

# Chapter 296-06 WAC

## PUBLIC RECORDS

### WAC

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### DISPOSITION OF SECTIONS FORMERLY CODIFIED IN THIS CHAPTER

296-06-060	Substantive rules, general policy statements and interpretations of general applicability. [Order 73-12, § 296-06-060, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by Order 76-27, filed 9/28/76.
296-06-070	Public records available. [Order 73-12, § 296-06-070, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by Order 76-27, filed 9/28/76.
296-06-160	Procedure for copying public records. [Order 73-12, § 296-06-160, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by Order 76-27, filed 9/28/76.
296-06-170	Records index. [Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020 (4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-170, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-170, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-170, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by WSR 05-09-059, filed 4/19/05, effective 5/20/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.260 (5).
296-06-180	Department final opinions and orders not indexed. [Order 73-12, § 296-06-180, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by Order 76-27, filed 9/28/76.
296-06-190	Instructions to staff in individual cases not indexed. [Order 73-12, § 296-06-190, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by Order 76-27, filed 9/28/76.
296-06-200	Factual staff reports, etc., not indexed in individual cases. [Order 73-12, § 296-06-200, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by Order 76-27, filed 9/28/76.
296-06-210	Correspondence and materials not indexed. [Order 73-12, § 296-06-210, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by Order 76-27, filed 9/28/76.
296-06-220	Communications regarding public records. [Order 73-12, § 296-06-220, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by Order 76-27, filed 9/28/76.
296-06-230	Adoption of form. [Order 73-12, § 296-06-230, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by Order 76-27, filed 9/28/76.
296-06-240	Maintenance of index. [Order 73-11, § 296-06-240, filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by Order 76-27, filed 9/28/76.
296-06-990	Appendix A—Form—Department of labor and industries authorization to inspect or copy public records in which an individual has a right of privacy. [Order 73-12, Appendix A (codified as WAC 296-06-990), filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by WSR 90-07-004, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020 (4) and 51.04.030.
296-06-99001	Appendix B—Form—Request for public records under the provisions of chapter 1, Laws of 1973 (Initiative 276). [Order 73-12, Appendix B (codified as WAC 296-06-99001), filed 7/31/73.] Repealed by WSR 90-07-004, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030.

**WAC 296-06-010 Purpose.** The department of labor and industries (L&I) is an agency of state government created

(6/21/05)

by RCW 43.17.010. In this chapter it shall be referred to as the "department." Where appropriate, "department" also refers to its staff and employees. The purpose of this chapter is to ensure compliance with the public records provisions of chapter 42.17 RCW.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 43.17 RCW, RCW 42.17.250, [42.17].251, 51.04.020, 51.04.030, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-010, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-010, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-010, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-010, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-020 Description of department organization.** (1) **Central organization.** The chief executive officer of the department is the director of labor and industries, referred to here as "director." The director is appointed by the governor with the consent of the senate and serves at the pleasure of the governor. The department is organized in six regions across five divisions: Insurance services, WISHA (Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act) services, specialty compliance services, operations, and field services. Each region and division is responsible to a deputy director or assistant director appointed by the director. Major policy decisions, rule-making, and the primary administrative functions of the department are carried out by the department's central organizations in Olympia.

#### (2) Field services.

The department maintains service locations, or major field offices, in many cities. These service locations are grouped into six regions throughout the state, each headed by a regional administrator.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 43.17 RCW, RCW 42.17.250 (1)(a), 51.04.020, 51.04.030, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-020, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-020, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-020, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-020, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-030 Locations where information about the department may be obtained and the department public records inspected and copied.** (1) **Tumwater office.**

The office of the director, the administrative office of the department, the main offices of the divisions, and the office of the public records officer are in the Labor and Industries headquarters building, Tumwater, Washington. General information about the department and its divisions may be obtained at this location, and on the internet at [www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov).

#### (2) Field offices.

(a) General information about the department may also be obtained at its service locations, or field offices, at the addresses listed on the internet at [www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov) and/or found on the state government pages of local area telephone directories.

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(b) Requests for public records containing confidential information will be processed only through the Tumwater office, unless the requestor is authorized to access them.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 43.17 RCW, RCW 42.17.250, 42.17.290, 51.04.020, 51.04.030, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-030, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-030, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-030, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-030, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-040 Operations and procedures.** The general operations and procedures of the department's five divisions are summarized below. For more information, go to: [www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov).

