

COUNCIL DATA REQUEST PROCESS

Data requests from the Council, and/or its individual members, to the PAs shall be submitted to the Council Chair (DOER), or its designee.¹ Requests may be made during a monthly Council meeting, or via email to ma-eeac@mass.gov and shall include an explanation of the purpose of the request along with any supporting information that would help the PAs better understand that purpose. The Council Chair, upon consultation with the Council's Consultants and/or the individual counselor, shall exercise its discretion in determining the value and usefulness of the request to the role of the Council, as a whole. The data privacy protection standards of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Department of Public Utilities shall apply to the provision of any requested information.

During monthly coordination meetings, PAs and the Council Chair will work together to review the request to determine that the value and usefulness of the data is appropriately balanced with the cost to respond. Consideration of the cost will include the time it will take to obtain and prepare the data, whether the costs to provide the data are reasonable and prudent, and whether any alternative ways to address the request exist that are less costly and/or provide greater value. The PAs and Council Chair will make this determination by the next monthly Council meeting following the request. The process for deciding whether or not the PAs will fulfill the request is as follows:

- If the PAs and Council Chair determine that the value and usefulness of the data is appropriately balanced with the cost to provide it, the PAs will do so in a timely manner, based on the nature of the request and the manner of collecting and preparing the data. At a minimum, the PAs will provide an update to the Council Chair and the requesting party within one month of notifying the group that the request was approved.
- If the PAs and Council Chair determine that the value and usefulness of the data is not appropriately balanced with the cost to provide it, the Council Chair may request a meeting with the PAs and the requesting party to discuss the request and the reasons the data was not produced, including a specific cost explanation.
- If the PAs and the Council Chair disagree on whether the value and usefulness of the data is appropriately balanced with the cost to provide it, the Council Chair has the ability to bring the decision to a vote at the Council. In the event of continued disagreement following a vote at the Council, PAs reserve the right to immediately petition the Department of Public Utilities to appeal the determination.

This process will minimize administrative costs by providing a single point of contact to minimize multiple communications, will cause each request to be accompanied by supporting information, thus requiring that the requester clearly articulate the purpose and consider alternative pathways, and will ensure that each request is reviewed for value, usefulness, and cost prudence.

¹ The process directed herein does not preclude the AGO from issuing data requests to the distribution companies pursuant to its statutory authority under G.L. c. 12, § 11E(c).