



— 2026 —

State of Digital Government

Trends in Public Records Requests

A background image of two women in an office. One woman, with dark curly hair and glasses, wearing an orange top and white pants, is standing and looking at a smartphone. The other woman, with long brown hair and glasses, wearing a blue pinstriped blazer, is sitting at a desk with a laptop, smiling. The image is overlaid with semi-transparent circular graphics and text boxes.

▲ 60% of agencies report significant growth

▲ 11–50% increase in public records request volume

▲ 24% are currently using AI in their organizations

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Introduction

This report provides a comprehensive analysis of the prevailing trends, challenges, and opportunities within the public records request (PRR) landscape for government agencies in 2025. Based on recent survey data, our findings align with the **2025 Public Records Complexity Benchmark Report**, both indicating a significant and sustained increase in both the volume and complexity of public records requests. The majority of government survey respondents anticipate a continued rise in request volume, with many estimating growth between 11% and 50% over the last three years. This surge is compounded by the increasing complexity of requests, driven by the large quantity of responsive documents, large file sizes, and the prevalence of video and audio records.

Key challenges impacting agencies include meeting statutory deadlines, managing vexatious requests, and navigating staffing and budget shortages. Data security — particularly concerning data breaches and redaction challenges — remains a critical concern. Furthermore, avoiding litigation for non-compliance — specifically for failing to produce records on time or for improper redactions — is a high priority for most organizations.

The Impact of AI

Opportunities to transform records request management operations are emerging as the path forward — particularly as artificial intelligence (AI) changes the landscape of government work. While the adoption of AI is still in its early stages, with a minority of organizations currently using tools like Microsoft Copilot and ChatGPT, there is strong potential for AI to streamline critical tasks to help clerks and records managers reduce workload, improve speed, and mitigate risk. These tasks might include summarizing record requests, research, and managing various reports.

By embracing strategic technological solutions, government agencies can enhance efficiency, ensure compliance, and improve service delivery. **This report outlines these market dynamics and provides actionable recommendations for navigating the evolving public records environment.**

Definitions

To ensure a clear understanding of the topics discussed in this report, the following key terms are defined:



Public records request (PRR): A formal request made by an individual, journalist, or organization to a government agency for access to public information or records. These requests are governed by federal and state laws that mandate transparency and access to government documents, such as the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).



Request complexity: A measure of the difficulty and resources required to fulfill a public records request. Factors contributing to complexity include the volume of responsive documents, the need to process various file types (including large video and email files), the number of collaborators involved, and the necessity for multiple clarifications with the requester.



Legislation and litigation: This refers to the legal framework governing public records and the potential for lawsuits related to non-compliance. Legislation changes can introduce new requirements, such as those related to police reform or IT modernization. Litigation concerns often center on the failure to meet statutory deadlines for producing records or the improper application of exemptions and redactions.





Redaction: The process of obscuring or removing sensitive, confidential, and exempt information from a document or media file before it is released to the public. Proper redaction is critical for protecting privacy and complying with legal standards like HIPAA and CJIS, while improper redaction can lead to litigation and data breaches.



Artificial intelligence (AI): In the context of government operations, AI refers to technology capable of expediting data analysis to support the work being done by staff. This includes using programs like Microsoft Copilot or ChatGPT for tasks such as summarizing documents and requests, conducting research, creating agendas, and generating response drafts, with the goal of automating and streamlining administrative processes so staff has time for other important work.

METHODOLOGY

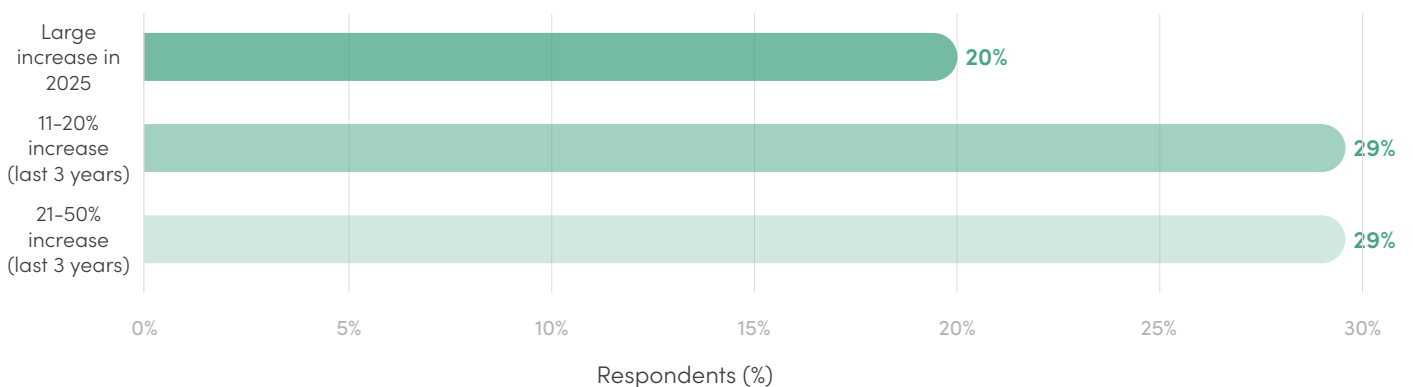
To develop the insights contained in this report, Granicus collaborated with ath Power Consulting (APC), a premier provider of research, training, and strategy solutions for both the public and private sectors. The data is based on a comprehensive survey of 91 public records request management professionals. This survey was designed to understand the specific issues and challenges these professionals encounter in their daily work, providing a foundational, data-driven view of the current public records landscape.



Market Dynamics and Growth Trends

The landscape of public records request management is undergoing a significant transformation, characterized by sustained growth in both the quantity and complexity of requests. This trend places considerable strain on government resources and necessitates a strategic evolution in operational processes.

SURGE IN REQUEST VOLUME

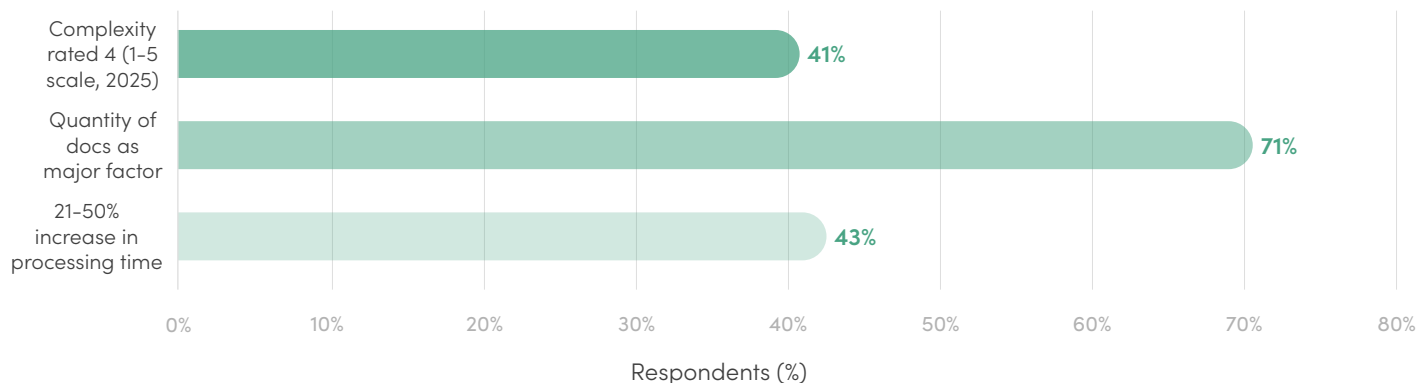


Key Takeaway

Public records request volumes are steadily increasing, with nearly 60% of respondents reporting significant growth in recent years.

