



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Children and Families

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Deputy General Counsel

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

April 29, 2021

Todd Feathers
MuckRock News
110801-28942697@requests.muckrock.com

Re: Public Records Request Received on April 7, 2021

Dear Todd Feathers:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Children and Families (“DCF”) hereby responds to your public records request (“PRR”) referenced above where you requested the following information:

A list, database, and/or spreadsheet detailing all data dictionaries held or used by the Department of Children and Families.

If your agency does not have a central record of its data dictionaries, I will accept copies of the data dictionaries themselves.

With your PRR, you provided an example of a data dictionary to demonstrate the type of record you were seeking. DCF does not maintain list of data dictionaries of the type you provided in your example. DCF training documents detail the information to be input into each field in DCF’s Case Management System.

DCF maintains data dictionaries related to its system administration that are utilized by DCF’s Information Technology (“IT”) Division to automate business processes. DCF Case Management System database contains more than 20,000 columns that include business and systems data, which are related to the following automated business functions. DCF provides the following listing of all automated business functions which may be helpful to you.

Massachusetts Child Welfare System - Automated Business Functions
Intakes (Child Abuse Reports)
Responses
Structured Decision Making Tools
Family Assessments
Action Plans
Consumer Demographics
Case Notes
Permanency Plans
Home Removals
Court Proceedings
Foster Care Recruitment
Foster Care Management
Background Record Checks
Provider Management
Treatment Plans
Treatment Deliveries
Interstate Compact Cases
Clinical Reviews
Safety Incidents
Service Authorizations
Service Tracking
Payment Information
Accounts Payable
Accounts Receivable
Vendor Management
Federal Financial Participation

Records related to the IT Division's data dictionaries themselves would be withheld as exempt from disclosure pursuant to G. L. c. 4, § 7 (26)(n), as the information relates to "the security or safety of persons or buildings, structures, facilities, utilities, transportation, cyber security or other infrastructure located within the commonwealth, the disclosure of which, in the reasonable judgment of the record custodian... is likely to jeopardize public safety or cyber security."

DCF now considers this PRR closed.

If you believe the agency has violated G.L. c. 66, § 10, pursuant to G.L. c. 66, § 10A, you may submit an appeal to the Supervisor of Public Records in the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth or seek judicial review by commencing a civil action in Suffolk Superior Court.

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Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

/s/Steven Treat
Steven Treat, Records Access Officer
Assistant General Counsel