# First Regular Session Seventy-fifth General Assembly STATE OF COLORADO

# REENGROSSED

This Version Includes All Amendments Adopted in the House of Introduction SENATE BILL 25-077

LLS NO. 25-0063.01 Megan McCall x4215

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

## 101 CONCERNING MODIFICATIONS TO THE "COLORADO OPEN RECORDS

102 Аст".

### **Bill Summary**

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <u>http://leg.colorado.gov</u>.)

The bill makes the following changes to the "Colorado Open Records Act" (CORA):

• Excludes from the definition of a "public record" a written document or electronic record that is produced by a device or application that is used to assist an individual with a disability or individuals with a language barrier to facilitate





communication if the written document or electronic record has been produced to facilitate communication in lieu of verbal communication;

- Changes the reasonable time to respond to a CORA request, except for requests from a mass medium or a newsperson, from 3 working days to 5 working days and changes the extension of time for the response period if extenuating circumstances exist from not exceeding 7 additional days to not exceeding 10 additional days;
- Adds an extenuating circumstance that allows for an extension of the response period when the custodian is not scheduled to work within the response period;
- Requires public entities to post any rules or policies adopted pursuant to CORA, including, if the public entity has one, the public entity's records retention policy, and to post information for members of the public regarding how to make a public records request;
- If public records are in the sole and exclusive custody and control of someone who is not scheduled to work within the response period, requires a custodian to provide all other available responsive public records within the response period and notify the requester of the earliest date on which the person is expected to be available or that the person is not expected to return to work. The requester may make a subsequent request for additional responsive records, if any, on or after the date the custodian provides.
- Allows a custodian, subject to certain exceptions, to determine that a request is made for the direct solicitation of business for pecuniary gain, requires the custodian to provide written notice of the determination to the requester, allows the custodian a 30-day response period for such a request, permits the requester to submit a signed statement affirming that the request is not for the direct solicitation of business for pecuniary gain which the custodian must consider in making their determination, permits the requester to appeal the determination that the request is made for the direct solicitation of business for pecuniary gain to the district court, and allows a custodian to charge the requester for the reasonable cost of directly responding to the request notwithstanding the allowance for the first hour of research and retrieval to otherwise be free of charge and notwithstanding the statutory cap on fees, which otherwise would apply;
- In addition to the prohibition on disclosing public elementary or secondary school students' addresses and

telephone numbers, prohibits disclosure of any other information of such a student that could be used by a person to directly contact, address, or send a message to the student through any means or method;

- Clarifies that if a custodian imposes any requirements concerning the prepayment of fees or the payment of fees in connection with a request for inspection of public records, the requirements must be in accordance with the custodian's adopted rules or written policies and must not be inconsistent with the provisions of CORA;
- Allows a requester to ask a custodian for a reasonable break-down of costs that comprises the fee charged for the research and retrieval of the requested public records;
- Modifies the requirement that, if a custodian of records for a public entity allows members of the public to pay for any other service or product provided by the custodian with a credit card or electronic payment, then the custodian must allow a requester of a public record to pay any fee or deposit associated with the request with a credit card or electronic payment, to instead require that the custodian allow for payment in this manner if the public entity allows members of the public to pay for any other service or product provided by the public entity; and
- Allows a custodian to treat a CORA request made within 14 calendar days of another CORA request for information pertaining to facially similar content made by the same person as one request for purposes of calculating the fee that the custodian may charge the requester for research and retrieval of responsive public records.

1 Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

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SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-72-202, amend

- 3 (6)(b)(XVII) and (6)(b)(XVIII); and **add** (6)(b)(XIX) as follows:
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**24-72-202. Definitions.** As used in this part 2, unless the context

- 5 otherwise requires:
  - (6) (b) "Public records" does not include:
- 7 (XVII) A complaint of harassment or discrimination, as described
- 8 in section 22-1-143, that is unsubstantiated and all records related to the

unsubstantiated complaint, including records of an investigation into the
 complaint; or

3 (XVIII) Jail assessments conducted pursuant to section 30-10-530
4 (5)(d) or 24-31-118; OR

5 (XIX) (A) A WRITTEN DOCUMENT OR ELECTRONIC RECORD THAT 6 IS PRODUCED BY A DEVICE OR APPLICATION THAT IS USED TO ASSIST AN 7 INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATION IF THE 8 WRITTEN DOCUMENT OR ELECTRONIC RECORD HAS BEEN PRODUCED TO 9 FACILITATE COMMUNICATION FOR THE INDIVIDUAL WITH THE DISABILITY 10 IN LIEU OF VERBAL COMMUNICATION; OR