Data indicates a clear and consistent upward trend in the volume of public records requests received by government agencies. **A majority of survey respondents confirmed an increase in request volume for 2025, with many anticipating this trend to continue.** Analysis of historical data from the past three years reinforces this observation, with the most common estimated increase in volume falling between 11-20% and 21-50%. This growth is not an anomaly but a new operational standard. The rising public expectation for transparency coupled with the ease of submitting digital requests has created a high-demand environment. **As a result, agencies must now manage a flow of requests that far exceeds historical levels, challenging their capacity to respond in a timely and compliant manner.**

ESCALATING REQUEST COMPLEXITY



Key Takeaway

Rising complexity in public records requests is driven by larger document volumes and multimedia files, significantly impacting processing times.

Parallel to the rise in volume is an even more resource-intensive trend: the escalating complexity of the requests themselves. **Most respondents rated the complexity of requests for 2025 as high, signifying that fulfilling them requires more time, technology, and inter-departmental coordination than ever before.**



Several factors contribute to this increased complexity:

- ✓ **Quantity of responsive documents:** Modern digital record-keeping means a single request can yield thousands of emails, documents, and other files that must be reviewed.
- ✓ **Large and varied file types:** The proliferation of body-worn camera footage, surveillance videos, audio recordings, and email records has introduced new, complex data formats into the PRR workflow. These files are not only large but also require specialized tools for review and redaction.
- ✓ **Increased requester interaction:** Fulfilling requests often involves a series of clarification emails and interactions with the requester to narrow the scope, which adds to the overall processing time.
- ✓ **Multiple collaborators:** Complex requests frequently require input from multiple departments (e.g., legal, IT, police), adding layers of coordination and approval that extend timelines.

The direct consequence of this complexity is a significant increase in the average time required to process a single request. Survey data shows the most common estimated increase in total processing time due to these factors is between 21% and 50%. This directly impacts an agency's ability to meet legally mandated deadlines, heightening the risk of litigation.

DRIVING FACTORS BEHIND THE TRENDS

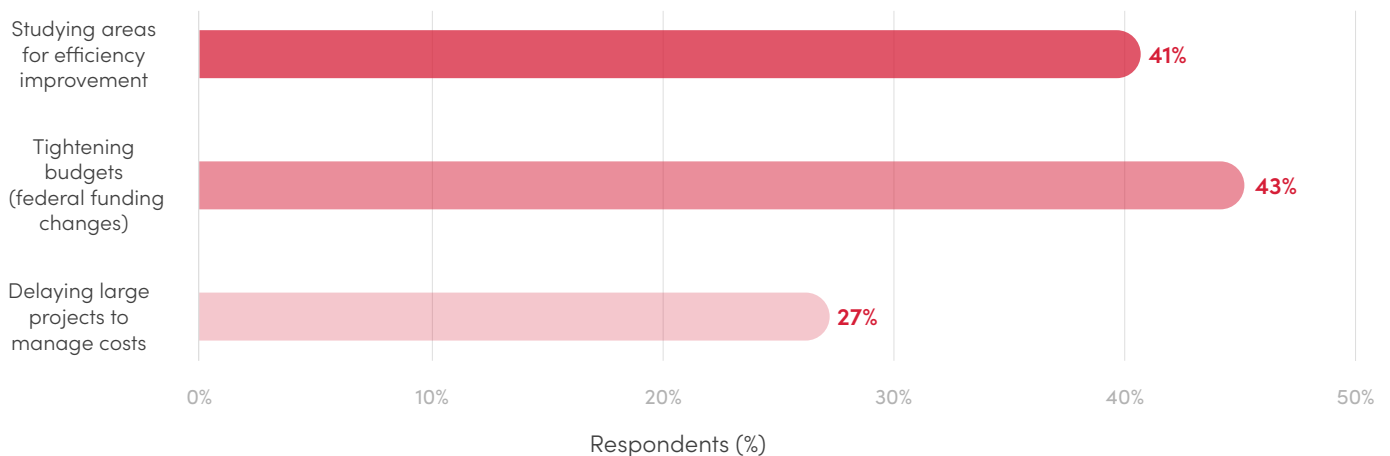
Several interconnected factors are driving these dynamics. The broad push for government transparency, efficiency, and accountability has empowered citizens and media organizations to scrutinize public operations more closely. Furthermore, legislative changes — particularly those related to police reform and state-level reporting requirements — often generate new categories of records that are subject to public disclosure.

Simultaneously, the inevitable and necessary digital transformation of government services has made submitting requests easier, while also creating an explosion in the volume of digital records that must be managed. Every email, digital report, and video file becomes a potentially responsive record, expanding the scope of what agencies must search, review, and produce. These dynamics create a challenging operational environment where agencies must do more with the same or fewer resources, making efficiency and process optimization paramount.

Economic Opportunities

While the growing volume and complexity of public records requests present significant operational hurdles, they also create clear economic opportunities for government agencies. By strategically investing in technology and process optimization, organizations can not only manage the increased demand but also unlock substantial gains in efficiency, reduce costs, and mitigate financial risks associated with non-compliance.

IMPROVING EFFICIENCY TO REDUCE OPERATIONAL COSTS



Key Takeaway

Efficiency and cost-saving measures are on the rise in order to mitigate the impact of budget constraints and funding uncertainties.

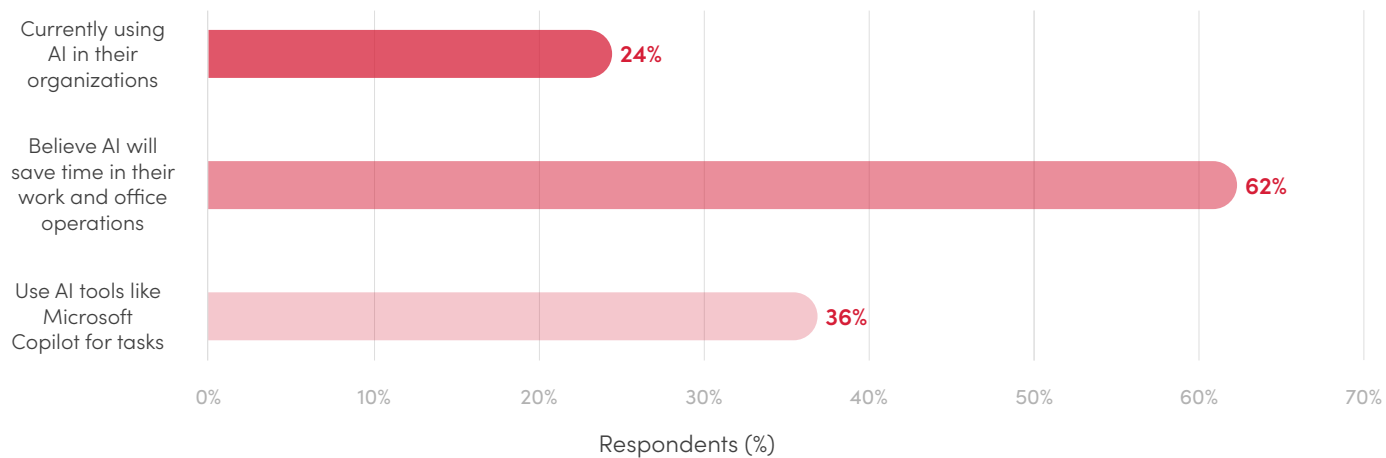
The single greatest opportunity lies in streamlining the public records request management workflow. The data shows request complexity is driving a 21-50% increase in processing time. This lost time translates directly to higher labor costs and reduced productivity, as staff members are diverted to manual, repetitive tasks.

