



June 15, 2026

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State

Re: Request to all NYS Executive Agencies for Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) logs

Dear Governor Hochul,

We are writing to inform you that a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request will be submitted to all New York State executive agencies seeking records of FOIL requests submitted or closed during calendar year 2025, including but not limited to those processed through the state's GovQA platform.

This request seeks standardized, agency-level data regarding the submission, processing, and disposition of FOIL requests, including key fields such as requester, subject of request, request dates, status, outcomes, and other fields maintained within GovQA or comparable systems. The purpose of this effort is to better understand the administration of FOIL across State government and to promote transparency of agency practices and response times.

Eighty-eight percent of state agencies (63 of 72) that submitted transparency plans to you [use the GovQA platform](#). GovQA enables agencies to easily create a public-facing searchable log of all records requests and documents provided to requestors, which would not only increase transparency but also could help cut down on duplicative requests. Other states and jurisdictions are already deploying GovQA to do just that. For example, [Oregon's Secretary of State](#), [California's Department of General Services](#), and the [City of Dallas](#) all publish requests received on their portals.

Because this request will be directed to all 72 executive agencies, most of which use the GovQA platform, we respectfully request that your office take steps to facilitate a coordinated, consistent, and timely response. In particular, centralized guidance could help ensure that agencies:

- Use the existing GovQA reporting tools the state is paying for in its \$650,000 a year contract with Granicus/GovQA to extract responsive data in a uniform format and make that data publicly available
- Avoid unnecessary delays or denials by making it clear that this request is not asking agencies to create a "new record"
- Apply FOIL standards consistently across agencies
- Respond in a timely fashion to this request for quintessentially public information.

In enacting the Freedom of Information Law, the Legislature declared that “a free society is maintained when government is responsive and responsible to the public,” and the “people's right to know the process of governmental decision-making and to review the documents and statistics leading to determinations is basic to our society” N.Y. Public Officers Law § 84. Facilitating timely and consistent agency responses to this request would ensure that agencies are living up to the legislative intent of FOIL, and demonstrate your administration’s commitment to government transparency.

Thank you for your consideration. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this request further with your staff. Please see attached the request that was sent to the Executive Chamber for its 2025 FOIL request log.

Sincerely,

Rachael Fauss
Senior Policy Advisor
Reinvent Albany

Heather E. Murray
Associate Director
Cornell Law School First Amendment Clinic
Managing Attorney, Local Journalism Project

Dear Records Access Officer,

Pursuant to the New York Freedom of Information Law (Public Officers Law, Article 6), we are requesting access to certain records maintained by your agency regarding Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests submitted to the agency and/or responded to through the GovQA software platform.

Specifically, we request a report or dataset (in electronic, machine-readable format such as CSV or Excel, if available) of all FOIL requests submitted to and/or processed (i.e., opened or closed) by your agency via GovQA for the period January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025 (i.e., a “log” of FOIL requests submitted to the agency, together with the agency’s responses).

For each FOIL request included in the FOIL log, we seek records sufficient to include:

- A unique FOIL identifier or tracking number assigned to each request;
- The name of the requester;
- The business or organizational affiliation of the requester, if available;
- The date the request was submitted;
- The text or substance of the request;
- Any available categorization fields (e.g., subject matter, request type);
- The date(s) of any acknowledgment(s);
- The date(s) of any response(s), including final determination;
- The current or final status of the request (e.g., pending, completed, denied, partially granted);
- The final disposition (granted, denied, partially granted, withdrawn, etc.);
- The exemptions cited for any denials or redactions; and
- Response time metrics, if tracked

If your agency does not use GovQA for FOIL request tracking, please construe this request as seeking the equivalent records from whatever system your agency uses to log, track, and manage FOIL requests during the specified period.

To the extent that the requested records are maintained in a database, we request that they be extracted or exported in the requested electronic format. Public Officers Law § 87(5)(a) provides that an agency shall provide records in the medium requested if it can reasonably do so. While § 89(3)(a) provides that an agency is not required to create a new record in response to a request, New York’s courts have recognized that retrieving or exporting existing electronic data into a different electronic format does not amount to creating a new record. See *Matter of Data Tree, LLC v. Romaine*, 9 N.Y.3d 454, 464–65 (2007) (rejecting the argument that providing electronically maintained records in the requested electronic format necessarily constitutes creation of a new record).

To facilitate this request, we ask that your agency generate an existing report within GovQA using its built-in reporting or request history functionality. [Granicus documentation](#) explains that GovQA maintains a “complete, defensible audit trail” of each request, including all actions, dates, communications, and status changes, and that agencies can generate on-demand,

scheduled, and custom reports using system fields such as request data, customer information, and status fields. Running such a report, or exporting request data using these existing reporting tools, constitutes retrieving data already maintained within the GovQA system and therefore does not require the creation of a new record.

Additionally, to the extent reflected in [New York State's contract with GovQA \(Granicus\)](#), data maintained in the system is owned by the State or the agency, and the platform must allow users to generate ad hoc reports from that data. This request seeks only the extraction of such agency-owned data using these existing reporting capabilities.

If portions of the requested records are exempt from disclosure, please provide all non-exempt portions and cite the specific statutory exemption(s) for any redactions.

We request a waiver of any applicable fees on the grounds that this request is made in the public interest and is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of government operations and transparency practices. If fees may exceed \$50, please inform me in advance.

Please provide the records electronically via email or the GovQA portal.

If you have any questions or require clarification, please feel free to contact us.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Rachael Fauss
Senior Policy Advisor
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