DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND SUPPORT SERVICES

CITY OF CHICAGO

September 23, 2026

Jacob Schulz
Jacob@jacobforcityclerk.com

Dear Jacob,

On behalf of the City of Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, I am responding to your Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") request sent for the following:

Pursuant to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, 5 ILCS 140, I request electronic copies of the following existing aggregate records concerning inquiries received from Chicago residents by the Department of Family & Support Services.

1. ***Please provide the current list, taxonomy, data dictionary, inquiry categories, call-reason codes, disposition codes, referral categories, queue names, service categories, or comparable existing record used to classify why residents contact DFSS by telephone, online, email, or in person.***

    a. ***This includes categories identifying:***
        i. ***the reason for the inquiry;***
        ii. ***the DFSS program, division, or service involved;***
        iii. ***requests for information or assistance;***
        iv. ***eligibility or application questions;***
        v. ***service-navigation questions;***
        vi. ***referrals or transfers;***
        vii. ***inquiries outside DFSS jurisdiction; and***
        viii. ***the outcome or disposition of the contact, where tracked.***
    b. ***High-volume resident inquiry topics for:***
        i. ***January 1 through December 31, 2024***
        ii. ***January 1 through December 31, 2025***
        iii. ***January 1, 2026 through the date of this request***

2. ***Please provide any existing aggregate report, dashboard export, statistical summary, management report, or comparable record showing the number of resident inquiries or contacts by subject, issue category, program, service, call reason, or comparable classification.***

    a. ***Where those categories are already maintained, please include inquiries related to DFSS resident-facing programs and services such as:***
        i. ***older-adult and senior services;***

ii. ***homelessness and emergency shelter services;***
iii. ***domestic violence services;***
iv. ***youth services;***
v. ***workforce or employment-related programs;***
vi. ***community service programs;***
vii. ***food or nutrition assistance;***
viii. ***benefit or resource navigation;***
ix. ***housing-related referrals;***
x. ***utility or financial-assistance referrals;***
xi. ***caregiver resources; and***
xii. ***other high-volume resident-facing programs administered or coordinated by DFSS.***
xiii. ***Senior-services inquiries and navigation***

3. ***For the same periods, please provide any existing aggregate reports concerning inquiries received through DFSS senior-services or Area Agency on Aging functions, including:***

    a. ***common reasons older adults or caregivers contact DFSS;***
    b. ***requests for information about available programs or benefits;***
    c. ***referrals to senior centers, home-delivered meals, caregiver programs, transportation, legal services, health services, housing resources, or other programs;***
    d. ***referrals to the Illinois Department on Aging, Social Security Administration, Medicare, Medicaid, or other government agencies;***
    e. ***repeat contacts;***
    f. ***and service-navigation issues experienced by older adults or caregivers.***
    g. ***Referrals, transfers, and inquiries outside DFSS jurisdiction***

4. ***For the same periods, please provide any existing aggregate report showing:***

    a. ***inquiries referred or transferred to another DFSS program or division;***
    b. ***referrals to another City of Chicago department;***
    c. ***referrals to Cook County;***
    d. ***referrals to State of Illinois agencies;***
    e. ***referrals to federal agencies;***
    f. ***referrals to nonprofit, healthcare, housing, legal-aid, food-assistance, employment, or community organizations;***
    g. ***the destination agency, program, or organization, where tracked;***
    h. ***inquiries determined to concern matters outside DFSS jurisdiction; and***
    i. ***information-only inquiries that did not result in another DFSS transaction or case.***
    j. ***If DFSS maintains referral, transfer, or disposition categories but does not maintain an aggregate report, please provide the current list of those categories.***

5. ***Please provide any existing aggregate report, dashboard, or management summary for the same periods showing, to the extent maintained:***

    a. ***total incoming calls or resident contacts;***
    b. ***calls answered;***
    c. ***abandoned calls;***
    d. ***average wait or speed-to-answer time;***
    e. ***average handling time;***
    f. ***callbacks;***
    g. ***transfers;***

h. ***repeat contacts;***
i. ***first-contact or first-call resolution;***
j. ***service-level performance;***
k. ***escalated inquiries;***
l. ***unresolved contacts; and***
m. ***any comparable measure of whether a resident received the information, assistance, referral, or service sought during the initial contact.***

6. ***Please provide any existing aggregate report, analysis, dashboard, memorandum, or management summary identifying recurring difficulties experienced by residents attempting to obtain DFSS services or navigate related government and community programs, including, where already tracked:***

    a. ***difficulty determining which program, department, agency, or organization to contact;***
    b. ***residents contacting the wrong agency or program;***
    c. ***repeat contacts concerning the same issue;***
    d. ***difficulty completing an application or enrollment process;***
    e. ***missing or incomplete documentation;***
    f. ***difficulty reaching another agency or organization following a referral;***
    g. ***difficulty obtaining follow-up after a referral; and***
    h. ***other recurring service-navigation barriers.***

<u>Scope</u>

- ***I seek existing aggregate, administrative, and management records only.***
- ***I am not requesting resident names, addresses, telephone numbers, Social Security numbers, individual case files, individual benefit or service records, call recordings, transcripts, or other personally identifying or confidential information.***
- ***I am also not requesting that DFSS create a new statistical analysis if the requested information is not already maintained.***

If responsive information exists in an existing dashboard, call-center reporting platform, case-management system, CRM, spreadsheet, database report, or business-intelligence tool from which an ordinary electronic export is available, an export of that existing report is sufficient.

If DFSS's position is that no responsive records exist for any item above, I request a description of the search conducted for each item, per 5 ILCS 140/9(b).

In reference to requests #1, #2, #4, #5 & #6 - DFSS does not have any responsive records to your request regarding existing aggregate records concerning inquiries received from Chicago residents by the Department of Family & Support Services, as we do not maintain those records.

In reference to request #3 – Your request is unduly burdensome under Section 3(g) of FOIA. Section 3(g) of FOIA provides that "requests for all records falling within a category shall be complied with unless compliance with the request would be unduly burdensome for the complying public body and there is no

way to narrow the request and the burden on the public body outweighs the public interest in the information."

Within a given year, the Department of Family & Support Services receives anywhere between 40,000 and 50,000 requests for assistance through phone and email. Your request is unreasonably burdensome, as requests 3A-3G are all too broad and lack clarity on what specifically is being requested. In order to produce the records you seek, your search period needs to be narrowed further, with specific details on the records being requested. Otherwise, for the reasons provided above, DFSS is unable to respond to your FOIA request as currently drafted.

If you agree to narrow your request, you must submit a revised written request to our attention. DFSS will take no further action or send you any further correspondence unless and until your current request is narrowed in writing. If we do not receive your narrowed request within fourteen calendar days of the date of this letter, your current request will be denied.

In the event that we do not receive a narrowed request and your current FOIA request is therefore denied, you have the right to have a denial reviewed by the Public Access Counselor (PAC) at the Office of the Illinois Attorney General, 500 S. 2nd Street, Springfield, Illinois 62706, (877) 299-3642. You also have the right to seek judicial review of your denial by filing a lawsuit in Cook County Circuit Court.

You have a right to review by the Illinois Attorney General's Public Access Counselor, who can be contacted at 500 S. Second Street, Springfield, IL 62706. You may also seek judicial review under 5 ILCS 140/11.

Sincerely,

FOIA Officer
Chicago Department of Family and Support Services
fssfoia@cityofchicago.org