



STATE OF INDIANA

MIKE BRAUN, Governor

**PUBLIC ACCESS COUNSELOR
JENNIFER RUBY**

Indiana Government Center South
402 West Washington Street, Room W470
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2745
Telephone: (317) 234-0906
Email: pac@opac.in.gov
Website: www.IN.gov/pac

August 26, 2026

Re: Complaint 25-FC-412
Jamaise D. Wilson (Complainant) v.
Grant County Coroner (Respondent)

This advisory opinion is issued in response to the above-referenced complaint filed November 25, 2025.

A Notice of Complaint, along with a copy of the complaint, was sent to the Respondent on December 12, 2025, requesting a formal response by January 13, 2026. A formal response, submitted by Attorney Martin Harker of Kiley Harker Certain on behalf of Respondent, was received in this office on January 8, 2026.

The complaint alleges that Respondent violated the Access to Public Records Act (APRA) by failing to provide copies of the requested records.

ANALYSIS

The public policy of APRA states that “[p]roviding persons with information is an essential function of a representative government and an integral part of the routine duties of public officials and employees, whose duty it is to provide the information.” Indiana Code (IC) 5-14-3-1. Respondent is a public agency for purposes of APRA; and therefore, subject to the requirements. IC 5-14-3-2(s). As a result, unless an exception applies, any person has the right to inspect and copy Respondent’s public records during regular business hours. IC 5-14-3-3(a).

Complainant filed an Access to Public Records (APRA) request on November 17, 2025, seeking a copy of numerous records including:

- 1) manner-of -death certification
- 2) coroner’s narrative report
- 3) prelim and final autopsy reports
- 4) toxicology results
- 5) scene photos

- 6) autopsy photos
- 7) investigator notes
- 8) chain of custody records
- 9) body transfer records
- 10) any communications with law enforcement and
- 11) any records released to any third parties.

Complainant states that at the time of filing the complaint she had not received an acknowledgement or production of any records. When a requestor does not receive an acknowledgement within the appropriate time period, here 7 days, a constructive denial has occurred. IC 5-14-3-4.4(c)(1) and *Opinion of the Public Access Counselor 25-FC-096*.

Complainant then must file a complaint to this office within 30 days of the alleged violation or denial, or the complaint is barred. IC 5-14-5-7.
Complainant filed her complaint on November 25, 2025, within 30 days.

Respondent stated that the responsive records were provided to Complainant on January 7, 2026. The Respondent listed each item of the APRA request and the documents provided or stated that no records existed. In addition, the Respondent referred Complaint to the Grant County Board of Health and the City of Marion Police Department for the source of some of the requested records that were not held by Respondent.

Complainant did not raise the issue of a reasonable time frame to receive responsive records because Complainant filed the complaint eight (8) days after the APRA request. APRA provides that a public agency may not deny or interfere with the exercise of the right stated in IC 5-14-3-3(a). If the public agency does not deny the request, within a reasonable time after the request is received by agency the public agency shall either:

- (1) Provide the requested copies to the person making the request; or
- (2) Allow the person to make copies:
 - (A) on the agency's equipment; or
 - (B) on the person's own equipment.

IC 5-14-3-3(b). Respondent did not affirmatively deny the request.

APRA does not define the term "reasonable time". This office has in the past provided guidance on what would be considered a reasonable time for purposes of compliance with the APRA provisions. An informal benchmark this office observes for a typical response time would be thirty (30) days from the receipt of the request. *Opinion of the Public Access Counselor 20-FC-87*.

However, this office has further observed that many requests cannot be fulfilled within thirty (30) days for a variety of reasons. In those circumstances, this

office considers the following factors:

- (1) the size of the public agency;
- (2) the size of the request;
- (3) the number of pending requests;
- (4) the complexity of the request; and
- (5) any other operational considerations or factors that may reasonably affect the public records process.

Opinion of the Public Access Counselor 25-FC-034.

In the complaint submission, Complainant states:

The coroner told me verbally to expect preliminary autopsy findings and death certificate for [Decedent] on 11/4 or 11/5.

Decedent died on November 2, 2025, according to Complainant's filings. Most death certificates take ten (10) days to a month or longer before issuance, depending on the circumstances. Although it is likely that the coroner believed preliminary autopsy findings would be available, our office's knowledge of IC 36-2-14 County Coroner believes making a death certificate available two (2) to three (3) days after the death of the decedent would be highly unlikely.

Given the breadth of the records request, time required to search for communications, and the fact that less than two (2) months lapsed, which included three (3) national holidays, Respondent fulfilled the records request within a reasonable amount of time.

CONCLUSION

This office finds that the Respondent did not violate APRA as alleged in the complaint.



Jennifer G. Ruby
Public Access Counselor