



# Data Practices Office

Introduction and Update



January 2024 | Management Committee



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# Background

## What are Data Practices?

Data practices are laws and processes that balance our obligations. They direct how we ensure:

- The public's right to access public government data.
- An individual's right to privacy.
- Met Council's need to conduct business properly and efficiently.



# Background

## Why a Data Practices Office?

The Met Council ...

- Is a diverse entity that operates many discrete, complex programs.
- Has Data Practices Act obligations, including data request requirements.

Past practice ...

- Relied on individual program-area designees to receive and respond to requests.

A Data Practices Office ...

- Creates a single, central designee responsible for managing all data requests.
- Offers more consistency, internal awareness, and support for program staff.
- Reduces the risk of running afoul of Data Practices Act requirements.

# Met Council Data Practices Office



## Our Mission and Role

The Data Practices Office supports the Council by promoting transparency; public access to Council information; and data rights.

We serve all five divisions of the Council as a central resource that:

- Receives and responds to data requests.
- Provides data practices training and guidance.
- Implements policies and procedures, including access procedures.
- Manages the Council's nonpublic data inventory.
- Ensures compliance with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

# What is Government Data?

## What is Government Data?

“All data collected, created, received, maintained or disseminated by any government entity regardless of its physical form, storage media or conditions of use.” Minn. Stat. § 13.02, subd. 7.



# The Data Practices Act



## Minnesota Government Data Practices Act

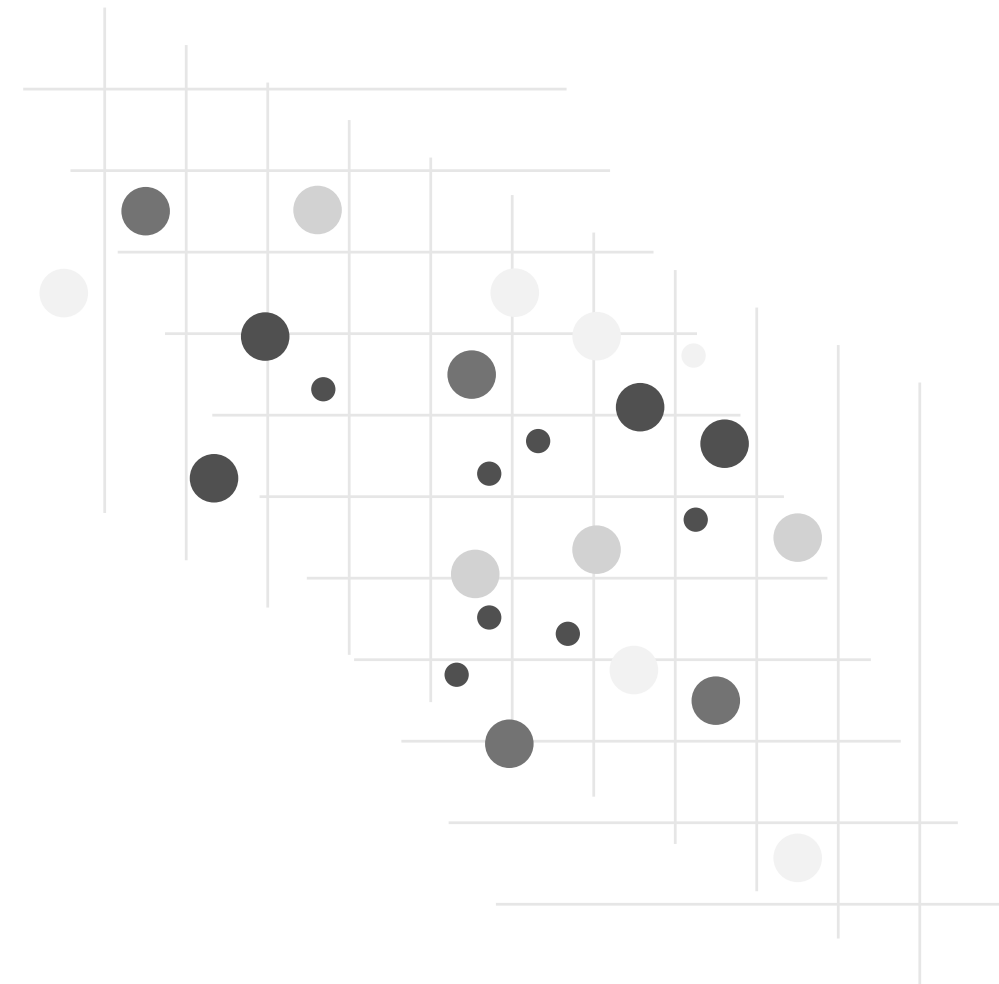
- Establishes presumption that government data are public unless classified not public by a law or statute.
- Regulates how government entities collect, create, maintain, and share data.
- Requires entities to respond to requests for access from the public and data subjects.
- Creates rights for individual data subjects.
- Directs how entities protect not public data.
- Classifies some data as not public.

