

2026 -- S 2484

LC003299

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO PUBLIC RECORDS -- ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS -- COST

Introduced By: Senators E Morgan, Rogers, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Paolino, Raptakis,
Appollonio, DiPalma, LaMountain, and Tikoian

Date Introduced: February 06, 2026

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 38-2-4 of the General Laws in Chapter 38-2 entitled "Access to Public
2 Records" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **38-2-4. Cost.**

4 (a) Subject to the provisions of § 38-2-3, a public body must allow copies to be made or
5 provide copies of public records. The cost per copied page of written documents provided to the
6 public shall not exceed fifteen cents (\$.15) per page for documents copyable on common business
7 or legal size paper. A public body may not charge more than the reasonable actual cost for providing
8 electronic records or retrieving records from storage where the public body is assessed a retrieval
9 fee.

10 (b) A reasonable charge may be made for the search or retrieval of documents. Hourly costs
11 for a search and retrieval shall not exceed fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per hour and no costs shall be
12 charged for the first hour of a search or retrieval. For the purposes of this subsection, multiple
13 requests from any person or entity to the same public body within a thirty (30) day time period shall
14 be considered one request.

15 (c) Copies of documents shall be provided and the search and retrieval of documents
16 accomplished within a reasonable time after a request. A public body upon request, shall provide
17 an estimate of the costs of a request for documents prior to providing copies.

18 (d) Upon request, the public body shall provide a detailed itemization of the costs charged
19 for search and retrieval.

1 (e) A court may reduce or waive the fees for costs charged for search or retrieval if it
2 determines that the information requested is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute
3 significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not
4 primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.

5 (f) The fees for costs charged for search, retrieval or copying shall be waived for members
6 of the general assembly who certify that they are acting in their official capacity and require the
7 copies for the discharge of their legislative duties.

8 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO PUBLIC RECORDS -- ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS -- COST

- 1 This act would provide that fees for costs charged for search, retrieval or copying of public
2 records shall be waived for members of the general assembly who certify that they are acting in
3 their official capacity.
4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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