



350 Hudson Avenue, Township of Washington, NJ 07676-4799

Office of the Township Clerk, Susan Witkowski, RMC

switkowski@twpofwashington.us

Phone: 201-664-4425

Fax: 201-664-8281

November 4, 2025/OPRA 596A

Via email: opra+request-82940-90f01f2c@requests.opramachine.com

Concerned Citizen,

The Township of Washington received your Open Public Records Act (OPRA) request on October 30, 2025. The official Records Custodian, Susan Witkowski, received your OPRA request on October 30, 2025. As such, the seven (7) business day deadline to respond to your request is October 10, 2025. This response to your request is being provided the 3rd day after custodian's receipt of said request.

Your OPRA Request requested the following:

Any records, certificates, letters, documents, plaques (or photos/records thereof), photos, articles, related to awards or rewards given to *police, fire, EMS/ambulance, CERT, emergency management, *public works, or other essential personnel for service during the COVID19 pandemic / pandemic emergency.

Any records, certificates, letters, documents, plaques (or photos/records thereof), photos, articles, related to valor, distinguished service, apprehension, meritorious service, critical care save, CPR save, years or length of service, childbirth assists, or number of response awards or rewards given to *police, fire, EMS/ambulance, CERT, emergency management, *public works, or other essential personnel for service between 01/01/2014 and 12/31/2024.

***There are such records responsive to your request.**

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

Volunteer fire and ambulance services in New Jersey are generally not subject to OPRA requirements. The New Jersey Supreme Court established in Verry v. Franklin Fire District No. 1, 230 N.J. 285 (2017) that volunteer fire companies are not public agencies under OPRA because they are merely instrumentalities of instrumentalities rather than direct instrumentalities of political subdivisions. This principle extends to volunteer ambulance and rescue squads, as confirmed in Brooks v. Tabernacle Rescue Squad, 2015 WL 3669795 (App. Div. 2015). Not Reported in A.3d (2015).

This OPRA is considered complete.

If your request for access to a government record has been denied or unfilled within the seven (7) business days required by law, you have a right to challenge the decision by the Township of Washington to deny access. At your option, you may either institute a proceeding in the Superior Court of New Jersey or file a complaint with the Government Records Council (GRC) by completing the Denial of Access Complaint Form. You may contact the GRC by toll-free telephone at 866-850-0511, by mail at P.O. Box 819, Trenton, NJ, 08625, by e-mail at grc@dca.state.nj.us, or at their web site at www.state.nj.us/grc. The GRC can also answer other questions about the law. All questions regarding complaints filed in Superior Court should be directed to the Court Clerk in your County.

Sincerely,

/s/ Susan Witkowski

Susan Witkowski, RMC

Township Clerk
Township of Washington
201-664-4425/switkowski@twpofwashington.us

RECEIVED

OCT 30 2025

TOWNSHIP CLERK

OR-596A

-----Original Message-----

From: concerned resident <opra+request-82940-90f01f2c@requests.opramachine.com>

Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 1:25 PM

To: Town Clerk <townclerk@twpofwashington.us>

Subject: OPRA request - Emergency personnel awards

Caution: External E-mail

Dear Washington Township (Bergen),

Please accept this electronic request for public records made under OPRA and the common law right of access. I am not required to fill out an official form or use a particular software platform to submit my request per NJSA 47:1A-6(f), which states that an email from a requestor including all of the information required on the adopted form shall suffice in place of a completed form as a valid government record request.

I HAVE NOT been convicted of any indictable offense under the laws of New Jersey, any other state, or the United States.

I WILL NOT use the requested government records for a commercial purpose.

I AM NOT seeking records in connection with a legal proceeding.

Records requested:

Any records, certificates, letters, documents, plaques (or photos/records thereof), photos, articles, related to awards or rewards given to police, fire, EMS/ambulance, CERT, emergency management, public works, or other essential personnel for service during the COVID19 pandemic / pandemic emergency.

Any records, certificates, letters, documents, plaques (or photos/records thereof), photos, articles, related to valor, distinguished service, apprehension, meritorious service, critical care save, CPR save, years or length of service, childbirth assists, or number of response awards or rewards given to police, fire, EMS/ambulance, CERT, emergency management, public works, or other essential personnel for service between 01/01/2014 and 12/31/2024.

My preferred delivery method for response(s) to this request is by E-mail as attachments. Please confirm you have received this request. If you are not the custodian of records, please forward my request to that person and provide their email address to me for future reference.

Yours faithfully,
concerned resident

Please deliver records electronically via email to the below UNIQUE address for all replies to this request:

opra+request-82940-90f01f2c@requests.opramachine.com

Is townclerk@twpofwashington.us the wrong address for OPRA requests to Washington Township (Bergen)? If so, please contact us using this form:

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_opramachine.com_change-5Frequest_new-3Fbody-3Dwashington-5Ftownship-5Fbergen&d=DwlFaQ&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A_Cdp gnVfiiMM&r=xe6LILGY4fBqf2qF2SfWyQPyzkOmFj7ck01xsbi l5ts&m=kScfL7ep8t7_bSpiGvXqTi76kTkHrLLMI463snpGzKyVQXFt0LReKytMi78X2oEk&s=m1K-BaCwko1V8gLtp0kN0FbWf8YNbZylwVKtteN9Mw&e=

Disclaimer: This message and any reply that you make will be published on the internet. Our privacy and copyright policies:

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_opramachine.com_help_officers&d=DwlFaQ&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A_Cdp gnVfiiMM&r=xe6LILGY4fBqf2qF2SfWyQPyzkOmFj7ck01xsbi l5ts&m=kScfL7ep8t7_bSpiGvXqTi76kTkHrLLMI463snpGzKyVQXFt0LReKytMi78X2oEk&s=N9snggHsZc73IW_3BAoAy8rM1YEHq1tljR91Qonzo2A&e=

View this OPRA request & responses online:

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A_opramachine.com_request_emergency-5Fpersonnel-5Fawards&d=DwlFaQ&c=euGZstcaTDllvimEN8b7jXrwqOf-v5A_Cdp gnVfiiMM&r=xe6LILGY4fBqf2qF2SfWyQPyzkOmFj7ck01xsbi l5ts&m=kScfL7ep8t7_bSpiGvXqTi76kTkHrLLMI463snpGzKyVQXFt0LReKytMi78X2oEk&s=9tiRp4UCQF0EfG-SzTUIFi75C5RIffZPMBjGusFyHEo&e=

Please note that in some cases publication of requests and responses will be delayed.

If you find this service useful as an OPRA custodian, please ask your web manager to link to us from your organisation's website.

"OPRA machine's mission is to give people easy and affordable access to New Jersey public records.

For more information, contact us at: (732) 707-1628 or PO Box 3180, New Brunswick, NJ 08903."