# Key Data Practices Responsibilities

## Data Practices Act Requirements

The Met Council must:

- Respond to data requests.
- Limit collection, use, and sharing of data on individuals.
- Secure and limit access to private and confidential data.
- Notify individuals when we collect private or confidential data.





# Why Do Data Practices Matter?

## A Presumption of Public Access

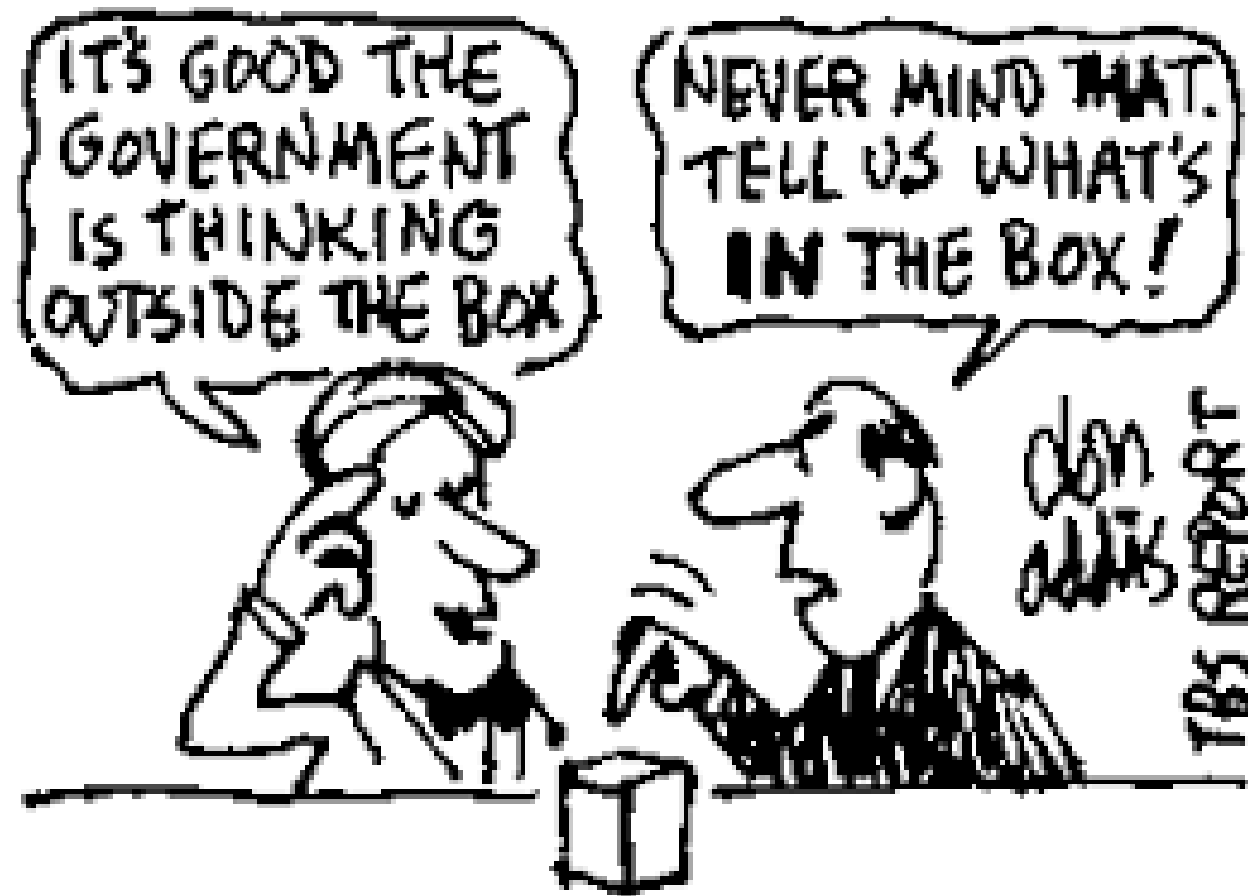


Illustration by Don Addis, as featured in Tampa Bay Skeptics Report.

# Building Up the DPO



## Internal Roles and Relationships

The DPO is the central hub, responsible for receiving and responding to all data requests.

Data practices liaisons in all five divisions connect the DPO to each of the Council's divisions and program areas. The liaisons:

- Act as primary point of contact between DPO and the program area.
- Help DPO understand responsive data that exists.
- Coordinate within the program area to identify and collect data.
- Alert the DPO and program leaders to potential issues.

# Building up the DPO



## New Request Portal and Management System

Developed and introduced a new external-facing data request portal.

- Data requests webpage with updated information to support requesters.
- Online data request form to guide requesters through the information we need to fulfill a data request.
- Request form automatically connects into the request management system.

Worked with IS to create a new data management system.

- Tracks activity from request submission through data collection, review, and final response.



ABOUT US	+
Contact Us	-
> Data Requests	

# DATA REQUESTS

## Our responsibility to provide information access

The Metropolitan Council collects and maintains a lot of information in the course of our work. This information is known as government data and it comes in many forms, such as paper or electronic documents, communications, maps, videos, and information stored in databases.

Meeting the information needs of the public and of individuals who are the subjects of data we hold is one of the Met Council's most important functions as a regional government agency. Consistent with the requirements of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, we will respond to data requests in a timely, cost-effective, and complete manner.

