

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

In the Matter of a Complaint by

FINAL DECISION

Michael Santana,

Complainant

against

Docket #FIC 2025-0284

Chief, Police Department,
City of New Haven; Police
Department, City of New
Haven, and City of New Haven

Respondents

November 19, 2025

The above-captioned matter was scheduled to be heard as a contested case on October 20, 2025, at which time the respondents appeared, but the complainant did not appear to prosecute the case.

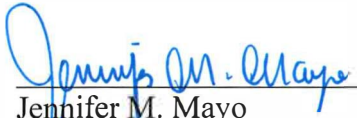
Commission staff contacted the complainant by telephone to inquire about his absence, at which time he advised that he believed this matter had been resolved.

The undersigned hearing officer notes that Attorney Joseph M. Merly, counsel for the respondents, appeared at the hearing with one witness. Specifically, it is noted that Attorney Merly appeared with David Portela, a lieutenant with the respondent police department. Lieutenant Portela represented that he spent the better part of two days, or sixteen hours, “researching and procuring the materials” responsive to the request at issue. In addition, Lieutenant Portela represented that he provided approximately half of the records responsive to the request in respondents’ possession to the complainant in September 2025, after receiving notice of the complaint from the Commission on September 24, 2025. The Lieutenant further represented that the only responsive records that had not been disclosed to the complainant, as of the date of the hearing, were body/surveillance footage, which were still in the queue for processing.

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

1. The complaint is hereby dismissed.
2. The complainant is admonished for his failure to appear at the hearing on this matter or to notify the Commission that the matter had been resolved, which failure resulted in a waste of scarce state resources.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jennifer M. Mayo", is written over a horizontal line.


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:

MICHAEL SANTANA, 1811 State Street, Hamden, CT 06517

CHIEF, POLICE DEPARTMENT, CITY OF NEW HAVEN; POLICE DEPARTMENT, CITY OF NEW HAVEN; AND CITY OF NEW HAVEN, c/o Attorney Joseph M. Merly, Office of the Corporation Counsel, 165 Church Street, New Haven, CT 06510


Jennifer M. Mayo
Acting Clerk of the Commission