

2026 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 493

BY SENATOR REESE

PUBLIC RECORDS. Provides relative to public record production and fees. (8/1/26)

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 44:32(C)(1)(a) and (2)(a); to provide for payment for public
3 records; to provide for the rates a custodian of public records may charge; to provide
4 for electronic public records; to provide for fee schedule information; to provide for
5 administration of public records; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 44:32(C)(1)(a) and (2)(a) are hereby amended to read as follows:

8 §32 Duty to permit examination; prevention of alteration; payment for overtime;
9 copies provided; fees

10 * * *

11 C.(1)(a) For all public records, except public records of state agencies, it shall
12 be the duty of the custodian of the public records to provide copies to persons so
13 requesting, unless the requestor fails to pay the applicable copying fees after being
14 notified of the amount in advance of production or the requestor has an outstanding
15 balance from a prior request. The custodian may establish and collect ~~reasonable~~ fees
16 for making copies of public records, which may include the transmission of
17 electronic copies of public records. **However, the maximum rates a custodian may**

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services. The keyword, summary, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

DIGEST

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Present law (R.S. 44:32) provides that the custodian of public records shall provide copies of public records to any person requesting them, except when the requestor fails to pay applicable copying fees after being notified in advance of the amount due or has an outstanding balance from a prior request.

Present law authorizes custodians to establish and collect reasonable fees for making copies of public records and to request payment in advance of production.

Present law provides that copies may be furnished without charge or at a reduced charge to indigent citizens.

Proposed law adds nonprofit organizations to those that may be furnished public records without charge or at a reduced charge.

Proposed law retains present law but distinguishes between public records of state agencies and all other public records and provides maximum allowable fees for records other than those of state agencies.

Proposed law provides that for all public records except those of state agencies:

- (1) The first 20 pages of records shall be provided free of charge.
- (2) Thereafter, a maximum rate of five cents per page may be charged for paper copies.
- (3) Custodians may charge the requestor for postage to mail paper copies.
- (4) Custodians shall provide requestors the option to receive responsive records electronically.
- (5) The rate for electronic records shall not exceed \$10.

Present law requires any custodian who elects to establish and collect fees to establish a reasonable fee schedule and post the schedule where it can be readily accessed by the public.

Proposed law includes that it shall be posted on the agency's website.

Proposed law prohibits custodians from charging for staff time to respond to a public records request.

Present law provides that, for public records of state agencies, fees are charged in accordance with the uniform fee schedule adopted by the commissioner of administration pursuant to R.S. 39:241 or as otherwise provided by law.

Proposed law retains present law relative to fees for public records of state agencies but specifies that the fees shall not exceed those in proposed law.

Effective August 1, 2026.

(Amends R.S. 44:32(C)(1)(a) and (2)(a))