11 (B) A WRITTEN DOCUMENT OR ELECTRONIC RECORD THAT IS 12 PRODUCED BY A DEVICE OR APPLICATION THAT IS USED TO ASSIST 13 INDIVIDUALS WITH A LANGUAGE BARRIER TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATION 14 IF THE WRITTEN DOCUMENT OR ELECTRONIC RECORD HAS BEEN PRODUCED 15 TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE INDIVIDUALS WITH A 16 LANGUAGE BARRIER IN LIEU OF VERBAL COMMUNICATION. AS USED IN THIS 17 SUBSECTION (6)(b)(XIX)(B), "LANGUAGE BARRIER" MEANS A DIFFICULTY 18 FOR INDIVIDUALS TO COMMUNICATE BECAUSE THE INDIVIDUALS SPEAK 19 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES OR DO NOT OTHERWISE SHARE A COMMON 20 LANGUAGE.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-72-203, amend
(3)(b) introductory portion, (3)(b)(I), (3)(b)(II) introductory portion,
(3)(b)(II)(B), (3)(b)(III), (3)(d)(I), and (3)(d)(II); and add (1)(c),
(3)(b)(IV), (3)(b.5), (3)(e), and (3)(f) as follows:

25 24-72-203. Public records open to inspection - definitions.
26 (1) (c) A PUBLIC ENTITY THAT HAS PUBLIC RECORDS THAT MAY BE
27 SUBJECT TO DISCLOSURE PURSUANT TO THIS PART 2 SHALL POST ON ITS

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1 WEBSITE ANY RULES OR POLICIES ADOPTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS 2 PART 2, INCLUDING RULES CONCERNING THE INSPECTION OF PUBLIC 3 RECORDS. THE PUBLIC ENTITY SHALL ALSO POST ON ITS WEBSITE ANY 4 RECORDS RETENTION POLICY THAT IT HAS AND SHALL PROVIDE ON ITS 5 WEBSITE INFORMATION TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC CONCERNING HOW TO 6 REQUEST INSPECTION OF PUBLIC RECORDS FROM A CUSTODIAN OF THE 7 PUBLIC ENTITY. IF THE PUBLIC ENTITY DOES NOT HAVE A PUBLICLY 8 ACCESSIBLE WEBSITE, THEN THE INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE POSTED 9 PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (1)(c) MUST BE PHYSICALLY POSTED IN 10 THE LOCATION DESIGNATED BY THE PUBLIC ENTITY FOR POSTING NOTICES.

11 (3) (b) The date and hour set for the inspection of records not 12 readily available at the time of the request shall MUST be within a 13 reasonable time after the request. As used in this subsection (3), a 14 "reasonable time" shall be IS presumed to be three FIVE working days or 15 less. Such period may be extended if extenuating circumstances exist. However, such period of extension shall not exceed seven TEN working 16 17 days. A finding that extenuating circumstances exist shall MUST be made 18 in writing by the custodian and shall MUST be provided to the person 19 making the request within the three-day FIVE-DAY period. Extenuating 20 circumstances shall apply only when:

(I) A broadly stated request is made that encompasses all or
 substantially all of a large category of records and the request is without
 sufficient specificity to allow the custodian reasonably to prepare or
 gather the records within the three-day FIVE-DAY period; or

(II) A broadly stated request is made that encompasses all or
 substantially all of a large category of records and the agency is unable to
 prepare or gather the records within the three-day FIVE-DAY period

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1 because:

2 (B) In the case of the general assembly or its staff or service
3 agencies, the general assembly is in session; or

4 (III) A request involves such a large volume of records that the 5 custodian cannot reasonably prepare or gather the records within the 6 three-day FIVE-DAY period without substantially interfering with the 7 custodian's obligation to perform his or her THE CUSTODIAN'S other public 8 service responsibilities; OR

9 (IV) THE CUSTODIAN, OR A PERSON WHO IS ESSENTIAL TO THE
10 PROCESS OF RESPONDING TO REQUESTS, IS NOT SCHEDULED TO WORK
11 WITHIN ALL OR PART OF THE FIVE-DAY PERIOD.

12 (b.5) NOTWITHSTANDING THE PERIODS SET FORTH IN SUBSECTION 13 (3)(b) OF THIS SECTION, A "REASONABLE TIME" TO RESPOND TO A REQUEST 14 MADE BY A MASS MEDIUM, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 13-90-119 (1)(a), OR 15 A NEWSPERSON, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 13-90-119(1)(c), IS PRESUMED TO 16 BE THREE WORKING DAYS OR LESS, AND SUCH PERIOD MAY BE EXTENDED 17 UP TO AN ADDITIONAL SEVEN WORKING DAYS IF EXTENUATING 18 CIRCUMSTANCES EXIST AS SET FORTH IN SUBSECTION (3)(b) OF THIS 19 SECTION.

