



pennsylvania

OFFICE OF OPEN RECORDS

Erik Arneson, Executive Director

Standard Right-to-Know Law Request Form

March 6, 2019

<https://www.openrecords.pa.gov/>

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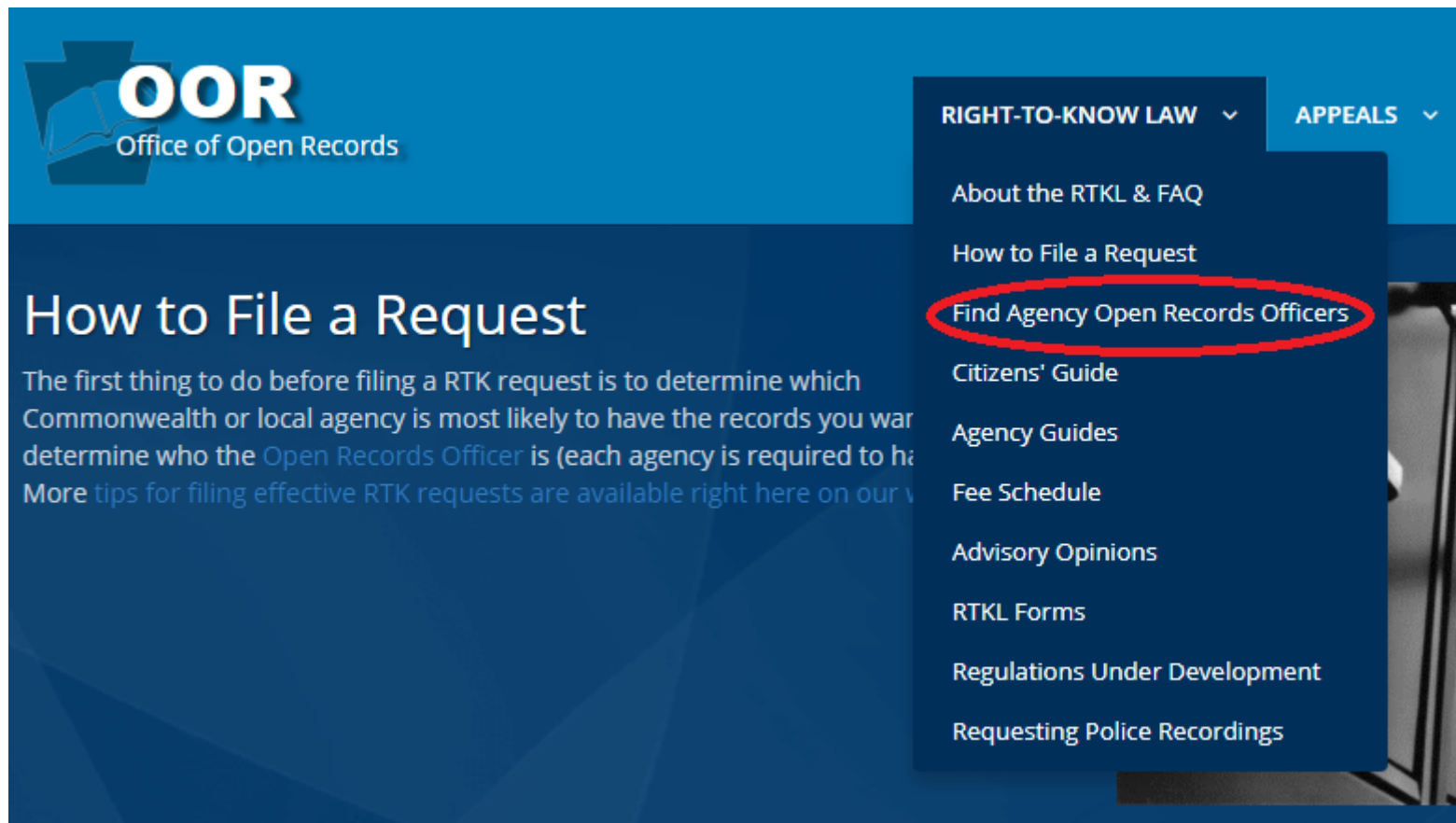
Filing a Right-to-Know Law Request in PA

Basic steps in filing a RTKL request in Pennsylvania:

- Determine which agency has the record(s) you want
- Fill out the Office of Open Records' [Standard Request Form](#)
 - All state & local agencies must accept it
 - Some agencies also have their own forms
- Submit the form to the appropriate agency
- Agency must respond within 5 business days
 - Can take a 30 calendar day extension for various reasons

