

# ANATOMY OF A PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST

# 3

Prepared for the Nevada Public Records Task Force

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agencies  
tested

*Three Requests. Three Agencies.  
Three Different Outcomes.*

**Ballard  
Spahr**  
LLP

# OVERVIEW OF THE THREE REQUESTS

On April 23, 2026, Task Force Member Colleen McCarty submitted three parallel public records requests to:

|                                                      |                                                                  |                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sparks Police<br/>Department</b><br><br>#20261280 | <b>Washoe County<br/>Sheriff's Office</b><br><br>#R032408-042326 | <b>Reno Police<br/>Department</b><br><br>#P020897-042326 |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|

## Each request sought the same information:

- Internal directories listing employee names, job titles/rank, division/departments assignments, office phone numbers, email addresses, and other department contact information
- Each request expressly stated it did NOT seek personal information of the employees



# NEVADA PUBLIC RECORDS ACT — NRS CHAPTER 239

## **NRS 239.010**

All public records are open to inspection unless otherwise declared confidential; there is a strong presumption of openness

## **NRS 239.0107**

Agencies must respond within 5 business days with either the records, an estimated date of availability, or notice that the agency does not possess the records

## **NRS 239.0107**

If additional time needed, agency must provide a date by which records will be available and explanation of reason record is not available

## **NRS 239.0107**

Agencies denying access must provide a written notice citing the specific statute or authority for withholding