20 (d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, if the 21 public records requested are election-related and are in the custody and 22 control of a county clerk and recorder but are in active use, in storage, or 23 otherwise not readily available at the time a requester asks to examine 24 them, and the request is made during an election for which the county 25 clerk and recorder is the designated election official, the county clerk and 26 recorder may, at the county clerk and recorder's discretion, take additional 27 time to fulfill the request as specified in this subsection (3)(d); except that

the provisions of this subsection (3)(d) do not apply if the requester of the public records is a mass medium organization as defined in section 13-90-119(1)(a), or a newsperson, as defined in section 13-90-119(1)(c). The county clerk and recorder may take additional time to fulfill the request as follows:

6 (I) During the period beginning on the sixtieth day before election 7 day and concluding with the date by which the county clerk and recorder 8 certifies the final official abstract of votes cast for the applicable election, 9 the county clerk and recorder may extend the period for production of 10 records up to an additional ten working days past the seven-day TEN-DAY 11 extension allowed under subsection (3)(b) of this section;

(II) The county clerk and recorder shall provide written notice of
the extension to the requester within three FIVE working days from the
date of the request;

15 (e) (I) (A) IF A CUSTODIAN, DESPITE EXPENDING REASONABLE 16 EFFORT, IS UNABLE TO DETERMINE OR ACCESS PUBLIC RECORDS THAT MAY 17 BE RESPONSIVE TO A REQUEST BECAUSE THE PUBLIC RECORDS MAY BE IN 18 THE SOLE AND EXCLUSIVE CUSTODY AND CONTROL OF ANOTHER 19 EMPLOYEE, VOLUNTEER, DIRECTOR, AGENT, ELECTED OFFICIAL, OR OTHER 20 PERSON AUTHORIZED TO HAVE CUSTODY AND CONTROL OF THE PUBLIC 21 RECORDS WHO IS ON LEAVE, NOT ON CONTRACT, OR OTHERWISE NOT 22 SCHEDULED TO WORK WITHIN THE APPLICABLE RESPONSE PERIOD, THE 23 CUSTODIAN SHALL PROVIDE WITHIN THE APPLICABLE RESPONSE PERIOD 24 ALL OTHER AVAILABLE RESPONSIVE PUBLIC RECORDS IN ACCORDANCE 25 WITH THIS PART 2. THE CUSTODIAN SHALL NOTIFY THE REQUESTER OF THE 26 EARLIEST DATE ON WHICH THE OTHER PERSON WHO MAY HAVE ANY 27 ADDITIONAL POTENTIALLY RESPONSIVE PUBLIC RECORDS IS EXPECTED TO

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1 BE AVAILABLE AND IF THE PERSON'S RETURN DATE IS UNABLE TO BE 2 DETERMINED AT THE TIME OF THE REQUEST, THE CUSTODIAN SHALL 3 NOTIFY THE REQUESTER OF THE DATE OF THE PERSON'S RETURN AS SOON 4 AS IT IS ABLE TO BE DETERMINED OR, IF THE PERSON IS NOT EXPECTED TO 5 RETURN TO WORK, THE CUSTODIAN SHALL PROVIDE NOTICE TO THE 6 REQUESTER OF THAT. THE REQUESTER MAY SUBMIT A NEW REQUEST FOR 7 ANY ADDITIONAL POTENTIALLY RESPONSIVE PUBLIC RECORDS ON OR 8 AFTER THE DATE THAT THE CUSTODIAN PROVIDES.

9 (B) THIS SUBSECTION (3)(e) IS NOT INTENDED TO BE UTILIZED TO
10 INTENTIONALLY DELAY OR CIRCUMVENT THE RELEASE OF PUBLIC RECORDS
11 AND IT DOES NOT EXEMPT A CUSTODIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN
12 REASONABLE ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS.

(II) THE PROVISIONS SET FORTH IN THIS SUBSECTION (3)(e) DO NOT
MODIFY THE PROVISIONS SET FORTH IN SUBSECTION (2)(a) OF THIS
SECTION.

