## **NFOIC Member Survey**



## 1. In the past five years in your state has:

	Increased Substantially	Increased slightly	Stayed about the same	Decreased slightly	Decreased substantially	No opinion / Do not know	Rating Average	Response Count
the number of open government violations?	15.2% (14)	30.4% (28)	33.7% (31)	5.4% (5)	0.0% (0)	15.2% (14)	3.65	92
government officials' understanding and compliance with open government requests?	4.4% (4)	37.8% (34)	17.8% (16)	13.3% (12)	14.4% (13)	12.2% (11)	3.05	90
	answered question					92		
skipped question						1		

2. If you have seen a POSITIVE change in government officials' understanding of and compliance with open government requests, to what do you primarily attribute the change? (Check all that apply. Skip this question and proceed to question #3 if the change you saw was negative.)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Increased awareness	58.1%	25
Increased interest in transparency	37.2%	16
Increased activism from citizens	51.2%	22
Increased assertiveness by media	51.2%	22
Other (please specify)	46.5%	20
	answered question	43
	skipped question	50

3. If you have seen a NEGATIVE change in government official's understanding of and compliance with open government requests, to what do you primarily attribute the change? (Check all that apply. Skip this question if you answered question #2.)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Decreased interest	17.9%	7
Decreased interest in transparency	51.3%	20
Less activism from citizens	23.1%	9
Less assertiveness by media	56.4%	22
Other (please specify)	30.8%	12
	answered question	39
	skipped question	54

4. Can you describe a circumstance from your area that illustrates how the open government landscape has changed?

	Response Count
	61
answered question	61
skipped question	32

#### 5. In the past five years in your state has:

	Increased Substantially	Increased slightly	Stayed about the same	Decreased slightly	Decreased substantially	No opinion / Do not know	Rating Average	Response Count
the number of open government lawsuits filed by newspapers or other news organizations?	4.8% (4)	9.6% (8)	20.5% (17)	28.9% (24)	24.1% (20)	12.0% (10)	2.34	83
answered question						question	83	
	skipped question					question	10	

6. If you have seen an INCREASE in the number of open government lawsuits filed in your state by newspapers or other news organizations, to what do you primarily attribute the change? (Check all that apply. Skip this question and proceed to question #6 if the change you saw was a decrease.)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Frequent violations	20.0%	4
Increased interest in transparency	40.0%	8
More assertive news organizations	45.0%	9
Other (please specify)	45.0%	9
	answered question	20
	skipped question	73

7. If you have seen a DECREASE in the number of open government lawsuits filed in your state by newspapers or other news organizations, to what do you primarily attribute the change? (Check all that apply. Skip this question if you answered question #5.)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Lack of resources	89.4%	42
Decreased interest in open government / transparency	2.1%	1
Lack of media resolve / commitment	29.8%	14
Other (please specify)	17.0%	8
	answered question	47
	skipped question	46

## 8. In the past five years in your state has:

	Increased Substantially	Increased slightly	Stayed about the same	Decreased slightly	Decreased substantially	No opinion / Do not know	Rating Average	Response Count
the number of open government lawsuits filed by individuals or other organizations besides news organizations?	13.1% (11)	29.8% (25)	27.4% (23)	6.0% (5)	0.0% (0)	23.8% (20)	3.66	84
answered question								84
skipped question					9			

## 9. In the past five years in your state has:

	Increased substantially	Increased slightly	Stayed about the same	Decreased slightly	Decreased substantially	No opinion / Do not know	Rating Average	Response Count
the number of open records requests made by professional journalists or news organizations?	13.1% (11)	22.6% (19)	32.1% (27)	10.7% (9)	3.6% (3)	17.9% (15)	3.38	84
the number of open records requests made by private citizens or other non-media organizations?	23.7% (18)	30.3% (23)	18.4% (14)	1.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	26.3% (20)	4.04	76
						answered question		
		skipped question				9		

### 10. In the last five years has:

	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased	No opinion / Do not know	Rating Average	Response Count	
citizen and media demands for more government openness, transparency and accountability?	57.1% (48)	28.6% (24)	8.3% (7)	6.0% (5)	2.52	84	
	answered question						
	skipped question						

## 11. Does your organization have an FOI hotline that provides information, advice or legal assistance to citizens, journalists or other information seekers?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	49.4%	41
No	43.4%	36
No opinion / Do not know	7.2%	6
	answered question	83
	skipped question	10

## 12. If you answered "no" to question #11, are you aware of a FOI hotline operated by anyone else in your state?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	47.1%	16
No	47.1%	16
No opinion / Do not know	5.9%	2
	answered question	34
	skipped question	59

## 13. Who operates the FOI hotline in your state. (Check all that apply.)

	Response Percent	Response Count
My organization	47.8%	32
Another FOI group	17.9%	12
A bar association	1.5%	1
AG's office or other government entity	22.4%	15
Other (please specify)	41.8%	28
	answered question	67
	skipped question	26

