PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT:

HOW TO EFFECTIVELY INTAKE, PROCESS AND RESPOND TO REQUESTS

WHAT NOT TO DO

- Fail to Respond
- Provide Inadequate Responses
- Release Confidential Information

VIOLATIONS OF THE ACT

- Civil Lawsuits
- Criminal Penalties
- Fines
- Damage to Reputation of Organization
- Loss of Trust From the Public

DEALING WITH THE INCREASING NUMBER OF REQUESTS

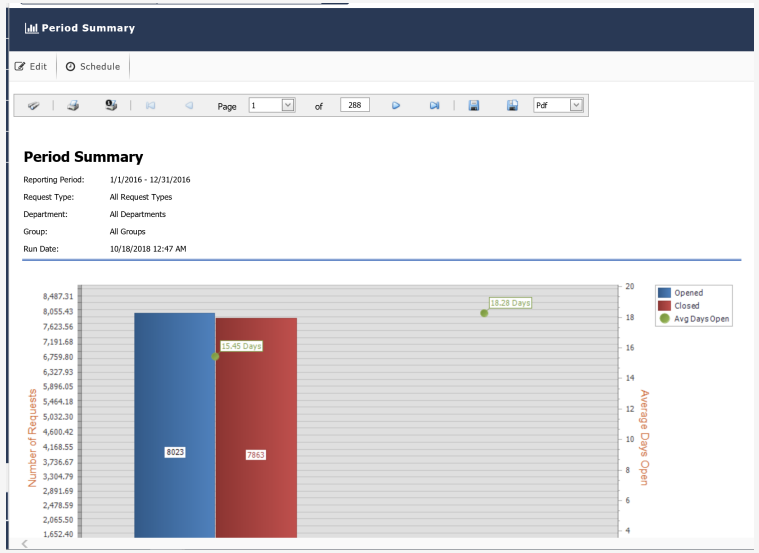
- Online Management System
- Training
- Central Point of Contact
- Open Records Process

BENEFITS OF AN ONLINE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

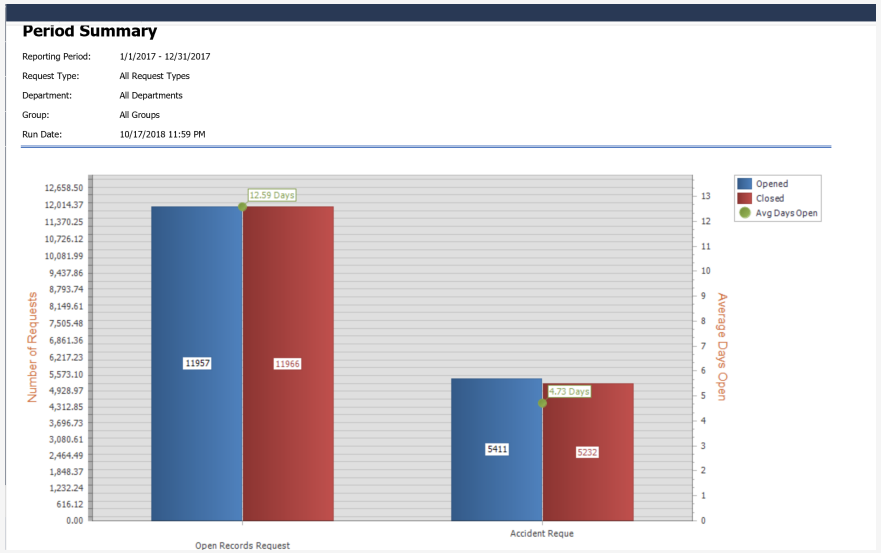
- Submit requests online
- Assign requests to specific department
- Allows requesters to agree to certain exclusions
- Save templates to easily email requesters
- Document actions and communication with the requester