Automating key stages of the PRR process offers a direct path to cost savings. Solutions that automate request intake, routing, and tracking can eliminate administrative bottlenecks.

Furthermore, advanced search and review platforms can drastically reduce the hours spent locating and preparing responsive documents. Agencies can optimize their human resources and enhance overall service delivery without increasing headcount by reallocating staff from these manual tasks to more strategic initiatives.



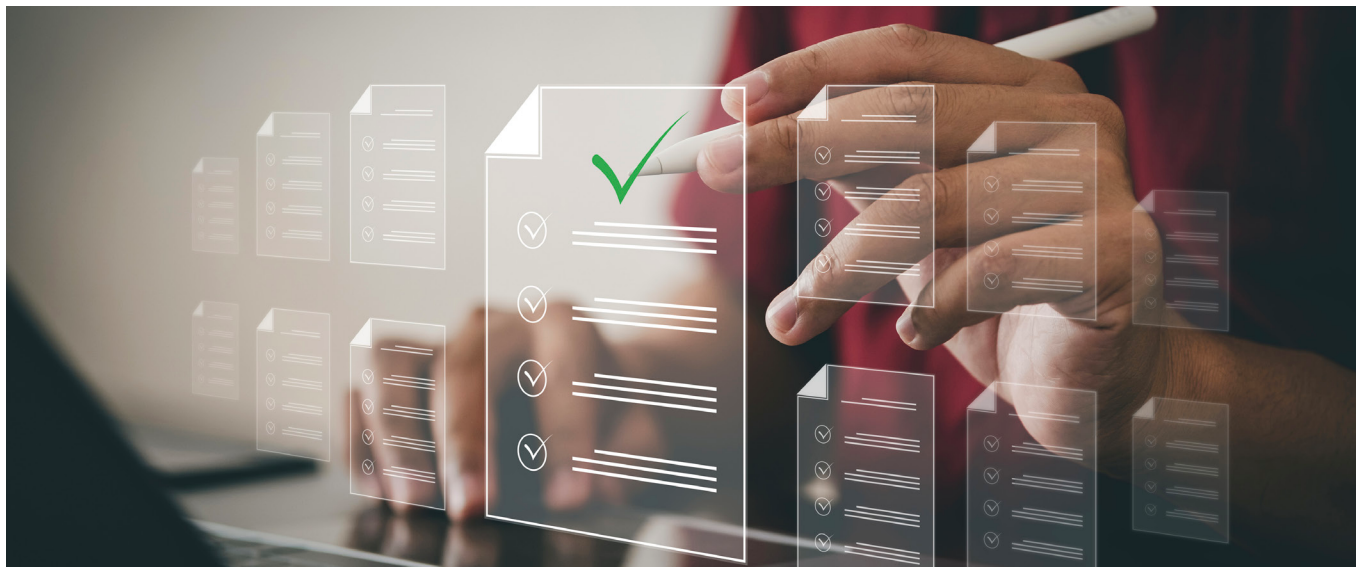
LEVERAGING AI FOR STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE



Key Takeaway

AI adoption, while nascent, is growing as organizations leveraging it to streamline repetitive tasks and improve operational efficiency.

The potential for AI to revolutionize PRR management represents a significant, largely untapped opportunity.



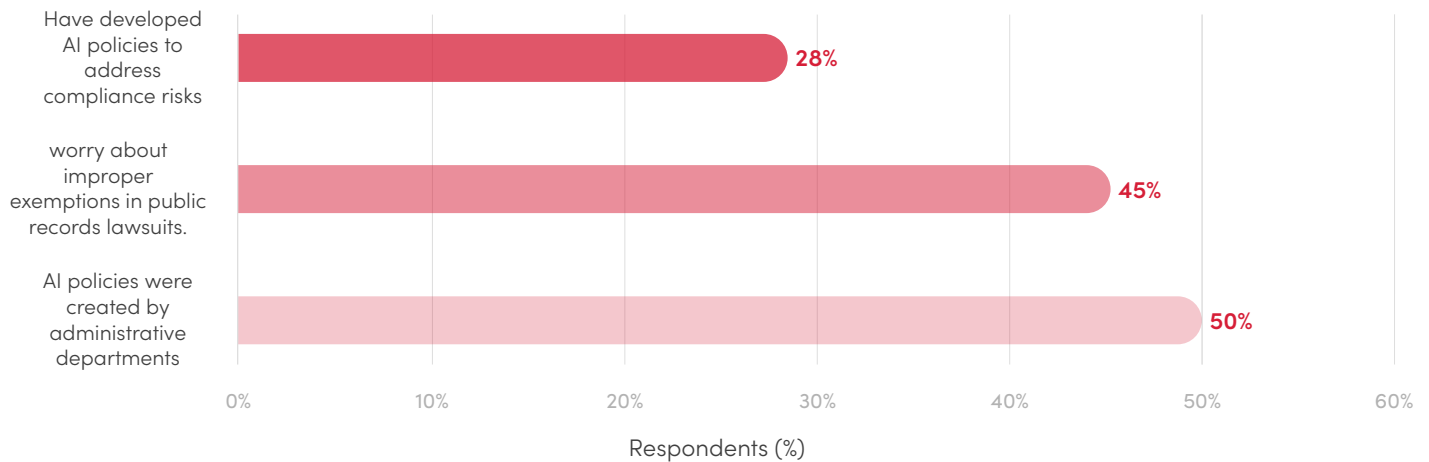
Survey respondents identified several key tasks where AI could deliver immense value:

- ✓ **Automated summaries:** AI can quickly generate summaries of requests, meeting minutes, department reports, and even complex legislation, saving valuable staff time.
- ✓ **Research and analysis:** AI tools can be used to conduct research and analyze large datasets, helping staff quickly identify relevant information for a request.
- ✓ **Response generation:** AI can assist in drafting initial responses to requesters, ensuring consistency and adherence to legal standards while freeing up staff to handle more complex issues.
- ✓ **Record summarization:** For large volumes of documents, AI can create concise summaries, allowing for faster review and identification of responsive materials.

By integrating AI into their workflows, agencies can accelerate response times, improve the quality of their output, and empower employees to focus on higher-value work. The organizations that become early adopters of AI will gain a distinct strategic advantage in managing public records efficiently and effectively.



AVOIDING FINANCIAL RISK THROUGH COMPLIANCE



Key Takeaway

Compliance measures, including AI policy development, are critical to reducing financial risks associated with public records processing.