## **NRS 239.0113**

Burden of proof is on the governmental entity to show the record is confidential



Agency #1

# Sparks Police Department

Request #20261280

18

Calendar days  
to production

3

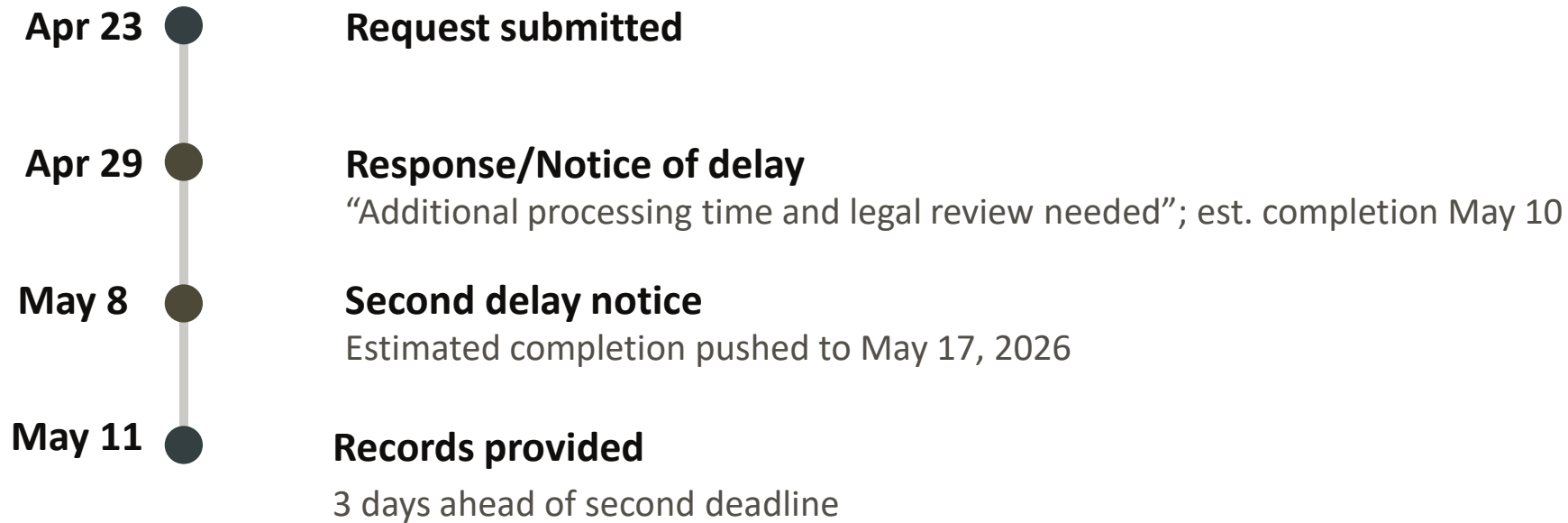
Documents  
produced

2

Extensions  
requested



# SPARKS POLICE DEPARTMENT — RESPONSE TIMELINE



Total Response Time  
**18 Calendar Days**

## SPARKS POLICE DEPARTMENT — LEGAL BASES CITED

### **“Individual Nontrivial Privacy Interest”**

*Clark Cnty. Sch. Dist. v. Las Vegas Rev.-J.*, 134 Nev. 700 (2018); *Las Vegas Metro. Police Dep’t v. Las Vegas Rev.-J.*, 136 Nev. 733 (2020); *Cameranesi v. United States Dep’t of Def.*, 856 F.3d 626 (9th Cir. 2017); *Donrey of Nevada, Inc. v. Bradshaw*, 106 Nev. 630 (1990); FOIA Exemption 6 (5 U.S.C.A. § 552(b)(6))

### **“Officer Safety”**

*Las Vegas Metro. Police Dep’t v. Las Vegas Rev.-J.*, 136 Nev. 733, 739 (2020); *Donrey of Nevada, Inc. v. Bradshaw*, 106 Nev. 630, 636 (1990); FOIA Exemption 7(F)



# **SPARKS POLICE DEPARTMENT — RECORDS PRODUCED**

## **City of Sparks Internal Phone Book**

1 page — Alphabetical phone directory listing employee names and work phone extensions only. No titles, no divisions, no emails.

## **Master Personnel List**

4 pages — Alphabetical list of employee names, positions (rank), and phone extensions.

## **HR Report Apr. 2026 PD**

4 pages — Employee last name, first name, position, division, department, work phone, and email address.



