

Massachusetts Public Records: Notable Case Law

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[Friedman v. Division of Administrative < https://www.socialaw.com/services/slip-opinions/slip-opinion-details/bruce-friedman-vs.-division-of-administrative-law-appeals-another-1>](https://www.socialaw.com/services/slip-opinions/slip-opinion-details/bruce-friedman-vs.-division-of-administrative-law-appeals-another-1) < [https://www.socialaw.com/services/slip-opinions/slip-opinion-details/bruce-friedman-vs.-division-of-administrative-law-appeals-another-1>](https://www.socialaw.com/services/slip-opinions/slip-opinion-details/bruce-friedman-vs.-division-of-administrative-law-appeals-another-1) [Law Appeals <](#)

<https://www.socialaw.com/services/slip-opinions/slip-opinion-details/bruce-friedman-vs.-division-of-administrative-law-appeals-another-1>>, 231 N.E.3d 957 (Mass. App. 2024) | Dismissal of a records requester's non-response appeal was valid because the requests failed to reasonably describe the records sought.

Attorney General v. District Attorney for Plymouth District and Others <

<http://masscases.com/cases/sjc/484/484mass260.html>>, 484 Mass. 260 (2020) | Information requested from the offices of certain district attorneys that was stored in electronic case databases maintained by each office is exempt from disclosure unless the information could be redacted to ensure that none of the records was directly or indirectly identifiable to any person.

Boston Globe Media Partners, Inc. v. Department of Criminal Justice Information Services <

<http://masscases.com/cases/sjc/484/484mass279.html>>, 484 Mass. 279 (2020) | Booking photographs and police incident reports about the arrests of certain police officers are not exempt from disclosure under the public records law or under the Criminal Offender Record Information.

Harvard Crimson, Inc. v. President & Fellows of Harvard College <

<http://masscases.com/cases/sjc/445/445mass745.html>>, 445 Mass. 745 (2006) | Certain documents in the custody of the Harvard University police department do not constitute "public

records” subject to mandatory disclosure under the Massachusetts public records law.

Wakefield Teachers Association v. School Committee of Wakefield <

<http://masscases.com/cases/sjc/431/431mass792.html>>, 431

Mass. 792 (2000) | A disciplinary decision and report of the superintendent of Wakefield public schools regarding the performance of a teacher is part of the teacher’s personnel file and is exempt from disclosure.

Lambert v. Exec. Dir. of Judicial Nominating Council <

<http://masscases.com/cases/sjc/425/425mass406.html>>, 425

Mass. 406 (1997) | Cited by governors when claiming that their respective office is exempt from the public records law.

Dist. Attorney for the Norfolk Dist. v. Flatley <

<http://masscases.com/cases/sjc/419/419mass507.html>>, 419

Mass. 507 (1995) | Held that Exemption (f) is not a blanket investigatory exemption designed to shield all police and law enforcement records; instead, a case-by-case analysis is required.

Attorney Gen. v. Collector of Lynn <

<http://masscases.com/cases/sjc/377/377mass151.html>>, 377

Mass. 151 (1979) | Held that Exemption (c), also known as “the privacy exemption,” requires a balancing test between individual privacy interests and the public interest in disclosure.

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