Avoiding litigation is a primary concern for nearly all government agencies, and for good reason. Lawsuits resulting from PRR non-compliance — whether from missed deadlines or improper redactions — can lead to significant financial penalties, legal fees, and reputational damage. **The data highlights that the two most common lawsuit concerns among survey respondents are failure to produce records within the legally allowed time and improper redactions.**

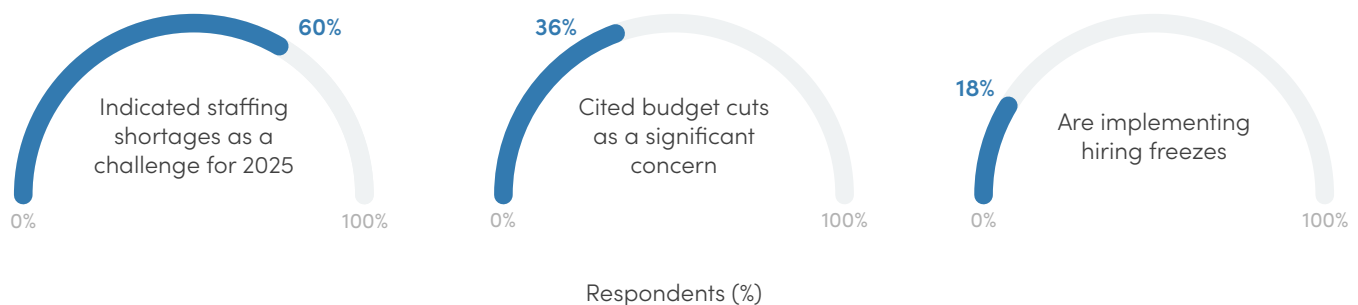
Investing in technology designed to ensure compliance should not just be seen as an operational expense but instead as a crucial risk management strategy. Modern PRR platforms provide dashboards and other tools for tracking deadlines, automated redaction tools, and comprehensive audit trails to document every step of the process. For example, the importance of accurate video and audio redaction was rated as very high by most respondents. Specialized software that automates this sensitive task minimizes the risk of human error and subsequent legal challenges.

By proactively addressing these compliance risks, agencies can protect themselves from costly litigation and build public trust through consistent, transparent practices.

Overcoming Challenges

Government agencies are navigating a complex environment where rising public expectations intersect with persistent internal challenges. Staffing shortages, budget constraints, and mounting security concerns create significant barriers to effective public records request management. However, these obstacles can be overcome with targeted strategies and modern solutions designed to optimize resources and fortify operations.

ADDRESSING STAFFING AND BUDGET CONSTRAINTS



Key Takeaway

Staffing shortages and budget cuts are pressing challenges, prompting agencies to explore cost-saving strategies.

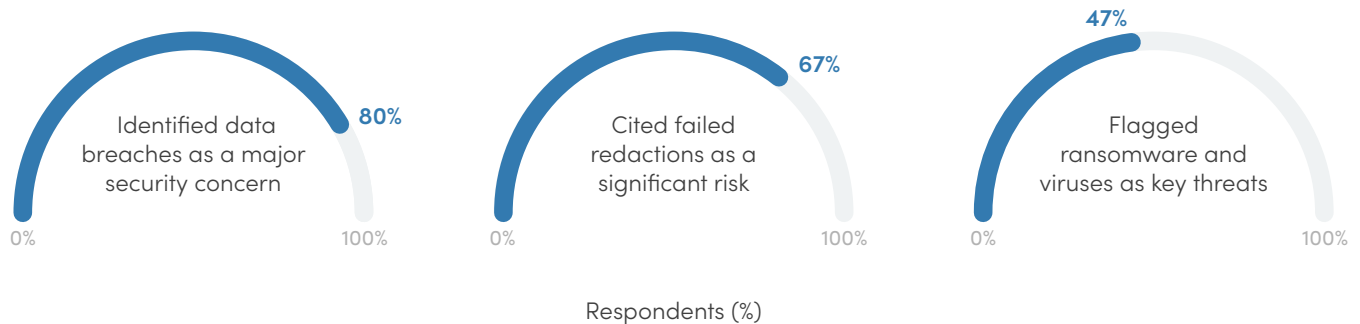
The challenges of staffing shortages and budget cuts were cited as major concerns for 2025. In this resource-constrained environment, agencies are expected to manage an increasing workload without a corresponding increase in personnel or funding. The traditional approach of hiring more staff is often not viable. Instead, the focus must shift to maximizing the productivity of the existing workforce.

Key Takeaway *(continued)*

This is where technology serves as a “force multiplier.” By automating the manual, time-consuming aspects of the PRR process, agencies can empower teams to accomplish more. For instance, a centralized platform for managing requests eliminates the need for staff to manually track deadlines and correspondence in spreadsheets and email inboxes. Intelligent tools reduce workload, streamline processing, and deliver better control. **Investing in solutions that streamline workflows allows agencies to alleviate the burden on overworked staff, improve morale, and maintain high levels of service and compliance even with limited resources.** This strategic use of technology allows employees to transition from laborious administrative duties to oversight and complex problem-solving.



MITIGATING SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE RISKS



Key Takeaway

Security concerns, particularly around data breaches and failed redactions, are driving the need for robust compliance measures.

Data security is no longer just an IT issue; it is a core component of public records request management. The data reveals that agencies are deeply concerned about data breaches, ransomware, viruses, and failed redactions that could lead to violations of privacy laws like HIPAA or security standards like CJIS. A single mistake in redacting sensitive information can have severe legal and financial consequences.

A proactive security posture is essential to overcoming these challenges. This includes adopting technology with built-in safeguards. Request management tools that offer automated audit trails and special security features — such as the principle of least privilege permissioning — can greatly minimize security risks.

Modern video redaction tool integrations are another example. These use AI to automatically identify and obscure sensitive information like faces, license plates, and personal identifiers in video and audio files, reducing the risk of human error, which is a leading cause of data spillage. Furthermore, secure, cloud-based platforms for managing public records can offer superior protection against ransomware and other cyber threats compared to on-premise legacy systems. **By embedding security and compliance into the workflow itself, agencies can protect sensitive data, ensure regulatory adherence, and build a resilient operational framework.**

MANAGING VEXATIOUS AND REDUNDANT REQUESTS

- ✓ 63% of respondents indicated **vexatious or redundant requests as a challenge for 2025.**
- ✓ These requests contribute to **increased processing times and resource strain.**
- ✓ Agencies are exploring strategies to **manage and mitigate the impact of such requests.**

Key Takeaway

Vexatious and redundant requests are a growing burden, necessitating proactive management to maintain efficiency.

Another significant challenge identified is the management of vexatious or redundant requests. These requests, which are often intentionally burdensome or repetitive, can consume a disproportionate amount of staff time and resources. **While agencies must respond to all legitimate requests, developing a standardized process for handling these specific cases is crucial.**

Technology can aid in identifying patterns of vexatious and repetitive requests, allowing agencies to develop a consistent and legally defensible response strategy. **A centralized system that identifies similar requests and allows them to be worked together reduces workload for legitimate requests and automated logging of all incoming requests and requester communications can help demonstrate a pattern of behavior for vexatious requests.** Additionally, creating a public-facing portal with a library of frequently requested documents and using built-in deflection technology that automatically suggests self-service options can proactively address common inquiries and reduce the number of duplicative requests. **This self-service approach not only saves staff time but also enhances transparency by making information readily accessible to the public.**

Conclusion

The data paints a clear picture of the public records landscape in 2025: one defined by growing demand, increasing complexity, and significant operational pressure. Government agencies face a dual challenge of meeting rising public expectations for transparency while contending with internal constraints such as staffing shortages, limited budgets, and critical security risks. The surge in request volume and the complexities introduced by large digital files, especially emails, video and audio, are stretching resources thin and elevating the risk of costly litigation from missed deadlines and improper redactions.

However, these challenges also present a clear mandate for modernization. The path forward is not through incremental adjustments but through strategic transformation powered by technology. Agencies have a compelling opportunity to move beyond manual, error-prone processes and embrace solutions that drive efficiency, ensure compliance, and empower their employees.