How to File a RTK Request

Using the AORO Database



How to File a RTK Request

Using the AORO Database

Open Records Officer Search

Agency Name	County	Type
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Cumberland"/>	<input type="text" value="Local"/>

More About Agency AOROs

Many agencies, but not all, have a single AORO

- Commonwealth agencies: DEP, DCNR, DOC, DCED, etc.
- Some agencies have **separate AOROs by bureau, dep't**, etc.
 - e.g., Philadelphia has approximately 40 AOROs
 - Municipalities sometimes have separate AOROs for Police Dep'ts.
- If you're not sure you have the right agency, say so:
 - "If this request is misdirected, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can withdraw this request and direct it to the proper AORO."

More About Agency AOROs

If you can't find the name of an AORO

- Double-check spelling when searching AORO Database
- Check agency website
- Call agency
- **If you still can't find a name: Address request to "AORO"**
- More than 6,000 agencies in PA
 - Some very small w/ limited resources (e.g., one part-time employee)
 - Some agencies have no website & no email

How to File a RTKL Request

OOOR Standard RTK Request Form, part 1



Standard Right-to-Know Law Request Form

Good communication is vital in the RTKL process. Complete this form thoroughly and retain a copy; it is required should an appeal be necessary. You have 15 business days to appeal after a request is denied or deemed denied.

SUBMITTED TO AGENCY NAME: _____ (Attn: AORO)

Date of Request: _____ Submitted via: ☐ Email ☐ U.S. Mail ☐ Fax ☐ In Person

PERSON MAKING REQUEST:

Name: _____ Company (if applicable): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

How do you prefer to be contacted if the agency has questions? ☐ Telephone ☐ Email ☐ U.S. Mail

RECORDS REQUESTED: *Be clear and concise. Provide as much specific detail as possible, ideally including subject matter, time frame, and type of record or party names. Use additional sheets if necessary. RTKL requests should seek records, not ask questions. Requesters are not required to explain why the records are sought or the intended use of the records unless otherwise required by law.*

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How to File a RTKL Request

OOR Standard RTK Request Form, part 2

DO YOU WANT COPIES?

- ☐ Yes, electronic copies preferred if available
- ☐ Yes, printed copies preferred
- ☐ No, in-person inspection of records preferred (*may request copies later*)

Do you want [certified copies](#)? ☐ Yes (*may be subject to additional costs*) ☐ No

RTKL requests may require payment or prepayment of fees. See the [Official RTKL Fee Schedule](#) for more details.

Please notify me if fees associated with this request will be more than ☐ \$100 (or) ☐ \$_____.

ITEMS BELOW THIS LINE FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

Tracking: _____ Date Received: _____ Response Due (5 bus. days): _____

30-Day Ext.? ☐ Yes ☐ No (If Yes, Final Due Date: _____) Actual Response Date: _____

Request was: ☐ Granted ☐ Partially Granted & Denied ☐ Denied Cost to Requester: \$_____

☐ Appropriate third parties notified and given an opportunity to object to the release of requested records.

NOTE: In most cases, a completed RTKL request form is a public record.
More information about the RTKL is available at <https://www.openrecords.pa.gov>

