

United States Department of Justice



Chief Data Officer Annual Report

December 2022

Statutory Authority

This annual report of the Department of Justice (Department or DOJ) Chief Data Officer (CDO) to Congress is prepared pursuant to 44 U.S.C. § 3520(e). It details agency compliance with the requirements of Title II of the Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act – the Open, Public, Electronic, and Necessary (OPEN) Government Data Act, Pub. L. No. 115–435. In addition, this report also serves as the annual update to the agency’s strategic information resources management plan pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 3506(b)(2).

Government-wide Requirements

The OPEN Government Data Act created the CDO position at federal agencies with responsibilities including:

- Overall responsibility for lifecycle data management
- Coordinate with agency officials for using, protecting, disseminating, and generating data to ensure agency data needs are met
- Manage data assets for the agency
- Ensure that, to the extent practicable, agency data conforms with data management best practices
- Support the work and data needs of the agency Statistical Official, Performance Improvement Officer, and Evaluation Officer
- Engage with agency employees, the public, and contractors in using public data assets and encouraging collaborative approaches on improving data use

The statute also directs agencies to take steps to maintain a comprehensive data inventory and make data assets open by default, in accordance with published government-wide guidance.

Given the responsibility of the CDO for lifecycle data management regardless of data type or mission, it is important to reference additional statutes and authorities when reporting on the Department CDO efforts under the OPEN Government Data Act. The Geospatial Data Act (GDA) designates DOJ as a covered agency, with additional requirements related to the management of geospatial data. Closely related to the OPEN Government Data Act is the Federal Data Strategy – Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memorandum M-19-18 – and accompanying action plans. Finally, Executive Orders 13859 and 13960 include actions for agencies to undertake related to artificial intelligence (AI), which align with data responsibilities.

Though not an exhaustive list, when taken together these authorities emphasize the critical nature of government data and the steps for agencies to take to maximize the utility of this resource for agency operations and the public at large.

Department of Justice Approach

Building on the efforts of individual DOJ Components, as well as agency-wide initiatives, the Department continues to take a holistic and collaborative approach to implementing the

responsibilities of the CDO and the requirements of the OPEN Government Data Act and additional authorities listed above.

At DOJ, the same individual serves as both the Department Chief Information Officer (CIO) and CDO. This allows the Department to draw upon the resources and institutional knowledge of the CIO's office to enact CDO responsibilities in a way that combines both governance and the technologies needed to implement.

Following the passage of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018, in February 2019 the Department published a DOJ Data Strategy – a foundational framework designed to build a standardized, programmatic approach to manage and share data while also advancing the capabilities of DOJ data communities. The DOJ Data Strategy includes numerous agency-wide and Component-specific responsibilities designed to develop enterprise approaches across four goals: data management, information sharing, identity and access management, and workforce. DOJ updated the Data Strategy in 2022 to reflect progress since the inaugural publication.¹

Oversight of the DOJ Data Strategy rests with the Department Data Governance Board (Board). Chaired by the CDO, the Board includes the DOJ Evaluation Officer and Statistical Official, senior Department leaders from operational areas such as information technology, records, acquisitions, and privacy, as well as officials from DOJ offices representing mission areas including law enforcement, litigation, and corrections. Three working groups, co-chaired by Board members and representing the four goals of the DOJ Data Strategy, lead the day-to-day implementation efforts. In addition to these working groups, the Board chartered two communities of interest to bring together Department stakeholders on the topics of geospatial data and AI.²

To execute the responsibilities of the DOJ Data Strategy, the Board developed an implementation plan with discrete deliverables and timelines. The plan also incorporates requirements from the OPEN Government Data Act and related authorities such as the GDA in order to ensure a comprehensive approach to these requirements. The Board reviews and updates the plan quarterly which provides an opportunity to adjust timelines, as needed, and incorporate any new requirements from statutes or guidance. Through 2022, the Department completed 46 actions from the plan. Highlights of the Board's accomplishments in 2022 include:

- Updated the DOJ Data Strategy to reflect agency progress and new focus areas
- Collected and published information on the use of DOJ data assets
- Developed a plan to host public data challenges with DOJ data assets
- Conducted an FY 2022 annual Department-wide data maturity self-assessment
- Maintained the DOJ-wide comprehensive data inventory

¹ The DOJ Data Strategy is accessible at: <https://www.justice.gov/file/1560166/download>.

² The DOJ Geospatial Data Strategy is accessible at: <https://www.justice.gov/jmd/page/file/1347246/download>. The DOJ AI Strategy is accessible at: <https://www.justice.gov/jmd/page/file/1364706/download>.

- Published DOJ data assets to the Federal data catalogue (Data.gov) and Federal geospatial data catalogue (Geoplatform.gov)

Significantly, in 2022 the CDO collaborated with the Evaluation Officer and Statistical Official to conduct the Department Capacity Assessment and identified datasets to support the priority questions in the inaugural agency Learning Agenda.³

The Department was one of four federal agencies the Government Accountability Office (GAO) selected to audit on compliance with the OPEN Government Data Act. DOJ received two Recommendations in GAO report GAO-22-104574, “OPEN DATA: Additional Action Required for Full Public Access” (December 2021).⁴ During 2022, DOJ published information about public data asset usage and will coordinate with GAO to close the associated Recommendation. To address the second Recommendation, DOJ developed a CDO-led plan to host public data challenges and events that increase the value of DOJ public data assets.

The Department also leverages the expertise and knowledge of the larger government community. The CDO is a member of the Federal CDO Council and continues to ensure the Department’s views are represented in working groups of the Council, specifically the Large Agency Committee. Similarly, as a covered agency under the GDA, the Department participates in the Federal Geographic Data Committee and its Steering Committee. In 2022, the Department AI Responsible Officials joined the newly created interagency Responsible Artificial Intelligence Official (RAIO) Council, which was established to facilitate interagency coordination to implement Executive Order 13960. Participation in these meetings allows DOJ’s interests to be articulated in the data standards and guidance being developed. Through this collaboration, the Department gathers best practices for implementation of statutory and policy requirements.

Looking Ahead

While the Department awaits further government-wide guidance on the OPEN Government Data Act, the Board will continue to mature DOJ open data capabilities and supporting artifacts. The structure established by the Board to implement the DOJ Data Strategy ensures the Department has the mechanisms in place to be responsive to new guidance or requirements as they become available.

³ The Learning Agenda is included within the DOJ FYs 2022-2026 Strategic Plan and is accessible at: <https://www.justice.gov/evidence-and-evaluation>.

⁴ GAO report GAO-22-104574, “OPEN DATA: Additional Action Required for Full Public Access,” is accessible at: <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-22-104574.pdf>. The DOJ recommendations were: “The Attorney General should, in coordination with the Chief Data Officer of the Department of Justice, develop and implement an agency-wide plan to host relevant challenges, competitions, events, or other open data related initiatives to create additional value from public data assets of the agency. (Recommendation 4)” and “The Attorney General should, in coordination with the Chief Data Officer of the Department of Justice, develop and implement an agency-wide plan to collect and publish information on the use of data assets by nongovernmental entities at least once a year. (Recommendation 5)”.