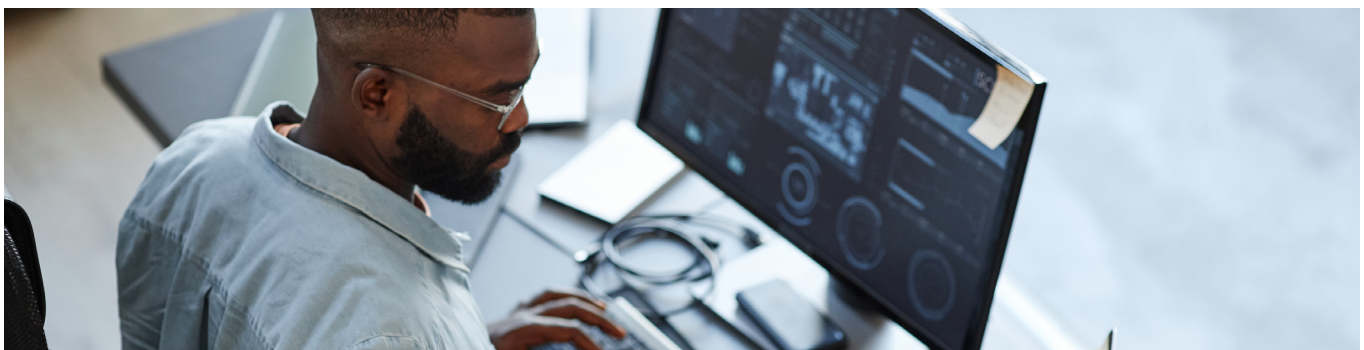
Actionable recommendations:



Prioritize workflow automation: The most immediate gains can be realized by automating the core PRR workflow. Implement a centralized system to manage request intake, tracking, and correspondence. This will reduce administrative overhead, ensure deadlines are met, and provide a complete audit trail for compliance.



Invest in advanced redaction tools: Given the high importance placed on email, video, and audio redaction in the survey responses, and the severe risks of strained staff and improper redactions, agencies should adopt specialized tools that automate the removal of exempted material not just from audio and video files, but also from emails. This minimizes human error and protects against costly legal challenges and data breaches.





Explore and pilot AI solutions: While full-scale AI adoption might seem distant, agencies should begin exploring its potential now. Start with pilot programs using AI for specific, high-value tasks such as summarizing meeting minutes or department reports. This will build institutional knowledge and demonstrate the tangible benefits of AI in a controlled environment.



Enhance security posture with modern technology: Move away from vulnerable legacy systems toward secure, cloud-based solutions designed for government. These platforms offer superior protection against cyber threats and ensure that sensitive data is managed in a compliant and defensible manner.

By embracing these recommendations, government agencies can transform the challenges of today into the efficiencies of tomorrow. Strategic investment in technology will enable organizations to not only keep pace with the evolving demands of public records request management but also to build more transparent, resilient, and trusted operations for the diverse group of requesters they serve.

Ready to learn more?

[Contact Us](#)



Appendix

In what sector do you work?

SEGMENT	
Local	33.00%
County	19.80%
State	37.40%
Special District (SD)	2.20%
Education	6.60%
Other (please specify)	1.10%

Do you work for a public safety organization (or a public safety portion of an agency)?

OVERALL	
Yes	52.70%
No	47.30%
LOCAL/COUNTY	
Yes	50.00%
No	50.00%
STATE	
Yes	61.80%
No	38.20%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION	
Yes	25.00%
No	75.00%

Select your role:

OVERALL		
	Records (manage and/or process records requests)	59.30%
	Legal (process and/or review records requests)	12.10%
	IT (support or manage tech for the records department)	2.20%
	Executive (oversee the records staff)	9.90%
	Othr (please specify)	16.50%
LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Records (manage and/or process records requests)	64.60%
	Legal (process and/or review records requests)	6.30%
	IT (support or manage tech for the records department)	4.20%
	Executive (oversee the records staff)	10.40%
	Othr (please specify)	14.60%
STATE		
	Records (manage and/or process records requests)	44.10%
	Legal (process and/or review records requests)	20.60%
	IT (support or manage tech for the records department)	0.00%
	Executive (oversee the records staff)	11.80%
	Othr (please specify)	23.50%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Records (manage and/or process records requests)	87.50%
	Legal (process and/or review records requests)	12.50%
	IT (support or manage tech for the records department)	0.00%
	Executive (oversee the records staff)	0.00%
	Othr (please specify)	0.00%

How long have you served in your current position?

OVERALL			LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Less than 1 year	3.30%		Less than 1 year	4.20%
	1 to 2 years	18.70%		1 to 2 years	10.40%
	3 to 5 years	37.40%		3 to 5 years	35.40%
	6 to 10 years	29.70%		6 to 10 years	37.50%
	11 to 20 years	6.60%		11 to 20 years	8.30%
	More than 20 years	4.40%		More than 20 years	4.20%

STATE			SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Less than 1 year	2.90%		Less than 1 year	0.00%
	1 to 2 years	29.40%		1 to 2 years	25.00%
	3 to 5 years	35.30%		3 to 5 years	50.00%
	6 to 10 years	23.50%		6 to 10 years	12.50%
	11 to 20 years	2.90%		11 to 20 years	12.50%
	More than 20 years	5.90%		More than 20 years	0.00%

How many employees are on your team?

OVERALL			LOCAL/COUNTY		
	1	16.50%		1	20.80%
	2-3	24.20%		2-3	22.90%
	4-10	31.90%		4-10	31.30%
	More than 10	27.50%		More than 10	25.00%

STATE			SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	1	0.00%		1	62.50%
	2-3	26.50%		2-3	25.00%
	4-10	35.30%		4-10	12.50%
	More than 10	38.20%		More than 10	0.00%

Please indicate your state or province.

OVERALL			OVERALL		
	Alabama	1.10%		Missouri	1.10%
	Alaska	2.20%		Nebraska	2.20%
	Arizona	4.40%		New Mexico	2.20%
	California	4.40%		New York	1.10%
	Colorado	2.20%		North Carolina	1.10%
	Connecticut	2.20%		Ohio	2.20%
	Florida	7.80%		Oklahoma	1.10%
	Georgia	3.30%		Oregon	1.10%
	Idaho	1.10%		Tennessee	1.10%
	Illinois	1.10%		Texas	13.30%
	Kansas	1.10%		Virginia	2.20%
	Massachusetts	1.10%		Washington	28.90%
	Michigan	2.20%		Washington, D.C.	2.20%
	Minnesota	1.10%		Wisconsin	4.40%

Please indicate your age from the ranges below.

OVERALL		
	Under 30	5.50%
	30-39	15.40%
	40-49	25.30%
	50-59	39.60%
	60-69	14.30%
LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Under 30	8.30%
	30-39	16.70%
	40-49	27.10%
	50-59	35.40%
	60-69	12.50%
STATE		
	Under 30	2.90%
	30-39	11.80%
	40-49	20.60%
	50-59	44.10%
	60-69	20.60%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Under 30	0.00%
	30-39	25.00%
	40-49	25.00%
	50-59	50.00%
	60-69	0.00%

Are you a current Granicus customer or GovQA User?

OVERALL		
	Yes	85.50%
	No	14.50%
LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Yes	88.40%
	No	11.60%
STATE		
	Yes	80.60%
	No	19.40%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Yes	100.00%
	No	0.00%

How satisfied are you with your current Public Records Processing solution?