Form updated Nov. 27, 2018

How to File a RTKL Request

OOR Standard RTK Request Form, part 2

DO YOU WANT COPIES? ☐ Yes, electronic copies preferred if available
☐ Yes, printed copies preferred
☐ No, in-person inspection of records preferred (*may request copies later*)
Do you want certified copies? ☐ Yes (*may be subject to additional costs*) ☐ No
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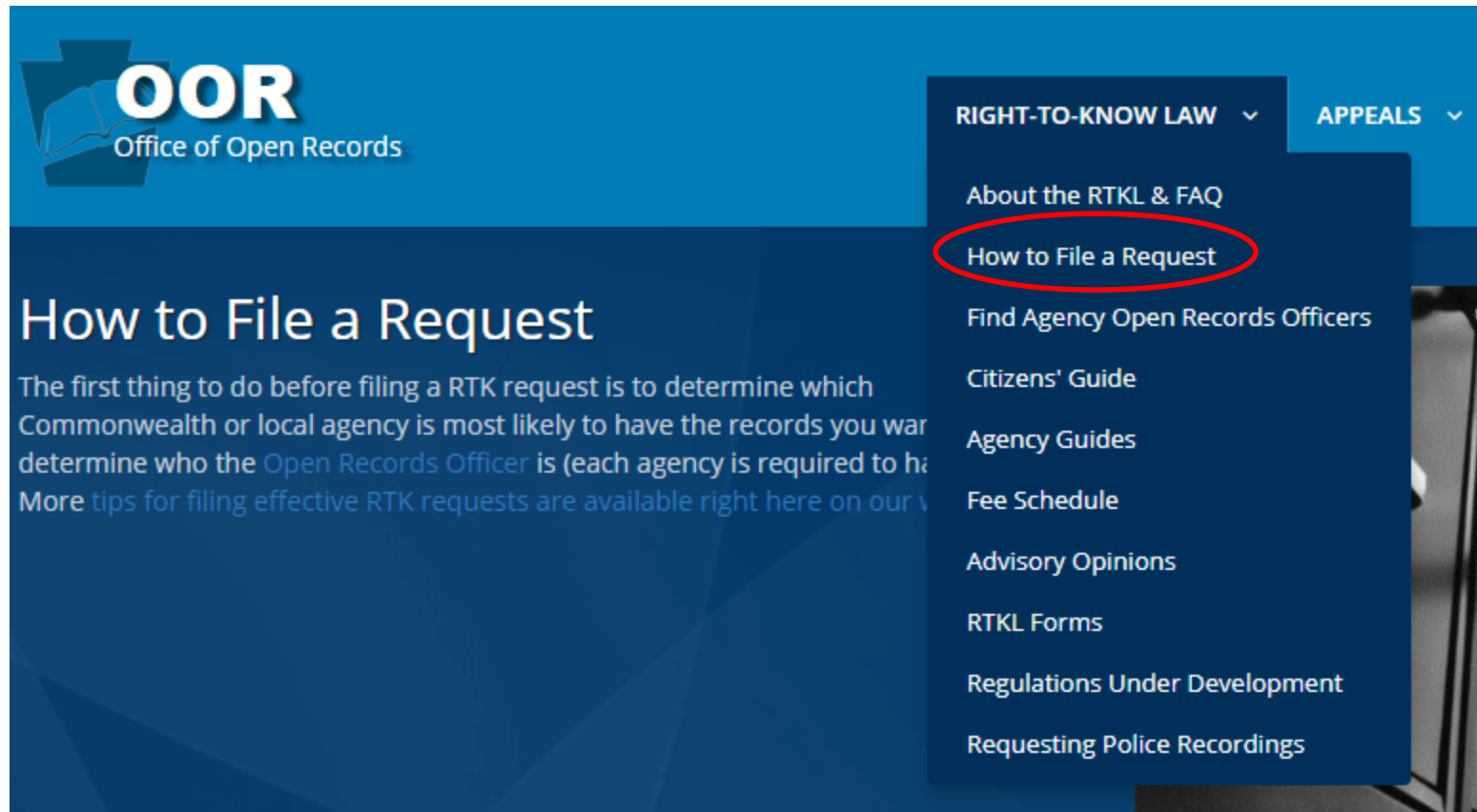
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Form updated Nov. 27, 2018

How to File a RTKL Request



Finding the OOR's Standard Request Form



How to File a RTKL Request

Finding the OOR's Standard Request Form

3. Prepare and Submit the Request

Some agencies have their own RTK Request Forms. Whenever possible, it's best to use the agency's form. But you can always use the OOR's Standard RTK Request Form, which is available here in PDF and Word versions:  

