

The Washington Post

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20071-7403
(202) 334-6000

Peggy Armstrong

Director, Office of Communications
Executive Office of the Mayor
One Judiciary Square, Suite 1100S
Washington, DC 20001
Delivered via FedEx

Get the NAME of the
person responsible +
their actual contact info

→ Get some kind of confirmation they received it.

Dear Ms. Armstrong:

Quote the appropriate law

Pursuant to the D.C. Freedom of Information Act, D.C. Code 1-1521 et. seq., I hereby request an electronic copy of the service request database maintained as part of the customer call center informally known as 727-1000.

In particular, I am requesting all records and all fields from the database from its inception to the present, including, but not limited to:

The location of the problem (including quadrant, street number, street name, latitude and longitude), the proximity or description of the location, the service requested, any additional description of the problem, the tracking number, the date of the request and all data elements associated with tracking, correcting or otherwise acting on the request.

I am also requesting any lookup tables, code sheets, dictionaries and other documents needed to interpret the data.

If you regard any of the requested records as subject to exemption from required disclosure under the Act, I ask that you exercise your discretion and disclose them nonetheless. If you find that any exemptions apply, please be aware of the specific requirement under the Act that you provide any reasonably segregable portion of any record.

I am requesting that this data be supplied in any common data format on any common medium, such as a comma-separated text file supplied via cd-rom. I am happy to provide you with any materials you need to comply with this request. Alternatively, we can set up an Internet drop-off point for the data.

— MAKE SURE TO ASK FOR DATA FORMAT, not just electronic, to avoid PDF!

I am making this request on behalf of The Washington Post, a newspaper of general circulation in the Washington DC area and throughout the United States. The records disclosed will be used in the preparation of news articles for dissemination to the public.

Your justification for disclosing into the agency may not have to provide.

Do enough
reporting
to know
the name
of the
system!

list by
name
the fields
you want +
are
entitled to

use
discretion

broad
enough
to include
things
you didn't
know to
ask for.

IMPORTANT!
You need
to be able
to read it.

redactions. I should have asked
them to justify any - forgot.

Accordingly, I request that, pursuant to DC Code 1-1522(b), you waive all fees in the public interest because the furnishing of this information will primarily benefit the public and is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the activities of government. If, however, you decline to waive all fees, I am prepared to pay your normal fees to media requests, but ask that you notify me if you expect these fees to exceed \$100.

Fee
waiver

I understand that this system is based on a common relational database format that should not take significant work to copy. I am eager to work with your office to make this request as simple as possible and to eliminate any unnecessary work.

If you have any questions about this request, please do not hesitate to call me at the phone number listed below. I look forward to your response within the ten day statutory time period.

Sincerely,

↳ call or visit
the NEXT DAY !

Sarah Cohen
Database Editor
(202) 334-6259
email: cohensh@washpost.com

try to give them a hint abt. where to find the records + how to ask tech ppl for them. If you know they've been provided before, tell them when & to whom. Example: where is the file cabinet? Who should they ask? Where do they start?

Other hints:

- list items that you know they cannot, by law, provide
- tell them you only want electronically held, not paper records

} tell them to exclude these.