

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

In the Matter of a Complaint by

FINAL DECISION

Shannon Carter,

Complainant

against

Docket #FIC 2025-0003

Director, Department of Public Works, City
of New Haven; Department of Public
Works, City of New Haven; and City of
New Haven,

Respondents

November 19, 2025

The above-captioned matter was heard as a contested case on May 14, 2025, at which time the complainant and the respondents appeared, stipulated to certain facts and presented testimony, exhibits and argument on the complaint. This case was consolidated for the purpose of the hearing with Docket #FIC 2025-0005, Shannon Carter v. Community Services Administrator, Community Services Administration, City of New Haven; Community Services Administration, City of New Haven; and City of New Haven (final decision pending).

After consideration of the entire record, the following facts are found and conclusions of law are reached:

1. The respondents are public agencies within the meaning of §1-200(1), G.S.
2. It is found that, by email dated December 4, 2024, the complainant requested electronic copies of the following records:
 - (a) “clearing of any homeless encampment, single tent, or individual camp for the period of January 2018 – November 2024, including any breakdowns of overtime hours;”
 - (b) “contracts between the city and any environmental consultant or cleaning organization for purpose of mitigation or clean-up after the clearing of any homeless encampment, single tent, or individual camp for the period of January 2018 – November 2024;”
 - (c) “the hours and labor costs for any personnel and equipment costs from the Department of Public Works for the purpose of removing or clearing any homeless encampment, single tent, or individual camp for the period of January 2018 – November 2024;” and

- (d) “the hours and labor costs for any personnel and equipment costs from any other city department for the purpose of removing or clearing any homeless encampment, single tent, or individual camp for the period of January 2018 – November 2024.”

3. It is found that, by email dated December 4, 2024, the respondents acknowledged the complainant’s request, described in paragraph 2, above.

4. It is found that, by email dated December 16, 2024, the complainant requested an update on the status of her request described in paragraph 2, above.

5. By letter of complaint, received and filed January 6, 2025, the complainant appealed to this Commission, alleging that the respondents violated the Freedom of Information (“FOI”) Act by failing to provide the records described in paragraph 2, above.

6. Section 1-200(5), G.S., provides:

“[p]ublic records or files” means any recorded data or information relating to the conduct of the public’s business prepared, owned, used, received or retained by a public agency, or to which a public agency is entitled to receive a copy by law or contract under 1-218, whether such data or information be handwritten, typed, tape-recorded, videotaped, printed, photostated, photographed or recorded by any other method.

7. Section 1-210(a), G.S., provides, in relevant part:

[e]xcept as otherwise provided by any federal law or state statute, all records maintained or kept on file by any public agency, whether or not such records are required by any law or by any rule or regulation, shall be public records and every person shall have the right to ... (3) receive a copy of such records in accordance with section 1-212.

8. Section 1-212(a), G.S., provides, in relevant part: “[a]ny person applying in writing shall receive, promptly upon request, a plain, facsimile, electronic or certified copy of any public record.”

9. It is concluded that the requested records, to the extent they exist and are maintained by the respondents, are public records within the meaning of §§1-200(5) and 1-210(a), G.S.

10. It is found that, by email dated May 5, 2025, the respondents sent to the complainant certain electronic copies, as an example of the records that they maintain related to the clearing of homeless encampments, tents, and individual camps for the applicable time period identified

in the complainant's December 4, 2024 records request. It is also found that such records consist of internal reports that track some information related to homeless encampments in the respondent City, but do not track the hours worked and associated costs of clearing such homeless encampments.¹

11. At the hearing on this matter, the complainant argued that the records provided by the respondents, described in paragraph 10, above, are not responsive to her request because they do not indicate all the hours worked or any of the associated costs of clearing homeless encampments, tents, and individual camps. The complainant also testified that she believed the respondents maintain such responsive records.

12. The respondents testified, and it is found, that although there are data fields in the internal reports, described in paragraph 10, above, for "Caretaker Hours", "Heavy Equipment Hours", "Labor Hours", "Property Maintenance Worker Hours", "Supervisor Hours", "Outreach Coordinator Hours", "Compass Hours", and "Police Hours", such data fields do not represent the actual hours worked by employees. The respondents also testified that an employee finalizing an internal report was initially required by the respondents' system to enter a number in certain data fields tracking hours; however, it was not required by the respondents that the number entered be the actual number of hours worked. The respondents testified that it was the routine practice of employees to enter the number "1" when required to enter a number, regardless of how many hours of work was actually performed on a given homeless encampment. The respondents further testified that, at some point during the applicable time period, the respondents fixed their system, ending the requirement that employees enter numbers in any of the "Hours" data fields in order to finalize such internal reports.²

13. With regard to the complainant's requests described in paragraphs 2(a), 2(c), and 2(d), above, the respondents credibly testified, and it is found, that they did not track the hours, overtime, or costs, associated with the clearing of homeless encampments, tents, and individual camps for the applicable time period. Consequently, it is also found that the respondents do not maintain any records responsive to the complainant's requests described in paragraphs 2(a), 2(c), and 2(d), above, as articulated at the hearing and as described in paragraph 11, above.

14. With regard to the complainant's request described in paragraph 2(b), above, the respondents credibly testified, and it is found, that they did not enter into any contracts with any outside organizations related to the clearing of homeless encampments, tents, and individual camps. Consequently, it is also found that the respondents do not maintain any records responsive to the complainant's request described in paragraph 2(b), above.

15. It is therefore concluded that the respondents did not violate the disclosure provisions of §§1-210(a) and 1-212(a), G.S., as alleged in the complaint.

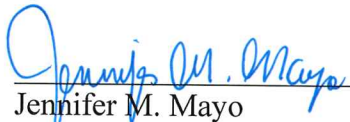
The following order by the Commission is hereby recommended on the basis of the record concerning the above-captioned complaint:

¹ See paragraph 12, below.

² The Commission notes that this explains why some internal reports have a number in certain "Hours" data fields, while the "Hours" data fields of other internal reports are entirely blank.

1. The complaint is dismissed.

Approved by Order of the Freedom of Information Commission at its regular meeting of November 19, 2025.



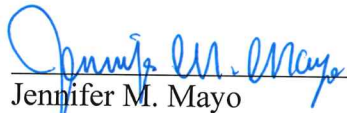
Jennifer M. Mayo
Acting Clerk of the Commission

PURSUANT TO SECTION 4-180(c), G.S., THE FOLLOWING ARE THE NAMES OF EACH PARTY AND THE MOST RECENT MAILING ADDRESS, PROVIDED TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION, OF THE PARTIES OR THEIR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE.

THE PARTIES TO THIS CONTESTED CASE ARE:

SHANNON CARTER, 11 Clark Street, Apt.1, New Haven, CT 06511

**DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, CITY OF NEW HAVEN;
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, CITY OF NEW HAVEN; AND CITY OF NEW
HAVEN**, c/o Attorney Catherine E. LaMarr, Office of the Corporation Counsel, City Hall,
165 Church Street, 4th Floor, New Haven, CT 06510



Jennifer M. Mayo
Acting Clerk of the Commission