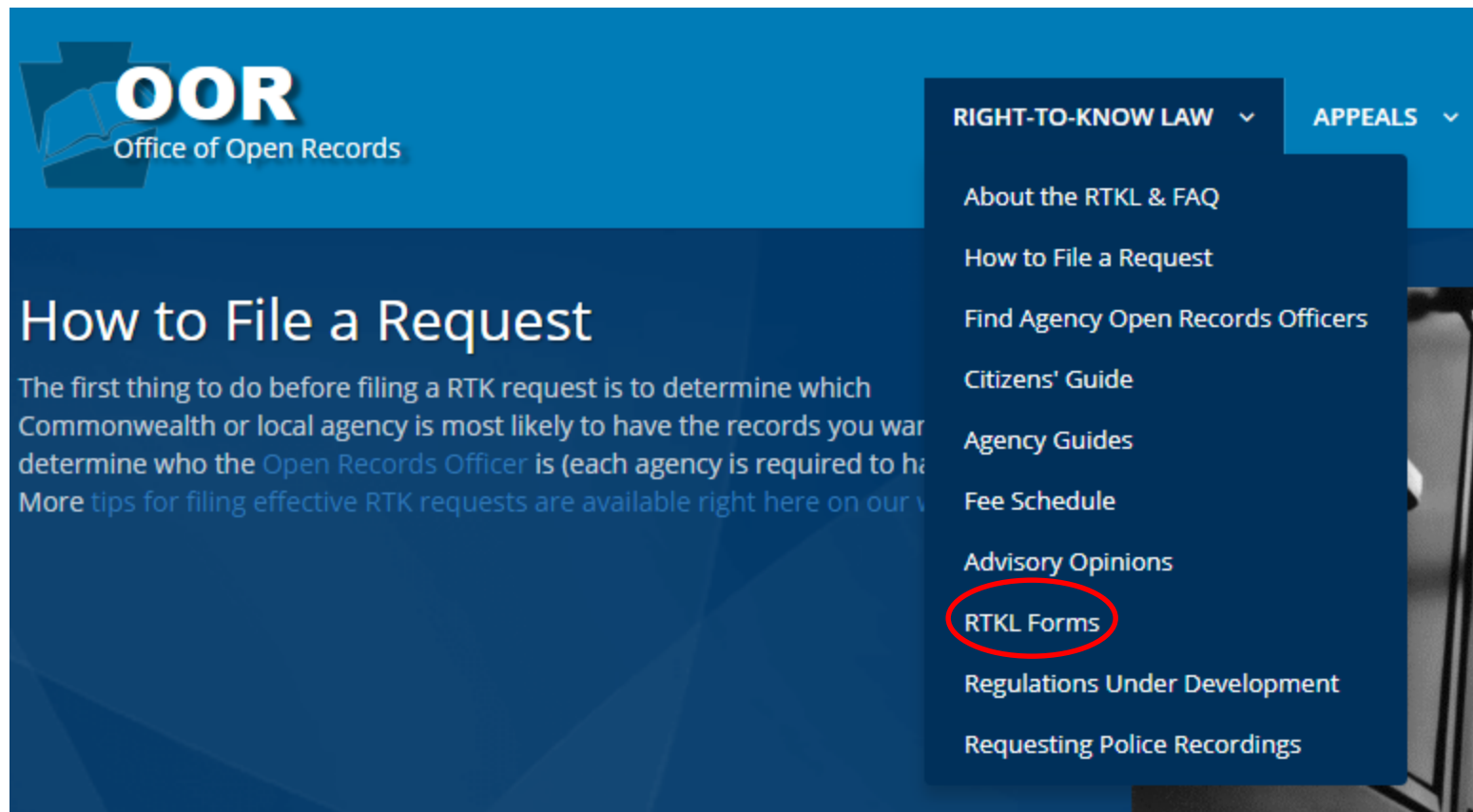
You can file a RTK request in four ways:

- Email
- Fax
- U.S. Mail
- In Person

No matter how you submit the request, be sure to address it to the AORO.