## Request data

Members of the public and individuals who are the subjects of data we hold have the right to access government data by making a data request.

[Submit a data request](#)

If you have accessibility issues submitting a request using this form, please contact our Data Practices Office at [datapracitices@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:datapracitices@metc.state.mn.us) or 651-602-1000.

## Learn more about data requests and your rights

- + [How to make a data request](#)
- + [How we respond to data requests](#)
- + [How and when we assess fees for providing copies of data](#)
- + [Additional rights and restrictions for public access](#)



(\*) Required Field

### Requester Information

Requester First Name

Requester Last Name

Requester Email - (We need a way to respond to your request) \*

Requester Phone Number

Business Organization

### Type of Data Requested

Are you the subject of this data request? (A copy of your government-issued ID is required.)  
Verification of identity is required before releasing non-public data. If not provided, only public data will be released \*

No  Yes

Are you a Metropolitan Council Union Representative?

No  Yes

Is this request related to an injury or property damage claim?

No  Yes

Are you a member of the media?

No  Yes

Are you a member of the Legislature or a Public Official?

No  Yes

Is this request for academic or research purposes?

No  Yes

How do you want to receive the information? \*

### Data Request Details

Request Description - (Provide as much specific detail as possible about the data you want to receive. Broad or vague requests may result in longer response times and/or fees.) \*

Area of interest (if known)

### Date Range (End date should be greater than Start date)

Date Range Start

Date Range End

### Acknowledgment

Metropolitan Council emails regarding this data practices request will come from our DP-Portal@metc.state.mn.us email address. Please add this email account to your safe sender list to prevent delivery of email to a junk folder \*