**(1) Insurance services.**

This division administers Washington's workers' compensation program—Medical care and disability benefits for workers who are injured on the job. Every business with employees must provide this coverage. L&I administers the "state fund," which covers the majority of the state's workers. Through its self-insurance program, it also monitors coverage offered by large companies that choose to self-insure and manage their own claims.

This division includes all of the workers' compensation programs that:

- Manage injured worker claims;
- Bill employers for their required quarterly premiums;
- Pay health care (and other) providers for their services.

The division also:

- Sets workers' compensation rates;
- Helps employers control their premiums through a variety of financial incentive, claims management, return-to-work and safety programs;
- Administers the department's crime victims compensation program, which covers those who are injured as a result of criminal acts.

More information is available at [www.LNI.wa.gov/ClaimsIns](http://www.LNI.wa.gov/ClaimsIns).

**(2) WISHA services.**

This division administers the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA), under a state plan agreement with the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). It aids in the prevention of job injuries and illnesses by adopting and enforcing safety and health standards and by training employers and employees in safe working procedures.

Through the RCW, the legislature has directed L&I to administer and enforce three additional programs. These programs are also handled by WISHA:

- Asbestos, including certifications and notifications of asbestos projects;
- Explosives, regulating the possession, handling, and use of explosives or explosive devices;
- Worker and community right to know, which provides a way of communicating information regarding hazardous substances in the workplace and the community.

Employer and employee procedures and responsibilities, and information about voluntary consultations to improve workplace safety can be found on the internet at [www.lni.wa.gov/FormPublications](http://www.lni.wa.gov/FormPublications). Information about reporting work-

place accidents to OSHA can be found on the internet at <http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/pubindex.list>.

**(3) Specialty compliance services.**

This division encompasses several diverse programs related to the construction trades, workplace rights, and apprenticeship. Its programs' duties include:

- Registering contractors to ensure they are bonded and insured.
- Licensing electrical contractors and elevator mechanics.
- Certifying plumbers and electricians.
- Regulating and inspecting:
  - Electrical installations.
  - Boilers and pressure vessels.
  - Factory assembled structures.
  - Elevators and other conveyances.

**Employment standards program:**

Develops and enforces rules regulating wages (including prevailing wages for public works projects) and hours, and working conditions, including those for teenagers.

**Apprenticeship program:**

Administers the state's apprenticeship training laws and policies.

**(4) Operations.**

This area includes several internal support divisions including administrative services, information services, the office of human resources, and fraud prevention and compliance.

**Fraud prevention and compliance:**

This division encompasses several diverse programs related to the prevention of abuse in the workers' compensation system. Its programs include:

- Audit.
- Collections.
- Detection and tracking.
- Firm appeals.
- Investigations.
- Significant employer cases.

**(5) Field services.**

This division provides the agency with local department program service throughout its service locations in six geographic regions of Washington.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 43.17 RCW, RCW 42.17.250 (1)(a) and (c), 42.17.290, 51.04.020, 51.04.030, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-040, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.-020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-040, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-040, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-040, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-050 Department rules.** The department's rules, adopted as authorized by law, are in Title 296 WAC.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.250 (1)(b) and (c), 42.17.290, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-050, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05; Order 76-27, § 296-06-050, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-050, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-080 Authorization to release information.** Some public records are protected from inspection and/or copying by state and/or federal law. You may access these records by either:

- Being the person legally authorized to access them; or

- Getting a notarized written authorization from the person with legal access. This authorization must:
  - Include a description of the records.
  - State the name of the person or persons authorized to inspect and copy the records.
  - Be signed and dated by the person with legal access to the records.

**Note:** If the records contain information about a disease or a condition usually transmitted through sexual contact, the release authorization must specifically mention sexually transmitted disease.

Authorizations to release information, once submitted to the department, become a part of the public record and the department's files.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 51.28.070, 51.16.070, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-080, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-080, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-080, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-080, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-090 Public records officer.** The department will designate a public records officer to be in charge of its public records. This officer will have an office at the department's Tumwater headquarters. They are responsible for the enforcement of the department's rules and regulations regarding the release of public records, and for making sure the department's staff cooperates and complies with the public disclosure requirements of chapter 42.17 RCW. They may appoint delegates to help with the work as necessary.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.17.060, 51.04.020, 51.04.030, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-090, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-090, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-090, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-090, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-100 Office hours.** Inspecting and copying the department's public records will be allowed only during regular office hours, which are 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, not including legal holidays.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.270, [42.17].280, [42.17].290, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-100, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-100, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-100, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-100, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-110 Requesting public records.** (1) You can request an inspection or copy of the department's public records by either:

- Making a request at any of the department's service locations; or
- Sending a written request to the L&I public disclosure unit at:

Department of Labor & Industries  
Public Disclosure Unit  
Post Office Box 44632  
Olympia, WA 98504-4632

**Note:** If you make an oral request, the department may put your request in writing and give or send a copy of it to you for confirmation or written correction.