OVERALL			LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Very satisfied	21.70%		Very satisfied	25.60%
	Satisfied	42.20%		Satisfied	46.50%
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	31.30%		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	25.60%
	Dissatisfied	2.40%		Dissatisfied	2.30%
	Very Dissatisfied	2.40%		Very Dissatisfied	0.00%
STATE			SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Very satisfied	22.60%		Very satisfied	0.00%
	Satisfied	35.50%		Satisfied	50.00%
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	32.30%		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	50.00%
	Dissatisfied	3.20%		Dissatisfied	0.00%
	Very Dissatisfied	6.50%		Very Dissatisfied	0.00%

Request Volume: How would you rate public records request volume increases for 2025?
 (Year-over-year or month-over-month increases in the number of requests you're receiving)

OVERALL	LOCAL/COUNTY
5 (Big increase) 20.60%	5 (Big increase) 21.90%
4 28.60%	4 34.40%
3 30.20%	3 21.90%
2 12.70%	2 15.60%
1 (Small increase) 7.90%	1 (Small increase) 6.30%

STATE	SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION
5 (Big increase) 25.00%	5 (Big increase) 0.00%
4 20.80%	4 28.60%
3 41.70%	3 28.60%
2 8.30%	2 14.30%
1 (Small increase) 4.20%	1 (Small increase) 28.60%

If you had to guess, what percent increase in volume would you say you've seen in the last 3 years?

OVERALL	LOCAL/COUNTY
0-4% 8.10%	0-4% 6.50%
5-10% 16.10%	5-10% 16.10%
11-20% 29.00%	11-20% 32.30%
21-50% 29.00%	21-50% 25.80%
51-100% 14.50%	51-100% 16.10%
More than 100% 3.20%	More than 100% 3.20%

STATE	SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION
0-4% 4.20%	0-4% 28.60%
5-10% 12.50%	5-10% 28.60%
11-20% 29.20%	11-20% 14.30%
21-50% 37.50%	21-50% 14.30%
51-100% 12.50%	51-100% 14.30%
More than 100% 4.20%	More than 100% 0.00%

12. How would you rate complexity of requests for 2025? (Complexity can be caused by voluminous quantities of response documents or collaborators required, large response file sizes – including video/audio, extensive clarification work, or other factors)

OVERALL	LOCAL/COUNTY
5 (Very complex) 20.60%	5 (Very complex) 28.10%
4 41.30%	4 28.10%
3 27.00%	3 37.50%
2 7.90%	2 3.10%
1 (Not complex) 3.20%	1 (Not complex) 3.10%

STATE	SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION
5 (Very complex) 16.70%	5 (Very complex) 0.00%
4 50.00%	4 71.40%
3 20.80%	3 0.00%
2 12.50%	2 14.30%
1 (Not complex) 0.00%	1 (Not complex) 14.30%

Which of the following causes of complexity most apply to your records processing challenges? (Select all that apply)

OVERALL	
Budget levels are sufficient	71.40%
Budget is stable but not enough	61.90%
Budget constraints limit ability to improve service delivery	47.60%
Funding is unpredictable and makes long-term planning difficult	20.60%
Budget decisions are not clearly linked to operational goals	49.20%
Not sure/Not involved in budgeting decisions	36.50%
Other	25.40%

Which of the following causes of complexity most apply to your records processing challenges?
(Select all that apply)

(continued)

LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Quantity of responsive documents per request	71.90%
	Large file sizes	59.40%
	Video/audio files	50.00%
	OCR/digitization of records for searchability	21.90%
	Clarification emails	50.00%
	Number of interactions/collaborators	37.50%
	Other (please specify)	25.00%
STATE		
	Quantity of responsive documents per request	70.80%
	Large file sizes	62.50%
	Video/audio files	41.70%
	OCR/digitization of records for searchability	25.00%
	Clarification emails	50.00%
	Number of interactions/collaborators	33.30%
	Other (please specify)	29.20%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Quantity of responsive documents per request	71.40%
	Large file sizes	71.40%
	Video/audio files	57.10%
	OCR/digitization of records for searchability	0.00%
	Clarification emails	42.90%
	Number of interactions/collaborators	42.90%
	Other (please specify)	14.30%

If you had to guess, what percent increase in average total request processing time do these complexity factors cause?

OVERALL			LOCAL/COUNTY		
	0-4%	8.10%		0-4%	3.20%
	5-10%	6.50%		5-10%	6.50%
	11-20%	25.80%		11-20%	25.80%
	21-50%	43.50%		21-50%	51.60%
	51-100%	16.10%		51-100%	12.90%
STATE			SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	0-4%	8.30%		0-4%	28.60%
	5-10%	4.20%		5-10%	14.30%
	11-20%	29.20%		11-20%	14.30%
	21-50%	41.70%		21-50%	14.30%
	51-100%	16.70%		51-100%	28.60%

Legislation Changes: How would you rate legislation changes to public records law for 2025?
(bills, mandates, and changing laws)

OVERALL			LOCAL/COUNTY		
	5 (Big increase)	20.60%		5 (Big increase)	21.90%
	4	28.60%		4	34.40%
	3	30.20%		3	21.90%
	2	12.70%		2	15.60%
	1 (Small increase)	7.90%		1 (Small increase)	6.30%
STATE			SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	5 (Big increase)	25.00%		5 (Big increase)	0.00%
	4	20.80%		4	28.60%
	3	41.70%		3	28.60%
	2	8.30%		2	14.30%
	1 (Small increase)	4.20%		1 (Small increase)	28.60%

Legislation Changes: How would you rate legislation changes to public records law for 2025? (bills, mandates, and changing laws)

OVERALL	LOCAL/COUNTY
5 (Very impactful) 8.10%	5 (Very impactful) 9.70%
4 19.40%	4 12.90%
3 27.40%	3 32.30%
2 24.20%	2 19.40%
1 (Not impactful at all) 21.00%	1 (Not impactful at all) 25.80%

STATE	SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION
5 (Very impactful) 8.50%	5 (Very impactful) 0.00%
4 20.80%	4 42.90%
3 25.00%	3 14.30%
2 25.00%	2 42.90%
1 (Not impactful at all) 20.80%	1 (Not impactful at all) 0.00%

Are there specific legislation topics that will affect your department in 2025? (Select all that apply)

OVERALL	
Police reform	14.50%
State (or local) reporting requirements – such as Washington’s JLARC	22.60%
IT modernization initiatives	21.00%
Elections	4.80%
Efficiency initiatives	25.80%
Other (please specify)	9.70%
No specific topics	43.50%

Are there specific legislation topics that will affect your department in 2025? (Select all that apply)
(continued)

LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Police reform	19.40%
	State (or local) reporting requirements – such as Washington’s JLARC	25.80%
	IT modernization initiatives	25.80%
	Elections	6.50%
	Efficiency initiatives	22.60%
	Other (please specify)	3.20%
	No specific topics	41.90%
STATE		
	Police reform	8.30%
	State (or local) reporting requirements – such as Washington’s JLARC	12.50%
	IT modernization initiatives	16.70%
	Elections	4.20%
	Efficiency initiatives	29.20%
	Other (please specify)	12.50%
	No specific topics	50.00%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Police reform	14.30%
	State (or local) reporting requirements – such as Washington’s JLARC	42.90%
	IT modernization initiatives	14.30%
	Elections	0.00%
	Efficiency initiatives	28.60%
	Other (please specify)	28.60%
	No specific topics	28.60%

Litigation Increases: How would you rate litigation and/or avoiding lawsuits related to public records requests in 2025?

OVERALL	LOCAL/COUNTY
5 (Very important) 46.80%	5 (Very important) 51.60%
4 11.30%	4 3.20%
3 24.20%	3 29.00%
2 9.70%	2 12.90%
1 (Not important at all) 8.10%	1 (Not important at all) 3.20%

STATE	SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION
5 (Very important) 33.30%	5 (Very important) 71.40%
4 20.80%	4 14.30%
3 25.00%	3 0.00%
2 8.30%	2 0.00%
1 (Not important at all) 12.50%	1 (Not important at all) 14.30%

What types of public records lawsuits do you worry about for 2025?

