to 433 public records requests (an average of 72 per month);
Responded to 256 inquiries on its Public Records/Open Meetings Help Line (PROM);
Issued 59 letters providing guidance concerning open government;
Released two updated and comprehensive open government compliance guides (Wisconsin Public Records Compliance Guide and Wisconsin Open Meetings Compliance Guide), containing updated laws, cases, and Attorney General Opinions since early 2018; and
Provided seven trainings and participated in educational presentations to other governmental agencies and other outside groups on open government matters.

Response Times for Public Records Requests

According to the Wisconsin Public Records Law Compliance Guide, “DOJ policy is that ten working days is generally a reasonable time for responding to a simple [public records] request for a limited number of easily identifiable records.”

The office continues to increase the percentage of responses fulfilled within this ten-

working-day guideline. In addition, the office's average response times overall continue to decrease.

During the first half of 2019:

The office responded to approximately 78% of all public records requests within the 10-working-day guideline.

The office responded to 53% of all requests in 3 calendar days or less, and responded to 66% of all requests in 7 calendar days or less.

The average response time for all responses was 11 calendar days, which includes those that were broader in scope or required time-intensive review.

As illustrated in the charts below, the office continues to respond to a high volume of public records requests, responding to 433 public records requests in the first half of 2019, an increase of about 30% as compared to this time last year. At the same time, the office kept its average response time to 11 calendar days per request for the first half of 2019.

Continuing Efforts

In the first half of 2019, the office also increased the public's access to public records and will continue to do so by posting the following information on its website:

A snapshot of public records requests pending on Monday of each week;

The average monthly response time for public records requests;

Responses to citizen correspondence, posted quarterly;

Specific responses to public records requests that may be of particular public interest or may be the subject of multiple requests for the same records;

Records related to Officer-Involved Critical Incidents; and

"Ask the OOG" columns for frequently asked questions.

The office reports directly to the Office of the Attorney General. The office is headed by Assistant Attorney General Paul Ferguson, and is supported by Assistant Attorney General Sarah Larson, two paralegals, one program and policy analyst, and several other attorneys and DCI employees within DOJ who regularly interact with the office.

For more information, visit the office's website or contact the office at



608-267-2220.

<https://www.doj.state.wi.us/news-releases/office-open-government-reports-mid-year-performance-statistics>