

## **What is Washington Association of Public Records Officers?**

The Washington Association of Public Records Officers (WAPRO) is a newly formed association for public records officers and other public employees who regularly assist in Public Records Act compliance. Its mission is to increase transparency and better PRA compliance by making standardized Public Records Act education widely available.

## **Why the Washington Association of Public Records Officers?**

A public records officer association just makes sense. There are approximately 2200 local governments and numerous state agencies in Washington State. The Public Records Act mandates that every government have a public records officer. The goal of the Washington Association of Public Records Officers (WAPRO) is to harness the collective knowledge and talent of these public records officers to increase transparency and Public Records Act compliance through education.

Conventional wisdom says “many hands make light work” and “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” With 2200 pairs of hands working together, WAPRO will help make light work of PRA compliance. And by participating in WAPRO, a small investment from each local and state agency in WAPRO will help buy a lot of prevention.

WAPRO will increase transparency through Public Records Act education. WAPRO will also serve as a forum where Public Records Officers and others who are part of an agency’s PRA compliance program can spot trends, share best practices and keep on top of legal developments. This will likely include a list-serve and a Public Records Act “wiki” site. Finally, WAPRO will help agencies evaluate software solutions such as tracking software and archiving tools that can ultimately make agencies more transparent for less money.

## **Who Should Join WAPRO?**

All public employees who assist with Public Records Act compliance and want more knowledge about the Public Records Act should join. This includes but is not limited to:

- Public Records Officers
- Information Technology staff
- Human Resource staff
- Legal counsel

## **What do members get?**

*Education:* WAPRO is developing educational opportunities that will be available to members at a low cost. Ultimately, WAPRO hopes to develop a certification program.

*Best Practices:* WAPRO will harness the collective wisdom from all of its members, who will then have access to this information. We expect to start a list-serve and a “wiki” site to enhance access.

*Tool Kit:* The WAPRO tool kit is still in the works, but once available it will include a bank of forms and sample documents, research tools such as the Exemption Compendium, and training tools you can use to train your agency including standardized PowerPoints.

*Networking:* Frequent opportunities throughout the year to meet your counterparts in other local governments and discuss current issues.

## How can you join WAPRO?

There are two ways to join. First, WAPRO will be holding its inaugural training on January 26, 2010 in Lakewood. This basic "Public Records Act 101" training is only \$125 and includes a one-year membership in WAPRO. You can find more information about the training and register by visiting the Washington Cities Insurance Authority, who is one of the sponsors of this training: [www.wciapool.org](http://www.wciapool.org).

Second, for those who cannot attend the training, you still join WAPRO for only \$75. Please contact Ramsey Ramerman ([rramerman@ci.everett.wa.us](mailto:rramerman@ci.everett.wa.us)) or Brandy Rinearson ([brinearson@cityofportorchard.us](mailto:brinearson@cityofportorchard.us)).

## WAPRO Board:

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