

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE



Rep. Ashley Carrick
State Capitol, Room 406
907-465-4976
Rep.Ashley.Carrick@akleg.gov

Official Business

HB 377

Sponsor Statement

April 7, 2026

An Act relating to public records: relating to managing and preserving audio and video recordings; and relating to fees for the inspecting and copying of public records under the Alaska Public Records Act.

House Bill 377 is a two-part bill updating public records statutes. Firstly, it modernizes the definition of public record in the State Records Management Act, and the Alaska Public Records Act. Specifically, it adds audio and video recordings, as well as emails to the definitions of public records. Secondly, it adds exemptions to the so-called “five-hour rule” in the Alaska Public Records Act for municipalities and the Department of Public Safety. The five-hour rule is established in AS 40.25.110(c) and specifies that if someone requests public records that require more than five hours to produce in one month, then the requester must pay a fee. In other words, if those records take less than five hours to produce in one month, the requester does not need to pay the fee. This can be abused by social media content creators to get free police body cam footage for social media content. While that footage is free for the content creators, it is very costly in terms of staff time.

To resolve outstanding issues, this bill allows municipalities and the Department of Public Safety to recoup costs on these public records requests by establishing exemptions to the five-hour rule. These exemptions would be in addition to existing exemptions from this rule for the Bureau of Vital Statistics, the Department of Education and Early Development, the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, the University of Alaska, the Alaska Railroad Corporation, and the judicial branch. It is important to note that this does not change how public record fees are currently calculated in AS 40.25.110 (c), and also does not impact a municipality’s authority to reduce or waive a fee in AS 40.21.110 (d).

This bill will modernize Alaska's public records statutes and provide a cost recovery mechanism for public records. I hope you will join me in supporting House Bill 377.

Prepared by Rep. Ashley Carrick’s Office.

Staff Contact: Stuart Relay, House State Affairs Committee Aide, stuart.relay@akleg.gov, 907-465-6879

hsta@akleg.gov