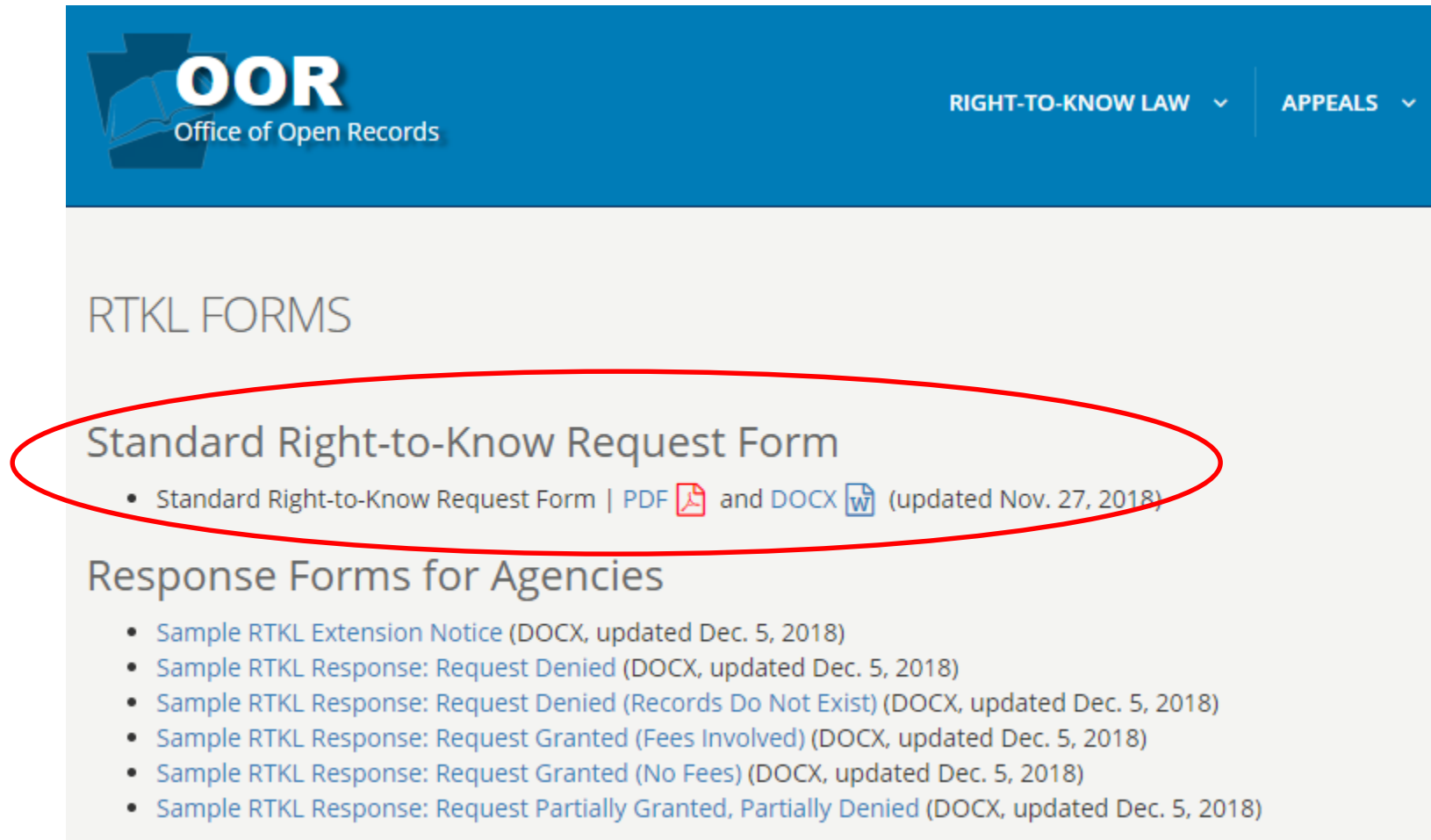
How to File a RTKL Request

Finding the OOR's Standard Request Form



How to File a RTKL Request

Finding the OOR's Standard Request Form





The screenshot shows the OOR (Office of Open Records) website. The header is blue with the OOR logo and navigation links for 'RIGHT-TO-KNOW LAW' and 'APPEALS'. The main content area is white and titled 'RTKL FORMS'. Under this title, the 'Standard Right-to-Know Request Form' is highlighted with a red oval. Below it, there is a list of 'Response Forms for Agencies'.

OOOR
Office of Open Records

RIGHT-TO-KNOW LAW ▾ APPEALS ▾

RTKL FORMS

Standard Right-to-Know Request Form

- [Standard Right-to-Know Request Form](#) | [PDF](#)  and [DOCX](#)  (updated Nov. 27, 2018)

Response Forms for Agencies

- [Sample RTKL Extension Notice](#) (DOCX, updated Dec. 5, 2018)
- [Sample RTKL Response: Request Denied](#) (DOCX, updated Dec. 5, 2018)
- [Sample RTKL Response: Request Denied \(Records Do Not Exist\)](#) (DOCX, updated Dec. 5, 2018)
- [Sample RTKL Response: Request Granted \(Fees Involved\)](#) (DOCX, updated Dec. 5, 2018)
- [Sample RTKL Response: Request Granted \(No Fees\)](#) (DOCX, updated Dec. 5, 2018)
- [Sample RTKL Response: Request Partially Granted, Partially Denied](#) (DOCX, updated Dec. 5, 2018)

OOOR Resources

Website, Twitter, Email Lists & More

- Web: <https://openrecords.pa.gov/>
- Blog: <https://openrecordspennsylvania.com/>
- Email lists: Daily Digest of FDs & General Updates
 - <https://www.openrecords.pa.gov/EmailSubscriptions.cfm>
- Twitter: [@OpenRecordsPA](#)
 - Executive Director: [@ErikOpenRecords](#)
- [YouTube Channel](#)
- Open Records in PA Podcast: [Apple Podcasts](#), [Stitcher](#), etc.