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SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY
OVERSIGHT PROJECT

MEMO OF SUPPORT

[Intro 1235 of 2025 \(Brewer\)](#)

Requires NYC agencies to publicly report FOIL logs

June 25, 2025

TITLE OF BILL

A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to the creation of a centralized system for processing freedom of information law requests.

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

Our groups support this legislation because we believe it will help the public and government better understand how FOIL is working in New York City and what steps are necessary to improve it.

NYC's OpenRecords portal is arguably the best technology system for FOIL in the country. Despite this, some NYC agencies are notorious for failing to respond to requests in a timely manner. Reinvent Albany's report, [NYC Government Flouting Freedom of Information Law \(April 2025\)](#), found that 16% of NYC requests filed in

2024 were still open a year later. The Department of Corrections, for example, takes an average of *485 days* to respond to requests. Many agencies also do not publish records released via FOIL even though “release to one, release to all” was the intent of the developer when OpenRecords was launched in 2014.

This legislation will codify and expand the OpenRecords portal to help it better serve New Yorkers. It will require agencies to publish data about the status of requests—allowing New Yorkers to see which agencies are complying with the law—and also make “release to one, release to all” the law rather than a mere guideline. These changes will ensure that NYC government continues to be transparent and accountable to its biggest funders – the public. We urge the Council to pass the bill, and the Mayor to sign it.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS

Section 1 adds a new §3012 to Chapter 72 of the New York City Charter. Subsection a defines “agency” as NYC government agencies and “request” as FOIL requests.

Subsection b provides that the commissioner of the Department of Records and Information Services (DORIS) shall develop and maintain a portal on the agency’s website for processing FOIL requests. The portal shall provide, “in a machine readable and externally searchable format,” the following information for each FOIL request received:

1. A unique ID number for each request
2. A title related to the content for each request
3. Date request received
4. Date request acknowledged
5. Date of expected response
6. Number of extensions by the agency to date
7. Date of any determination made
8. Type of determination made (granted, denied, granted in part, etc.)
9. Exemptions cited (if applicable)
10. Whether there were responsive records (if applicable)
11. Date of filing for appeal
12. Status of appeal
13. Exemptions cited in response to appeal (if applicable)
14. Total dollar amount of fees collected from requestor
15. How many records produced (if any)
16. Whether request was subject to Article 78 proceeding, the result and judgment
17. Amount of attorney’s fees to be paid by the agency
18. Date of appeal of any judgment of Article 78 proceeding

19. Downloadable copy of records released for request in machine-readable format

Subsection c provides that the portal shall allow:

1. Agencies to receive/respond to requests using the portal
2. Agencies to upload digital files in open and machine-readable formats
3. Agencies and the public to track progress of requests
4. The public to file requests on the portal
5. Full-text search of the content of requests on the portal
6. Full-text search of records published on the portal
7. Access to electronic copies of all records published on the portal
8. Access to the data within the site through an application programming interface (API)
9. Any requestor to receive automated updates on the status of their request
10. Any person to access a directory that includes the name, title, and contact info for each agency's records access officer
11. Any person to access statistics on requests from the portal, disaggregated by agency, among other data.

Subsection d provides that the information in subsection b(1-18) shall be posted as soon as practicable, but not more than 10 business days of any determination regarding the release of records. Records from subsection b(19) shall be posted within 14 business days of being sent to the requestor.

Subsection f [sic] provides that each agency's website shall link to the portal.

Subsection g provides that agencies shall enter into the portal any request received outside the portal.

Subsection h provides that DORIS, in consultation with the Mayor's Office of Operations, shall develop performance guidelines related to the statistics in the portal, and shall hold a public hearing on those guidelines, formalizing them after considering the public's feedback.

Subsection i provides that at least every six months, DORIS shall deliver updates to agency FOIL officers on best practices for responding to FOIL requests.

Subsection j provides that within 90 days of the law's enactment, DORIS shall submit an implementation plan to the mayor and speaker of the city council.

Section 2 states that the bill takes effect a year after becoming law.