OVERALL	
Failure to produce requested records within time allowed by law	54.80%
Improper exemptions or redactions (such as accidental release of PII)	45.20%
Fees or charges for public records	17.70%
Other (please specify)	19.40%

LOCAL/COUNTY	
Failure to produce requested records within time allowed by law	51.60%
Improper exemptions or redactions (such as accidental release of PII)	45.20%
Fees or charges for public records	19.40%
Other (please specify)	16.10%

What types of public records lawsuits do you worry about for 2025?

(continued)

STATE	
Failure to produce requested records within time allowed by law	58.30%
Improper exemptions or redactions (such as accidental release of PII)	33.30%
Fees or charges for public records	16.70%
Other (please specify)	20.80%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION	
Failure to produce requested records within time allowed by law	57.10%
Improper exemptions or redactions (such as accidental release of PII)	85.70%
Fees or charges for public records	14.30%
Other (please specify)	28.60%

Respondents to previous surveys ranked “Meeting Time Deadlines” as a top 5 priority. How would you rate “Meeting Time Deadlines” for this year, 2025?

OVERALL	LOCAL/COUNTY
5 (Very important) 51.60%	5 (Very important) 51.60%
4 29.00%	4 3.20%
3 16.10%	3 29.00%
2 3.20%	2 12.90%
STATE	SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION
5 (Very important) 54.20%	5 (Very important) 42.90%
4 25.00%	4 28.60%
3 16.70%	3 28.60%
2 4.20%	2 0.00%

What other challenges might impact public records processing for your agency in 2025?
(Select all that apply)

OVERALL
Data Security/Cybersecurity Concerns 24.20%
Reporting & Oversight 27.40%
Vexatious/Redundant Requests 62.90%
Budget Cuts 35.50%
Staffing Shortages 59.70%
None of the above 8.10%
LOCAL/COUNTY
Data Security/Cybersecurity Concerns 25.80%
Reporting & Oversight 29.00%
Vexatious/Redundant Requests 64.50%
Budget Cuts 35.50%
Staffing Shortages 58.10%
None of the above 9.70%

What other challenges might impact public records processing for your agency in 2025?
(Select all that apply)

(continued)

STATE		
	Data Security/Cybersecurity Concerns	29.20%
	Reporting & Oversight	33.30%
	Vexatious/Redundant Requests	62.50%
	Budget Cuts	29.20%
	Staffing Shortages	70.80%
	None of the above	0.00%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Data Security/Cybersecurity Concerns	0.00%
	Reporting & Oversight	0.00%
	Vexatious/Redundant Requests	57.10%
	Budget Cuts	57.10%
	Staffing Shortages	28.60%
	None of the above	28.60%

Which types of security concerns do you have? (Select all that apply)

OVERALL		
	Data breach	80.00%
	Ransomware	46.70%
	Viruses	46.70%
	CJIS/HIPAA Violations	40.00%
	Failed redactions (missed PII or other exempted material)	66.70%
	Other	13.30%

Which types of security concerns do you have? (Select all that apply)

(continued)

LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Data breach	87.50%
	Ransomware	62.50%
	Viruses	62.50%
	CJIS/HIPAA Violations	37.50%
	Failed redactions (missed PII or other exempted material)	50.00%
	Other	0.00%
STATE		
	Data breach	71.40%
	Ransomware	28.60%
	Viruses	28.60%
	CJIS/HIPAA Violations	42.90%
	Failed redactions (missed PII or other exempted material)	85.70%
	Other	28.60%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Data breach	0.00%
	Ransomware	0.00%
	Viruses	0.00%
	CJIS/HIPAA Violations	0.00%
	Failed redactions (missed PII or other exempted material)	0.00%
	Other	0.00%

Do you manage or process audio or video records in your organization?

OVERALL		
	Yes	69.40%
	No	30.60%
LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Yes	74.20%
	No	25.80%
STATE		
	Yes	62.50%
	No	37.50%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Yes	71.40%
	No	28.60%

How would you rate video/audio redactions? (including video/audio from bodycam, dashcam, courtroom/inmate/other surveillance, suspect/witness interview records, or other evidentiary records)

OVERALL			LOCAL/COUNTY		
	5 (Very important)	58.10%		5 (Very important)	52.20%
	4	16.30%		4	17.40%
	3	16.30%		3	30.40%
	2	7.00%		2	0.00%
	1 (Not important at all)	2.30%		1 (Not important at all)	0.00%
STATE			SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	5 (Very important)	53.30%		5 (Very important)	100.00%
	4	20.00%		4	0.00%
	3	0.00%		3	0.00%
	2	20.00%		2	0.00%
	1 (Not important at all)	6.70%		1 (Not important at all)	0.00%

Which of the following other types of records requests do you process as well?

OVERALL		LOCAL/COUNTY	
Interagency Record Requests	50.00%	Interagency Record Requests	48.40%
Legislative Correspondence	4.80%	Legislative Correspondence	3.20%
Legal Holds	43.50%	Legal Holds	35.50%
Subpoenas	54.80%	Subpoenas	58.10%
Complaints	33.90%	Complaints	35.50%
Claims	17.70%	Claims	19.40%
EDiscovery	30.60%	EDiscovery	29.00%
Other (please specify)	6.50%	Other (please specify)	0.00%
None of the above	16.10%	None of the above	19.40%
STATE		SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION	
Interagency Record Requests	54.90%	Interagency Record Requests	42.90%
Legislative Correspondence	8.30%	Legislative Correspondence	0.00%
Legal Holds	45.80%	Legal Holds	71.40%
Subpoenas	45.80%	Subpoenas	71.40%
Complaints	33.30%	Complaints	28.60%
Claims	12.50%	Claims	28.60%
EDiscovery	41.70%	EDiscovery	0.00%
Other (please specify)	8.30%	Other (please specify)	28.60%
None of the above	16.70%	None of the above	0.00%

Are you currently using AI In your organization?

OVERALL		
	Yes	24.10%
	No	50.00%
	Don't Know	25.90%
LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Yes	27.60%
	No	48.30%
	Don't Know	24.10%
STATE		
	Yes	9.10%
	No	59.10%
	Don't Know	31.80%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Yes	57.10%
	No	28.60%
	Don't Know	14.30%

Which AI programs does your organization use? (Select all that apply)

OVERALL		
	ChatGPT	35.70%
	Microsoft Copilot	64.30%
	Other (please specify)	14.30%
LOCAL/COUNTY		
	ChatGPT	25.00%
	Microsoft Copilot	75.00%
	Other (please specify)	12.50%
STATE		
	ChatGPT	0.00%
	Microsoft Copilot	100.00%
	Other (please specify)	50.00%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	ChatGPT	75.00%
	Microsoft Copilot	25.00%
	Other (please specify)	00.00%

For which tasks does your organization use an AI tool? (Select all that apply)

OVERALL		
	Agenda creation	14.30%
	Agenda item summaries	14.30%
	Meeting minute summaries	35.70%
	Department report summaries	21.40%
	Public comment summaries	7.10%
	Research	28.60%
	Reord request summaries	14.30%
	Requester response creation	7.10%
	Other (please specify)	42.90%
LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Agenda creation	25.00%
	Agenda item summaries	25.00%
	Meeting minute summaries	37.50%
	Department report summaries	25.00%
	Public comment summaries	12.50%
	Research	25.00%
	Reord request summaries	12.50%
	Requester response creation	0.00%
	Other (please specify)	50.00%