Attach a file

No file chosen

Additional File 1

No file chosen

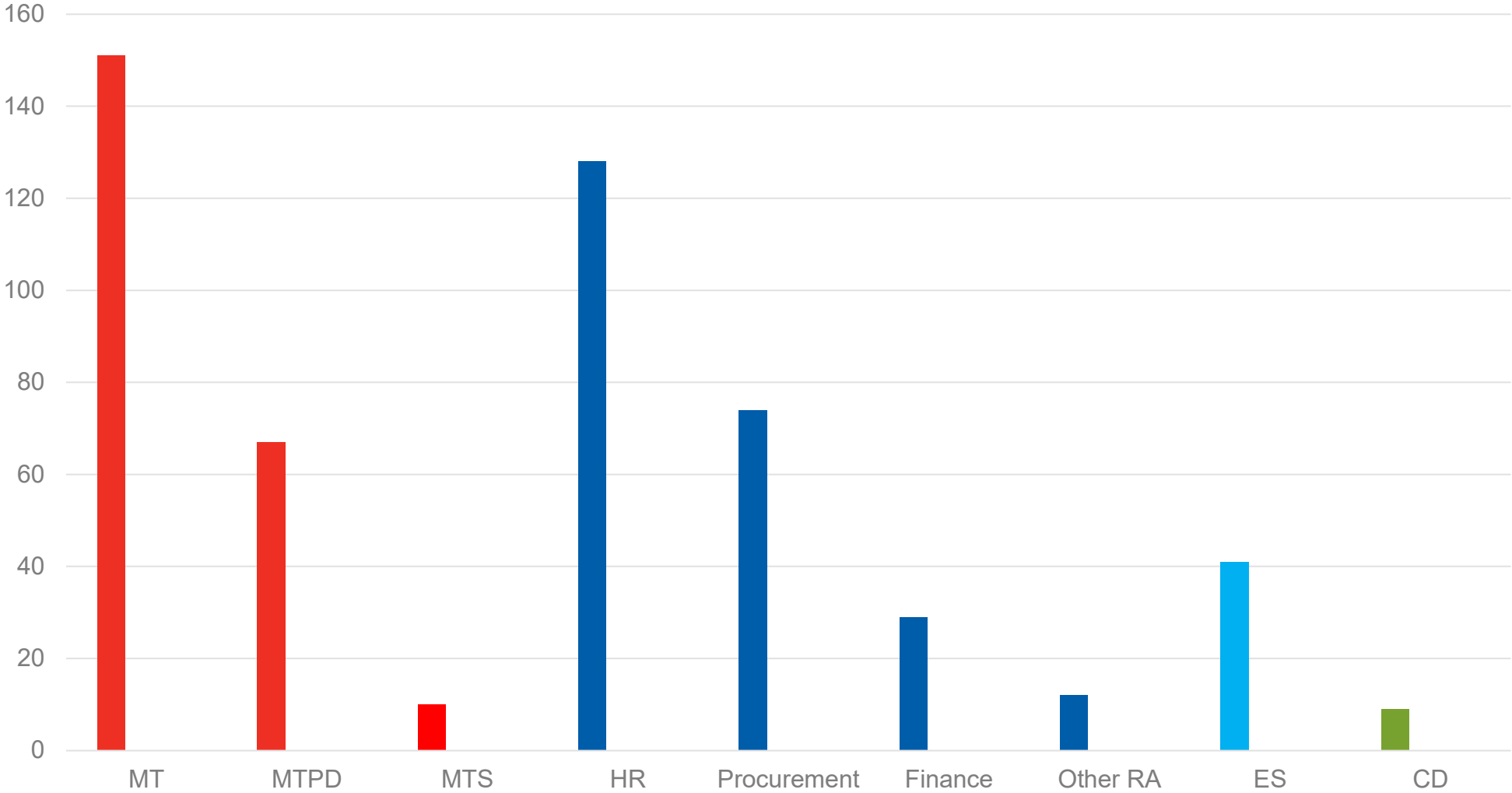
Additional File 2

No file chosen

By clicking the Submit button, you acknowledge Metropolitan Council will release responsive data according to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. Metropolitan Council may charge for copies of responsive data, consistent with state law and its copy cost policy. Requesters can inspect responsive data in person for free.

