
HOUSE BILL 2356

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Representatives Paul, Burnett, and Shavers

Prefiled 01/09/26. Read first time 01/12/26. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations.

1 AN ACT Relating to public records concerning homicide cases; and
2 amending RCW 42.56.540.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 42.56.540 and 1992 c 139 s 7 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) The examination of any specific public record may be enjoined
7 if, upon motion and affidavit by an agency or its representative
8 ((~~or~~)), a person who is named in the record or to whom the record
9 specifically pertains, or a person described in subsection (2) of
10 this section, the superior court for the county in which the movant
11 resides or in which the record is maintained, finds that such
12 examination would clearly not be in the public interest and would
13 substantially and irreparably damage any person, or would
14 substantially and irreparably damage vital governmental functions. An
15 agency has the option of notifying persons named in the record or to
16 whom a record specifically pertains or a person described in
17 subsection (2) of this section, that release of a record has been
18 requested. However, this option does not exist where the agency is
19 required by law to provide such notice.

20 (2) For public records of a law enforcement agency relating to a
21 homicide, the victim's next of kin or, in the case of a minor child

1 who is the next of kin, the child's legal guardian, may request by
2 motion and affidavit that the record be enjoined pursuant to
3 subsection (1) of this section. For purposes of this subsection,
4 "next of kin" means the victim's spouse, state registered domestic
5 partner, parents, siblings, or children, except that "next of kin"
6 does not include such person if they are the perpetrator.

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