(2) Written requests must include the following:

- The requestor's name.

- The date the request is being made.
- A description of the requested records, including the title, subject matter, date the records were made, and any other identifying information.
- A signed statement that the material will not be used for commercial purposes, if the requested material includes a list of individuals.

**Note:** Department staff will assist the requestor in identifying records if needed. If the request is not clear, the department will ask for clarification. If no clarification is received, the department will not respond. The department shall not deny a request for identifiable public records solely on the basis that the request is overbroad.

(3) Records that are protected by an individual's rights to privacy will not be released until the authorization described in WAC 296-06-080 is submitted, with the written request, to the department.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.260(1), 42.17.320, 42.17.290, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-110, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-110, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-110, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-110, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-120 Copying fees.** The department may charge the requestor a fee for reimbursement of actual copying costs and postage costs. The department may require a deposit of up to ten percent of the estimated cost of all copies. If the department delivers a public records request on a partial or installment basis, it may charge for each part of the request as it is provided. If an installment of a records request is not claimed or reviewed within thirty days, subject to a case-by-case consideration, the department is not obligated to complete the balance of the request. Requestors may make their own copies at a department location, under the supervision of a department staff member, if the records will not be harmed and it will not interfere with the normal work of the department.

**Note:** Copying charges for various media are found on the internet at [www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov). The contractor registration section and electrical program charge separate fees for copies of material from a contractor's or an electrician's files. These fees are in WAC 296-200-900 and 296-46B-910.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.260 (7) and (8), 42.17.270, 42.17.280, 42.17.290, 42.17.300, 42.17.305, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-120, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-120, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90. Statutory Authority: RCW 18.27.040, 42.17.290 and 42.17.300. WSR 82-18-026 (Order 82-26), § 296-06-120, filed 8/25/82; Order 76-27, § 296-06-120, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-120, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-130 Denials of records requests.** The public records officer and his or her designees have the power to deny a request for public records. Denials must include:

- The reason for the denial.
- A statement of any exemption that authorizes the denial of the record.
- A brief explanation of how the exemption applies to the withheld record.
- The signature of the public records officer or their designee.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.260(1), 42.17.320, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-130, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-130, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-130, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-130, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-140 Appeal of denial of requests.** After a request for inspection or copying of public records is denied, the requestor may ask the department to review the denial. The request for review must:

- Be made in writing.
- Be sent to the public records officer or his/her designee after receiving the denial.
- Specifically refer to the denial.
- Contain a brief statement that gives reasons for reconsideration of the denial.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.290, 42.17.320, 42.17.325, and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-140, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-140, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-140, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-140, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-150 Protection of public records.** The department will protect its public records from damage or disorganization. Public records requests will not be allowed to interfere with essential functions of the department.

All inspections of public records will be supervised by a department staff member. Staff members will not allow records to be inspected or copied by anyone who is intoxicated, violent, abusive, threatening, or otherwise disruptive. Anyone who displays these characteristics during a records inspection may have the inspection terminated by department staff.

Staff members who are supervising the inspection or copying of public records will make sure of the following:

- Records are not torn, mutilated, marked, or otherwise harmed by the requestor.
- Inspection and copying activities do not disrupt the department's operations.
- Full, prompt, and courteous assistance is provided to the requestor.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.290 and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-150, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020(4) and 51.04.030. WSR 90-07-004, § 296-06-150, filed 3/9/90, effective 4/9/90; Order 76-27, § 296-06-150, filed 9/28/76; Order 73-12, § 296-06-150, filed 7/31/73.]

**WAC 296-06-175 Records index.** The department of labor and industries will maintain a current index as required by RCW 42.17.260. The index will consist of record types and/or descriptions, their locations, and availabilities. These records will be made available according to public disclosure law. The agency records index is accessible online at [www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov). The index will be updated as needed. Copies of the index will be provided upon request by the public disclosure unit.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.17.260 (5), (6) and 2005 c 483. WSR 05-13-151, § 296-06-175, filed 6/21/05, effective 7/22/05.]