# Data and Highlights

Data Requests by Program



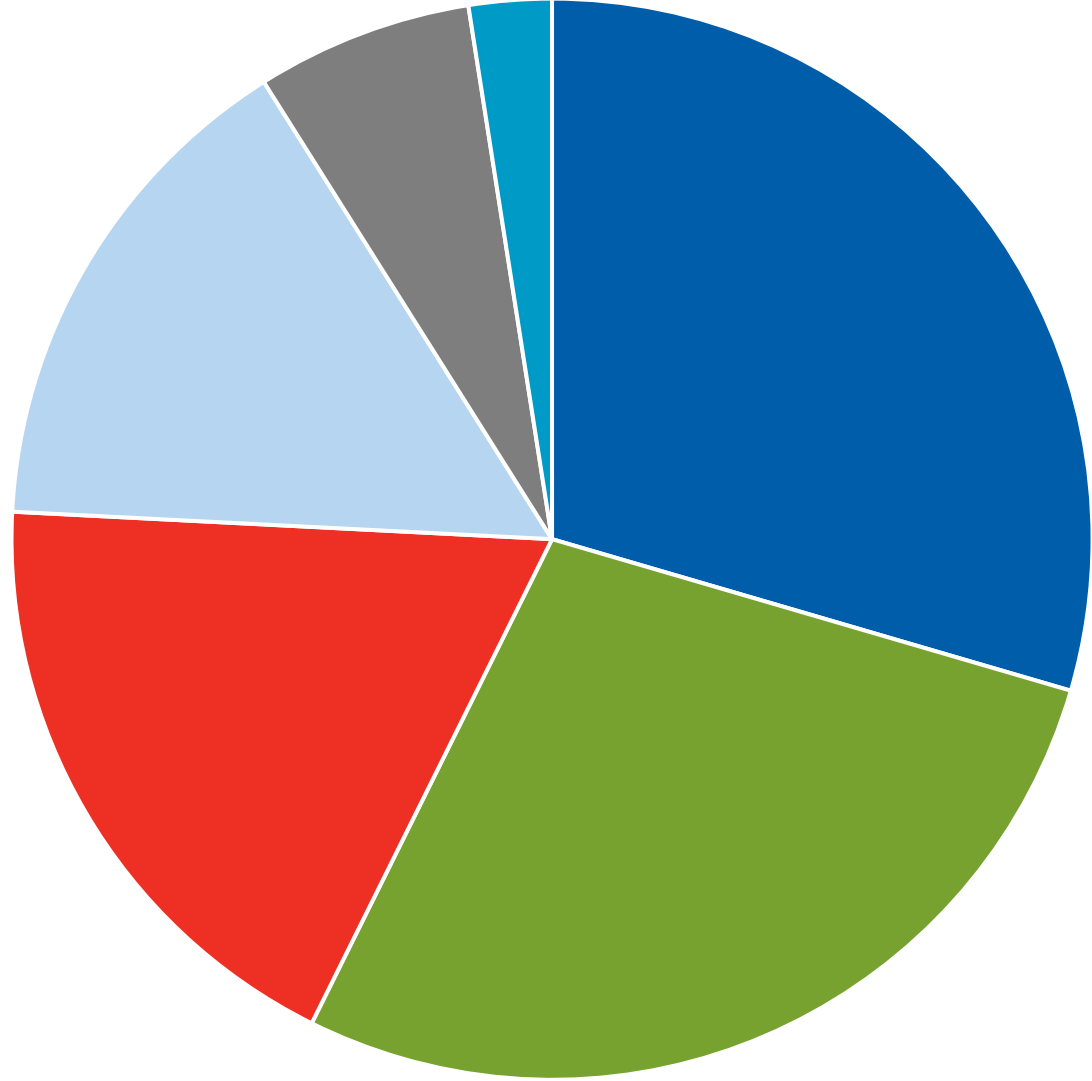
**Total Requests**

Transit	218
RA	243
ES	41
CD	9

# Data and Highlights

## Who Makes Requests

- No Selection/Public
- Data subject
- Injury/Damage Claim
- Media
- Union
- Legislative



\* (Self-reported via request form options.)

# Looking Ahead



## DPO Next Steps

1. Update internal policies and training.
2. Build on internal connections.
3. Develop more robust statistics and reporting.
4. Use requests to inform what we proactively share.





Thank You

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[datapactices@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:datapactices@metc.state.mn.us)

<https://metro council.org/About-Us/Contact/Data-Requests>