For which tasks does your organization use an AI tool? (Select all that apply)

(continued)

STATE		
	Agenda creation	0.00%
	Agenda item summaries	0.00%
	Meeting minute summaries	0.00%
	Department report summaries	0.00%
	Public comment summaries	0.00%
	Research	50.00%
	Reord request summaries	0.00%
	Requester response creation	0.00%
	Other (please specify)	50.00%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Agenda creation	0.00%
	Agenda item summaries	0.00%
	Meeting minute summaries	50.00%
	Department report summaries	25.00%
	Public comment summaries	0.00%
	Research	25.00%
	Reord request summaries	25.00%
	Requester response creation	25.00%
	Other (please specify)	25.00%

For which organizational tasks do you think AI would benefit? (Select all that apply)

OVERALL	
Agenda creation	18.60%
Agenda item summaries	23.30%
Meeting minute summaries	37.20%
Legislation summaries (ordinances, resolutions, etc.)	18.60%
Department report summaries	23.30%
Public comment summaries	18.60%
Research	37.20%
Other (please specify)	27.90%
LOCAL/COUNTY	
Agenda creation	15.00%
Agenda item summaries	35.00%
Meeting minute summaries	45.00%
Legislation summaries (ordinances, resolutions, etc.)	25.00%
Department report summaries	25.00%
Public comment summaries	20.00%
Research	55.00%
Other (please specify)	15.00%
STATE	
Agenda creation	25.00%
Agenda item summaries	15.00%
Meeting minute summaries	25.00%
Legislation summaries (ordinances, resolutions, etc.)	15.00%
Department report summaries	25.00%
Public comment summaries	20.00%
Research	25.00%
Other (please specify)	40.00%

For which organizational tasks do you think AI would benefit? (Select all that apply)

(continued)

SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION	
Agenda creation	0.00%
Agenda item summaries	0.00%
Meeting minute summaries	66.70%
Legislation summaries (ordinances, resolutions, etc.)	0.00%
Department report summaries	0.00%
Public comment summaries	0.00%
Research	0.00%
Other (please specify)	33.30%

Does your organization have any policies developed around AI?

OVERALL	
Yes	27.60%
No	32.80%
Don't Know	39.70%
LOCAL/COUNTY	
Yes	27.60%
No	41.40%
Don't Know	31.00%
STATE	
Yes	18.20%
No	27.30%
Don't Know	54.50%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION	
Yes	57.10%
No	14.30%
Don't Know	28.60%

Who created those policies? (Select all that apply)

OVERALL			LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Governor's office	12.50%		Governor's office	0.00%
	Legislative body	6.30%		Legislative body	0.00%
	Administrative Department	50.00%		Administrative Department	25.00%
	County or City-level authorities	25.00%		County or City-level authorities	50.00%
	Advisory committee	6.30%		Advisory committee	12.50%
	Other (please specify)	12.50%		Other (please specify)	12.50%
STATE			SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Governor's office	50.00%		Governor's office	0.00%
	Legislative body	25.00%		Legislative body	0.00%
	Administrative Department	50.00%		Administrative Department	100.00%
	County or City-level authorities	0.00%		County or City-level authorities	0.00%
	Advisory committee	0.00%		Advisory committee	0.00%
	Other (please specify)	25.00%		Other (please specify)	0.00%

How do you feel about using AI?

OVERALL			LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Excited	17.20%		Excited	27.60%
	Curious	27.60%		Curious	17.20%
	Indifferent	17.20%		Indifferent	17.20%
	Cautious	25.90%		Cautious	24.10%
	Reluctant	12.10%		Reluctant	13.80%
STATE			SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Excited	9.10%		Excited	0.00%
	Curious	31.80%		Curious	57.10%
	Indifferent	13.60%		Indifferent	28.60%
	Cautious	36.40%		Cautious	0.00%
	Reluctant	9.10%		Reluctant	14.30%

Do you think AI will have a big impact on government operations?

OVERALL		
	Yes	46.60%
	No	15.50%
	Don't Know	37.90%
LOCAL/COUNTY		
	Yes	44.80%
	No	13.80%
	Don't Know	41.40%
STATE		
	Yes	40.90%
	No	18.20%
	Don't Know	40.90%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	Yes	71.40%
	No	14.30%
	Don't Know	14.30%

How do you think AI will affect your work and your office in the future? (Select all that apply)

OVERALL	LOCAL/COUNTY
Help with repetitive tasks 51.70%	Help with repetitive tasks 55.20%
Save resources 32.80%	Save resources 34.50%
Save time 62.10%	Save time 62.10%
Reduce staff demands 25.90%	Reduce staff demands 24.10%
Reduce staffing needs 17.20%	Reduce staffing needs 17.20%
Other (please specify) 25.90%	Other (please specify) 20.70%
STATE	SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION
Help with repetitive tasks 40.90%	Help with repetitive tasks 71.40%
Save resources 27.30%	Save resources 42.90%
Save time 63.60%	Save time 57.10%
Reduce staff demands 27.30%	Reduce staff demands 28.60%
Reduce staffing needs 13.60%	Reduce staffing needs 28.60%
Other (please specify) 36.40%	Other (please specify) 14.30%

How much do think that changes in federal personnel and funding will affect your organization and/or community?

OVERALL	LOCAL/COUNTY
5 (Very large effect) 17.90%	5 (Very large effect) 14.30%
4 25.00%	4 32.10%
3 39.30%	3 39.30%
2 10.70%	2 7.10%
1 (No effect at all) 7.10%	1 (No effect at all) 7.10%

STATE	SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION
5 (Very large effect) 19.00%	5 (Very large effect) 28.60%
4 23.80%	4 0.00%
3 28.60%	3 71.40%
2 19.00%	2 0.00%
1 (No effect at all) 9.50%	1 (No effect at all) 0.00%

What steps are you currently taking to prepare for these changes? (Select all that apply)

OVERALL
None 25.00%
Budget tightening/savings 44.60%
Hiring freezes 17.90%
Revisiting project planning/delays on large projects 26.80%
Purchasing freezes on large dollar items 12.50%
Studying areas for improvement with efficiency 41.10%

What steps are you currently taking to prepare for these changes? (Select all that apply)
(continued)

LOCAL/COUNTY		
	None	14.30%
	Budget tightening/savings	50.00%
	Hiring freezes	14.30%
	Revisiting project planning/delays on large projects	32.10%
	Purchasing freezes on large dollar items	7.10%
	Studying areas for improvement with efficiency	50.00%
STATE		
	None	38.10%
	Budget tightening/savings	42.90%
	Hiring freezes	19.00%
	Revisiting project planning/delays on large projects	19.00%
	Purchasing freezes on large dollar items	19.00%
	Studying areas for improvement with efficiency	28.60%
SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	None	28.60%
	Budget tightening/savings	28.60%
	Hiring freezes	28.60%
	Revisiting project planning/delays on large projects	28.60%
	Purchasing freezes on large dollar items	14.30%
	Studying areas for improvement with efficiency	42.90%

How concerned are you feeling about the potential impact of these activities on your organization?

OVERALL			LOCAL/COUNTY		
	5 (Very concerned)	23.80%		5 (Very concerned)	16.70%
	4	33.30%		4	30.30%
	3	31.00%		3	37.50%
	2	11.90%		2	12.50%
STATE			SPECIAL DISTRICT/EDUCATION		
	5 (Very concerned)	30.80%		5 (Very concerned)	40.00%
	4	30.80%		4	40.00%
	3	23.10%		3	20.00%
	2	15.40%		2	0.00%