(III) AS USED IN THIS SUBSECTION (3)(e), UNLESS THE CONTEXT
 OTHERWISE REQUIRES, "APPLICABLE RESPONSE PERIOD" MEANS:

18 (A) THE FIVE-DAY PERIOD OR THE TEN-DAY EXTENSION SET FORTH
19 IN SUBSECTION (3)(b) OF THIS SECTION;

20 (B) THE THREE-DAY PERIOD OR THE SEVEN-DAY EXTENSION SET
21 FORTH IN SUBSECTION (3)(b.5) OF THIS SECTION; OR

(C) THE PERIOD INCLUDING THE ADDITIONAL TEN-DAY PERIOD SET
FORTH IN SUBSECTION (3)(d)(I) OF THIS SECTION.

(f) (I) IF A CUSTODIAN DETERMINES THAT REQUESTED PUBLIC
RECORDS WILL BE USED FOR THE DIRECT SOLICITATION OF BUSINESS FOR
PECUNIARY GAIN, THE CUSTODIAN SHALL PROVIDE THE REQUESTER WITH
WRITTEN NOTICE OF THE DETERMINATION WITHIN THE THREE-DAY OR

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1 FIVE-DAY PERIOD, AS APPLICABLE, AND, NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER 2 PROVISION OF THIS SECTION, IN SETTING A DATE AND HOUR FOR RECORDS 3 TO BE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION, THE CUSTODIAN SHALL HAVE THIRTY 4 WORKING DAYS FROM PROVIDING THE NOTICE. A REQUESTER MAY SUBMIT 5 WITH A REQUEST A SIGNED STATEMENT AFFIRMING THAT THE REQUESTED 6 PUBLIC RECORDS WILL NOT BE USED FOR THE DIRECT SOLICITATION OF 7 BUSINESS FOR PECUNIARY GAIN, WHICH THE CUSTODIAN MUST CONSIDER 8 IN MAKING THE CUSTODIAN'S DETERMINATION PURSUANT TO THIS 9 SUBSECTION (3)(f)(I). The custodian shall not consider if the 10 REQUESTER MAY RECEIVE ANY MONETARY OR EQUITABLE AWARD 11 PURSUANT TO LITIGATION IN MAKING THE DETERMINATION OF WHETHER 12 A REQUEST IS FOR THE DIRECT SOLICITATION OF BUSINESS FOR PECUNIARY 13 GAIN.

14 (II) A REQUESTER THAT MAKES A REQUEST THAT HAS BEEN 15 DETERMINED BY A CUSTODIAN TO BE FOR THE DIRECT SOLICITATION OF 16 BUSINESS FOR PECUNIARY GAIN MAY APPLY TO THE DISTRICT COURT OF 17 THE DISTRICT IN WHICH THE REQUESTED PUBLIC RECORDS ARE LOCATED 18 FOR A DETERMINATION THAT THE REQUEST IS NOT FOR THE DIRECT 19 SOLICITATION OF BUSINESS FOR PECUNIARY GAIN. THE COURT SHALL 20 REVIEW THE MATTER AT THE EARLIEST PRACTICAL TIME AND HAS 21 DISCRETION TO LIMIT ITS REVIEW TO SUBMISSION OF PLEADINGS, 22 AFFIDAVITS, AND OTHER MATERIAL AS DEEMED APPROPRIATE BY THE 23 COURT, OR THE COURT MAY SCHEDULE A HEARING. IN ITS REVIEW, THE 24 COURT SHALL APPLY AN ABUSE OF DISCRETION STANDARD TO THE 25 CUSTODIAN'S DETERMINATION.

26 (III) NOTWITHSTANDING SECTION 24-72-205 (6)(a), A CUSTODIAN
27 IS ENTITLED TO RECOVER THE REASONABLE COST ASSOCIATED WITH

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DIRECTLY RESPONDING TO A REQUEST FOR RECORDS THAT HAS BEEN
 DETERMINED BY THE CUSTODIAN TO BE FOR THE DIRECT SOLICITATION OF
 BUSINESS FOR PECUNIARY GAIN.

4 (IV) A REQUEST FOR PUBLIC RECORDS FOR PURPOSES RELATED TO
5 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, ORGANIZING, OR OTHER RIGHTS AND ACTIVITIES
6 PROTECTED BY ARTICLE 33 OF TITLE 29 BY AN ENTITY ENGAGED IN
7 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, ORGANIZING, OR OTHER RIGHTS AND ACTIVITIES
8 PROTECTED BY ARTICLE 33 OF TITLE 29 IS NOT A REQUEST FOR THE DIRECT
9 SOLICITATION OF BUSINESS FOR PECUNIARY GAIN.