RUNNING REPORTS

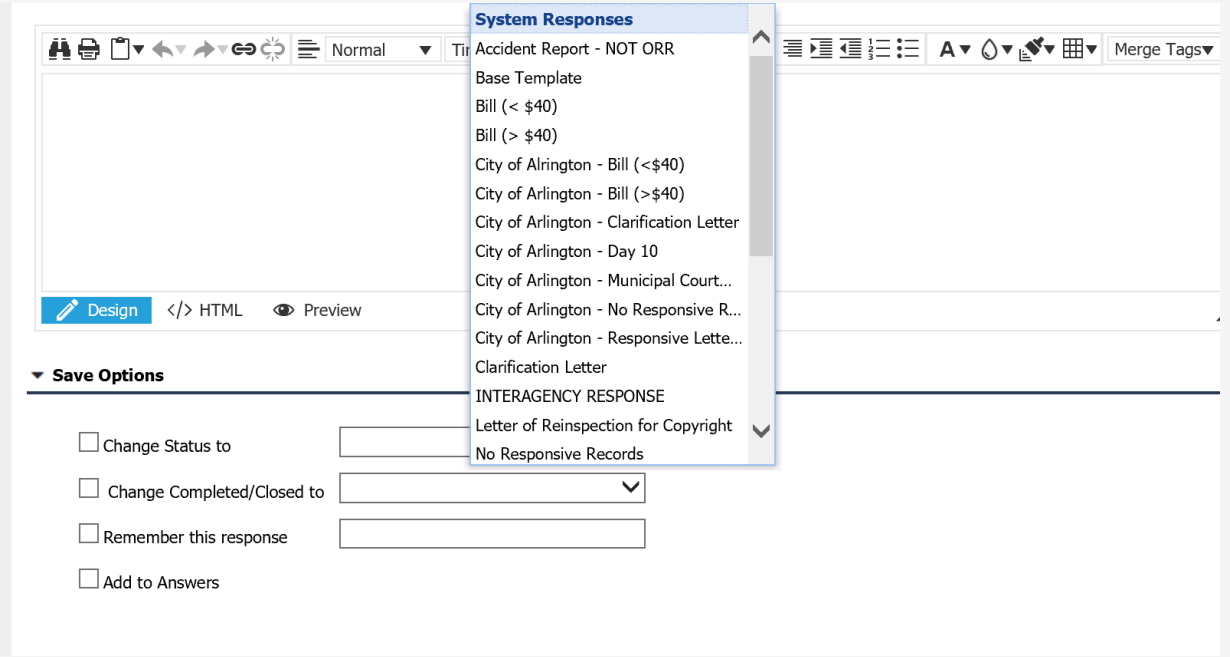
2016



2017



SAVE TEMPLATES



TRAINING

- Identifying common types of confidential information
- Awareness of deadlines
- Clarifying a request
- Knowing when to send a cost estimate

NEW FORMATS OF INFORMATION



Body worn camera footage



Text messages on personal devices



Social media posts/ comments

DEALING WITH THE INCREASE IN NEW FORMATS OF INFORMATION

- Know the deadlines and retention periods for new formats of information
- For example, a request for body worn camera footage must include
- (1) the date and approximate time of the recording;
- (2) the specific location where the recording occurred; and
- (3) the name of one or more persons known to be a subject of the recording.

IDENTIFY WHEN A REQUEST SHOULD BE CLARIFIED/NARROWED

- If a request is unclear or very broad, then you can send a written request for clarification or modification.
- The requestor has 61 days to clarify or modify a request, which must be stated in the request for clarification. The request is considered withdrawn if the clarification or modification is not received within 61 days.
- For deadline purposes, the day we receive clarification or modification from a requestor is considered the day the city received the request and the 10 day time period starts over.



BENEFITS OF A COST ESTIMATE

Estimate over $40

- Send a cost estimate letter. Sending a cost estimate does NOT pause or reset the City's legal deadlines.
- You must still gather the records and request legal review within 10 business days.

Estimate over $100

- Send a cost estimate letter
- Do not have to process the request until you collect a deposit of at least 50%
- Sending a request resets the City's legal deadlines: the 10 day deadline starts over on the date that the deposit or modification is received.

HAVE A PROCESS IN PLACE

- Assign requests to the appropriate department
- Have a liaison for each department who is the point of contact for requests
- Train all employees on the open records process and how to identify confidential information
- Have a central point of contact for all requests
- Have the right tools, such as an online management system and software for locating and gathering large amounts of information