



ACLU

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
of NEW JERSEY

HOW TO CONTACT THE OPEN GOVERNANCE PROJECT

To contact the OGP for legal assistance
www.aclu-nj.org/complaint

To send the ACLU-NJ a public records request form
that requests improper or unlawful information,
e-mail the form to: badform@aclu-nj.org

To make a donation
www.aclu-nj.org/donate

To become an open governance volunteer attorney
www.aclu-nj.org/coopatt

OPEN GOVERNANCE PROJECT

“Information is
the currency of
democracy.”

— Thomas Jefferson



Open Governance Project
American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey
P.O. Box 32159, Newark, NJ 07102
973-642-2084
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OPEN GOVERNANCE PROJECT

WHO WE ARE

The Open Governance Project (OGP) is an initiative of the ACLU of New Jersey. The ACLU is the nation's foremost guardian of liberty, working daily in courts, legislatures and communities to defend and preserve individual rights and freedoms.

WHAT WE DO

The OGP works to improve citizens' access to public records and meetings through litigation, public education and advocacy. The OGP also lobbies local and state government in support of laws and policies that promote government transparency.

WHY OPEN GOVERNMENT IS IMPORTANT

Open Government is a linchpin of democracy, ensuring that voters have the information they need to elect leaders and evaluate their performance in office.

Public access to information is an essential tool in the fight against corruption in government. Transparency is key to restoring citizens' confidence in public officials, especially in a climate of corruption at multiple levels of government.

Public access to information saves lives and taxpayer dollars and exposes poor government practices.

The public has the right to know what its government is doing. After all, our government is supposed to be for the people, of the people, by the people.

OUR CURRENT PRIORITIES

- Litigate cases under the public records and meetings laws to ensure as much openness as possible, without sacrificing individual privacy rights.
- Promote the passage of legislation to limit what government bodies can charge for copies of public records to no more than 10 cents a page.
- Promote the passage of legislation to strengthen the enforcement of the Open Public Meetings Act, or "Sunshine Law," and keep it relevant as technologies change.
- Survey and analyze the Open Government Records Act (OPRA) request forms from the 1,900+ records custodians across the state, identifying those that require improper or unlawful information and seeing them corrected.

HOW THE OGP MAKES A DIFFERENCE

- Providing free legal representation in select cases to individuals who are unlawfully denied access to public records or public meetings.
- Offering informational seminars to community organizations, members of the legal profession and government agencies on open governance topics, such as How to Use OPRA, the Requirements of the Sunshine Law and Developing Issues in Government Transparency.
- Consulting with government agencies and public officials on policy matters involving open government.

“Public records are one portal through which the people observe their government, ensuring its accountability, integrity and equity while minimizing sovereign mischief and malfeasance.”

— Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor