

RCW 42.56.150 Training—Local elected and statewide elected officials. (1) Each local elected official and statewide elected official, and each person appointed to fill a vacancy in a local or statewide office, must complete a training course regarding the provisions of this chapter, and also chapter 40.14 RCW for records retention.

(2) Officials required to complete training under this section may complete their training before assuming office but must:

(a) Complete training no later than ninety days after the date the official either:

(i) Takes the oath of office, if the official is required to take an oath of office to assume his or her duties as a public official; or

(ii) Otherwise assumes his or her duties as a public official; and

(b) Complete refresher training at intervals of no more than four years for as long as he or she holds the office.

(3) Training must be consistent with the attorney general's model rules for compliance with the public records act.

(4) Training may be completed remotely with technology including but not limited to internet-based training. [2014 c 66 s 3.]

Findings—2014 c 66: "The legislature finds that the rights of citizens to observe the actions of their public officials and to have timely access to public records are the underpinnings of democracy and are essential for meaningful citizen participation in the democratic process. All too often, however, violations of the requirements of the public records act and the open public meetings act by public officials and agencies result in citizens being denied this important information and materials to which they are legally entitled. Such violations are often the result of inadvertent error or a lack of knowledge on the part of officials and agencies regarding their legal duties to the public pursuant to these acts. Also, whether due to error or ignorance, violations of the public records act and open public meetings act are very costly for state and local governments, both in terms of litigation expenses and administrative costs. The legislature also finds that the implementation of simple, cost-effective training programs will greatly increase the likelihood that public officials and agencies will better serve the public by improving citizen access to public records and encouraging public participation in governmental deliberations. Such improvements in public service will, in turn, enhance the public's trust in its government and result in significant cost savings by reducing the number of violations of the public records act and open public meetings act." [2014 c 66 s 1.]

Short title—2014 c 66: "This act may be known and cited as the open government trainings act." [2014 c 66 s 6.]

Effective date—2014 c 66: "This act takes effect July 1, 2014." [2014 c 66 s 7.]