(V) THIS SUBSECTION (3)(f) DOES NOT APPLY TO A CONTRACT OR
OTHER INFORMATION DELIVERED USING COMPUTER DATA EXTRACTION
METHODS THAT REQUIRE MINIMAL HUMAN INTERVENTION FOR RETRIEVAL.
SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-72-204, amend
(3)(a)(VI) as follows:

15 24-72-204. Allowance or denial of inspection - grounds procedure - appeal - definitions - repeal. (3) (a) The custodian shall
deny the right of inspection of the following records, unless otherwise
provided by law; except that the custodian shall make any of the
following records, other than letters of reference concerning employment,
licensing, or issuance of permits, available to the person in interest in
accordance with this subsection (3):

(VI) Except as provided in section 1-2-227, addresses and
telephone numbers of students in any public elementary or secondary
school AND ANY OTHER INFORMATION OF STUDENTS IN ANY PUBLIC
ELEMENTARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOL THAT COULD BE USED BY A PERSON
TO DIRECTLY CONTACT, ADDRESS, OR SEND A MESSAGE TO THE STUDENT
THROUGH ANY MEANS OR METHOD;

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SECTION 4. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-72-205, amend (6)(a) and (7); and add (6)(c) and (8) as follows:

3 24-72-205. Copy, printout, or photograph of a public record 4 - imposition of research and retrieval fee. (6) (a) A custodian may 5 impose a fee in response to a request for the research and retrieval of 6 public records only if the custodian has, prior to the date of receiving the 7 request, either posted on the custodian's website or otherwise published 8 a written policy that specifies the applicable conditions concerning the 9 research and retrieval of public records by the custodian, including the 10 amount of any current fee. Under any such policy, the custodian shall not 11 impose a charge for the first hour of time expended in connection with the 12 research and retrieval of public records. After the first hour of time has 13 been expended, the custodian may charge a fee for the research and 14 retrieval of public records that shall not exceed thirty dollars per hour. IF 15 REQUESTED, A CUSTODIAN SHALL PROVIDE A REASONABLE BREAK-DOWN 16 OF COSTS THAT COMPRISES THE FEE CHARGED FOR THE RESEARCH AND 17 RETRIEVAL OF PUBLIC RECORDS AUTHORIZED PURSUANT TO THIS 18 SUBSECTION (6)(a).

19 (c) FOR PURPOSES OF THE FEE CHARGED PURSUANT TO THIS 20 SUBSECTION (6), A CUSTODIAN MAY TREAT A REQUEST FOR PUBLIC 21 RECORDS MADE WITHIN FOURTEEN CALENDAR DAYS OF ANOTHER REQUEST 22 FOR INFORMATION PERTAINING TO FACIALLY SIMILAR CONTENT MADE BY 23 THE SAME PERSON AS ONE REQUEST AND NOT AS MULTIPLE INDIVIDUAL 24 REQUESTS; EXCEPT THAT THIS SUBSECTION (6)(c) DOES NOT APPLY TO 25 REQUESTS MADE BY A MASS MEDIUM, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 13-90-119 26 (1)(a), OR A NEWSPERSON, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 13-90-119 (1)(c).

(7) If a custodian of a public record requested pursuant to this part

1 2 PUBLIC ENTITY allows members of the public to pay for any other 2 service or product provided by the <del>custodian</del> PUBLIC ENTITY with a credit 3 card or electronic payment, the A custodian OF THE PUBLIC ENTITY AND OF 4 A PUBLIC RECORD REQUESTED PURSUANT TO THIS PART 2 must allow the 5 requester of the public record to pay any fee or deposit associated with the 6 request with a credit card or via an electronic payment. The custodian 7 may require a requester to pay any service charge or fee imposed by the 8 processor of a credit card or electronic payment.

9 (8) IF A CUSTODIAN IMPOSES ANY REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING 10 THE PREPAYMENT OF FEES OR THE PAYMENT OF FEES IN CONNECTION WITH 11 A REQUEST FOR INSPECTION OF PUBLIC RECORDS, THE REQUIREMENTS 12 MUST BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CUSTODIAN'S ADOPTED RULES OR 13 WRITTEN POLICIES PURSUANT TO THIS PART 2 AND MUST NOT BE 14 INCONSISTENT WITH THE PROVISIONS SET FORTH IN THIS SECTION.

15 SECTION 5. Act subject to petition - effective date -16 **applicability.** (1) This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following 17 the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the 18 general assembly; except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant 19 to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an 20 item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, 21 section, or part will not take effect unless approved by the people at the 22 general election to be held in November 2026 and, in such case, will take 23 effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the 24 governor.

(2) This act applies to requests for public records made pursuant
to article 72 of title 24, Colorado Revised Statutes, on or after the
applicable effective date of this act.