# 14. What best describes the maximum level of legal assistance offered by your state's hotline in most circumstances? (Please choose only one):

	Response Percent	Response Count
Direct representation in the form of counsel.	10.6%	7
Advice, guidance and information regarding access rights under the law.	75.8%	50
Referrals for legal counsel.	3.0%	2
Other (please specify)	10.6%	7
	answered question	66
	skipped question	27

## 15. How are hotline queries and responses handled? (Check all that apply.)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Email	74.6%	47
Website	27.0%	17
Telephone	84.1%	53
Other (please specify)	14.3%	9
	answered question	63
	skipped question	30

### 16. Regardless of who operates the hotline, or the method of contact:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Subpar	Poor	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
how would you rate the FOI hotline's effectiveness?	35.7% (25)	40.0% (28)	14.3% (10)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	10.0% (7)	4.24	70
						answered	d question	70
	skipped question				23			

#### 17. Is your coalition experiencing a decline in support because of financial problems with the media? Response Response Percent Count Yes 40.0% 30 34.7% No 26 No opinion / Do not know 25.3% 19 answered question 75 skipped question 18

## 18. If YES, how are the media's financial problems having an effect on your organization. (Check all that apply.)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Decreased funding to spend on open government issues	83.3%	30
Decreased willingness to advocate vigorously	38.9%	14
Decreased willingness to sue	61.1%	22
Fewer journalists on staff making open records requests	52.8%	19
Fewer journalists on staff in general	69.4%	25
Less participation in your organization's efforts	52.8%	19
	answered question	36
	skipped question	57

## 19. In the past five years, has the membership of your coalition:

	Response Percent	Response Count
Increased substantially	6.8%	5
Increased slightly	21.9%	16
Stayed about the same	34.2%	25
Decreased slightly	13.7%	10
Decreased substantially	2.7%	2
No opinion / Do not know	20.5%	15
	answered question	73
	skipped question	20

## 20. In your opinion:

	Very Useful	Somewhat useful	Not very useful	Do not know / No opinion	Rating Average	Response Count
a war chest that provided financial assistance to would-be litigants for meritorious FOI or open meeting lawsuits would be?	79.2% (61)	15.6% (12)	1.3% (1)	3.9% (3)	2.81	77
				answere	d question	77
				skippe	d question	16

21. Please choose the choice below that best describes your level of familiarity with the Knight FOI Fund, administered by NFOIC to help pay for court costs, filing fees and other expenses associated with lawsuits over nondisclosure or meeting access. (Choose only one. Select "Other" if none of the choices provided are accurate or adequately descriptive.)

	Response Percent	Response Count
The Knight Fund allowed our coalition or someone in our state to bring a case that might not have otherwise been possible.	10.3%	8
Our coalition or someone in our has state applied for a Knight Fund grant, but was unsuccessful.	5.1%	4
I am familiar with the Knight Fund. I have never used or recommended it, but I might in the future.	46.2%	36
I am familiar with the Knight Fund. I have never had an occasion to use or recommend it, and I do not anticipate doing so.	6.4%	5
I was not aware that the Knight Fund or anything like it existed.	26.9%	21
Other (please specify)	5.1%	4
	answered question	78
	skipped question	15

## 22. In which state is your coalition or member organization located?

	Response Percent	Response Count
AL	2.7%	2
AK	2.7%	2
AZ	2.7%	2
AR	4.0%	3
CA	4.0%	3
СО	4.0%	3
СТ	1.3%	1
DE	2.7%	2
DC	2.7%	2
FL	4.0%	3
GA	1.3%	1
н	1.3%	1
ID	1.3%	1
IL	1.3%	1
IN	2.7%	2
IA	2.7%	2

KS	0.0%	0
KY	1.3%	1
LA	5.3%	4
ME	2.7%	2
MD	1.3%	1
MA	1.3%	1
MI	2.7%	2
MN	1.3%	1
MS	0.0%	0
МО	2.7%	2
MT	1.3%	1
NE	0.0%	0
NV	0.0%	0
NH	0.0%	0
NJ	4.0%	3
NM	2.7%	2
NY	1.3%	1
NC	1.3%	1
ND	0.0%	0

ОН	2.7%	2
OK	2.7%	2
OR	1.3%	1
PA	6.7%	5
RI	0.0%	0
SC	1.3%	1
SD	1.3%	1
TN	4.0%	3
TX	1.3%	1
UT	1.3%	1
VT	0.0%	0
VA	1.3%	1
WA	2.7%	2
WV	0.0%	0
WI	1.3%	1
WY	1.3%	1
	answered question	75
	skipped question	18

## 23. What is your title? Please select the most relevant option.

	Response Percent	Response Count
State coalition member	9.3%	7
State coalition board member	17.3%	13
State coalition Director / Executive Director	26.7%	20
MLRC Defense Counsel Section	25.3%	19
Other (please specify)	21.3%	16
	answered question	75
	skipped question	18