Agency #2

# Washoe County Sheriff's Office

Request #R032408-042326

96

Calendar days  
elapsed

0

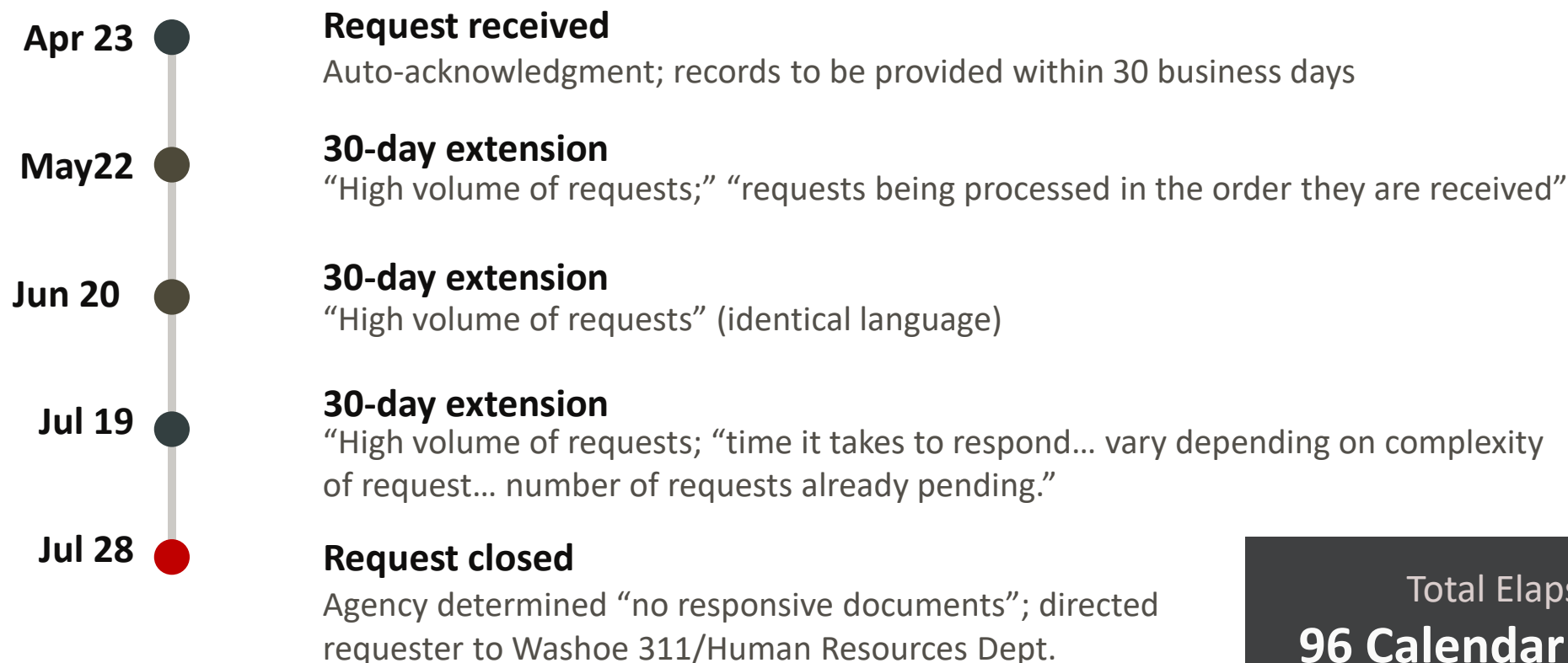
Documents  
produced

3

Extensions  
requested



# WASHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE — RESPONSE TIMELINE



Total Elapsed Time  
**96 Calendar Days — No  
Records Produced**



# WASHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE — REVIEW

## Key Issues

- Determined that no responsive documents existed, including any internal phone directory, employee roster, or organizational chart
- After 96 days, directed requester to submit a new request to Washoe 311/Human Resources
- No statutory exemption cited; denial based solely on absence of responsive documents
- Three successive 30-day extensions, each using same reasons



