

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2014

Legislative Document

No. 1818

S.P. 728

In Senate, March 12, 2014

An Act To Facilitate Public Records Requests to State Agencies

Reported by Senator VALENTINO of York for the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary pursuant to Public Law 2013, chapter 229, section 3.

Reference to the Committee on Judiciary suggested and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 1 MRSA §413, sub-§5** is enacted to read:

3 **5. Website.** The public access officer for each state agency that maintains a website
4 shall cause the name, physical address, e-mail address and telephone number for the
5 public access officer or a link to a page containing the public access officer's contact
6 information to be posted on the home page of that agency's publicly accessible website.

7 **Sec. 2. State agencies; website link to dedicated page.** The Department of
8 Administrative and Financial Services, Office of Information Technology, in consultation
9 with state agencies, shall develop a standardized website link to a dedicated Freedom of
10 Access Act page within each agency's publicly accessible website with instructions and
11 information for persons requesting public records.

12 **Sec. 3. State agencies; keyword match for "FOAA."** State agencies shall use
13 executive branch information technology resources to create a keyword match for
14 "FOAA" in their websites.

15 **Sec. 4. Freedom of Access Act portal and request tracking.** The Public
16 Access Ombudsman and the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Office
17 of Information Technology shall work with InforME to develop and implement a system
18 of consistent tracking and reporting of Freedom of Access Act request information
19 pursuant to Public Law 2013, chapter 229, section 3. The tracking and reporting system
20 must be implemented by all state agencies by January 1, 2015.

21 **SUMMARY**

22 This bill implements recommendations of the Public Access Ombudsman pursuant to
23 Public Law 2013, chapter 229, section 3 related to the feasibility of developing a
24 centralized system for coordinating the receipt of and response to requests to state
25 agencies for public records in accordance with the Freedom of Access Act.

26 The bill requires state agencies' public access officers to include their contact
27 information on their agency websites. It also requires the Department of Administrative
28 and Financial Services, Office of Information Technology, in consultation with state
29 agencies, to develop a standardized link to Freedom of Access Act pages and requires
30 state agencies to use executive branch resources to create a keyword match for "FOAA"
31 in their websites.

32 The bill requires the Public Access Ombudsman and the Office of Information
33 Technology to work with InforME to develop and implement a system of consistent
34 tracking and reporting of public records requests under the Freedom of Access Act.