

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**Department of Forensic Sciences**



**Open Government Report 2014**

To institutionalize a culture of transparent and open government, accountability, and to expand opportunities for resident participation and collaboration, this Report describes how the Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) has and will continue to develop and enhance transparency, public participation, and collaboration. In accordance with Mayor's Order 2014-170, this report addresses the following topics:

**Transparency**

- DFS's Public Information Officer maintains the agency website ([dfs.dc.gov](http://dfs.dc.gov)) and Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/DCDepartmentofForensicSciences](http://www.facebook.com/DCDepartmentofForensicSciences)), regularly posting news and information to both. The website includes an Open Government and FOIA page that includes to all sorts of DFS information, including administrative, financial, operational, and public testimony/meetings. Agency press releases are posted to the website and Facebook, as well as emailed out to dozens of media outlets.
- DFS takes its obligations pursuant to the District's Freedom of Information Act and Open Meeting Act seriously. DFS's General Counsel is the agency's FOIA officer and in the most recent fiscal year for which data is available, a disposition was reached in 100 percent of requests received and was done so in a median time of 12 days. Links are available on the DFS website that direct users to a FOIA request form, the agency's FOIA report, and the results of FOIA requests filed. Regarding Open Meetings, DFS publishes advance notice of the quarterly meetings of its Science Advisory Board in the DC Register and on its website, along with an agenda. After the meetings, notes are posted in a timely fashion, and a complete audio recording is made available upon request. Webcasting is under consideration pending technology review and application.
- DFS will regularly consider what public information to provide through existing and new media, in keeping with its mission and the statute creating the agency.

- DFS is working closely with the Office of the City Administrator (OCA) and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) to identify a significant number of datasets that OCA and OCTO expect to publish online later this year. If no dataset from DFS is selected to be included in this 2014 release, we will continue to work with OCA and OCTO to identify datasets appropriate to publish in 2015. In the future, requirements for open data reporting will be provided by the Chief Data Officer.

### **Public Engagement and Participation**

- All of DFS's policies and procedures are linked in the agency's public website. Commentary/feedback can be sent to [contactDFS@dc.gov](mailto:contactDFS@dc.gov).
- Through its website and Facebook page, DFS gives advance notice of any community meetings or public hearings in which the agency is participating. The website also features links to the Director's testimony at Performance and Budget Oversight Hearings before the DC Council. DFS responds promptly to any public inquiries/comments made via its website, Facebook page or emails to its Public Information Officer, Executive Assistant and members of the agency Directorate.
- Stakeholders are identified by statute, District of Columbia Code, Division 1, Title 5, Chapter 15.
- The public can contact DFS by email, Facebook page, phone and regular mail.

### **Collaboration**

- DFS has weekly meetings of its Directorate, which includes all Department heads. Coordination among departments on agency-wide issues is discussed. Meetings are held regularly involving DFS and its stakeholder agencies, where information is exchanged and feedback sought. Additional meetings are regularly held with stakeholders to organize, prioritize and resolve issues that may arise. DFS's website and Facebook page list and give links to news, events, and updates relevant to the agency.
- DFS works with the stakeholders, media and the public to provide timely and accurate information about activities relevant to its mission.