Agency #3

# Reno Police Department

Request #P020897-042326

75

Calendar days  
To production

1

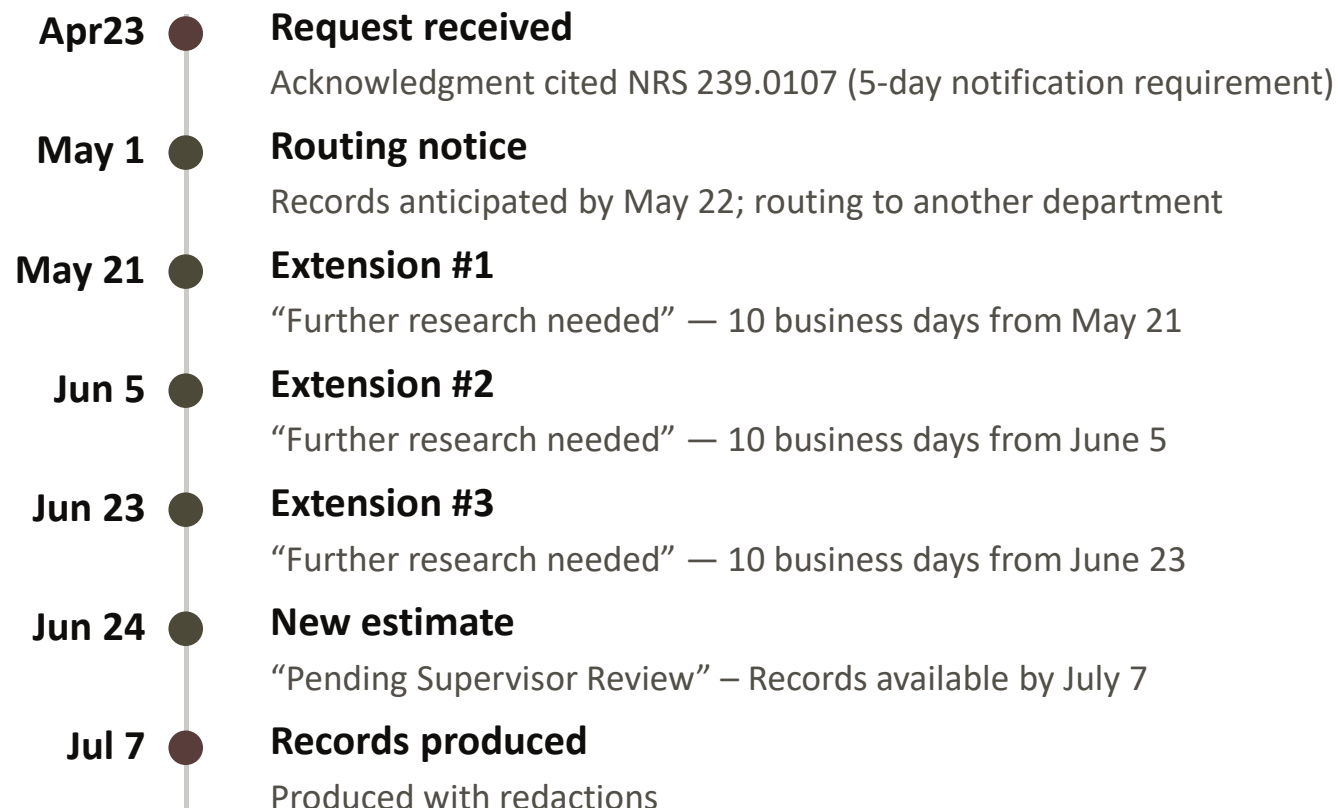
Documents  
produced

4

Extensions  
requested



# RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT — RESPONSE TIMELINE



Total Response Time  
**75 Calendar Days**



## RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT — LEGAL BASES CITED

### **“Investigative Technique”**

Confidential Law Enforcement Technique / *Donrey of Nevada v. Bradshaw*, 106 Nev. 630, 798 P.2d 144 (1990)

### **“Officer’s Bill of Rights”**

NRS 289.025

### **“Personal Information”**

NRS 239B.030 / 603A.040



# RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT — RECORDS PRODUCED

## **“Employee Phone List w/ Unit”**

16 pages | Printed 4/3/2026 | Single document produced after 75 days

Contains: employee name, rank/title, badge number, assignment, supervisor, days off, shift hours, office phone, city cell phone, personal cell phone, home phone

## **Redactions Applied**

- Personal cell phone numbers
- Home phone numbers
- Assignment information



# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

|                             | Sparks PD                   | Washoe County SO             | Reno PD                                                              |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Date of Request             | April 23, 2026              | April 23, 2026               | April 23, 2026                                                       |
| First Response              | Apr 29<br>(6 days)          | Apr 23<br>(auto-ack)         | Apr 23<br>(auto-ack)                                                 |
| Records Produced            | May 11, 2026                | None                         | July 7, 2026                                                         |
| Total Calendar Days         | 18                          | 96 (no records)              | 75                                                                   |
| No. of Extensions           | 2                           | 3                            | 4                                                                    |
| Records Produced?           | Yes<br>(3 documents)        | No<br>("no responsive docs") | Yes<br>(1 doc, redacted)                                             |
| Legal Basis for Withholding | Privacy /<br>Officer Safety | None cited                   | Investigative Tech. /<br>Officer's Bill of Rights /<br>Personal Info |



# RECORDS PRODUCED VS. WITHHELD

## Sparks PD

3 documents, ~9 pages

- Phone directory (names + work phone extensions)
- Personnel list (names + positions + extensions)
- HR report (names + positions + divisions + phones + emails)

## Washoe County SO

0 documents

No records  
produced

*Determined “no responsive documents” after  
96 days*

## Reno PD

1 document, 16 pages

- Employee phone list (names, titles, assignments, supervisors, shifts, office phones, city cell phones)
- Redacted: personal cell numbers, home phone numbers, assignment
- *Cited privacy, officer safety, and investigative technique exemptions*



# KEY FINDINGS

1. Identical requests produced significantly different outcomes across three agencies in the same metropolitan area
2. Response times ranged from 18 days to 96 days (with no production) for the same category of routine records
3. One agency (Washoe County) determined it had no responsive documents, including any form of employee directory, despite employing several hundred personnel
4. Legal bases for withholding varied significantly across agencies
5. Extension notices frequently used identical language across multiple iterations
6. No agency produced the requested records within the NRS 239.0107 statutory timeframe of 5 business days (initial response)

# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

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*“The same request. The same day.  
The same type of records.  
Three entirely different outcomes.”*

**Ballard  
Spahr**  
LLP