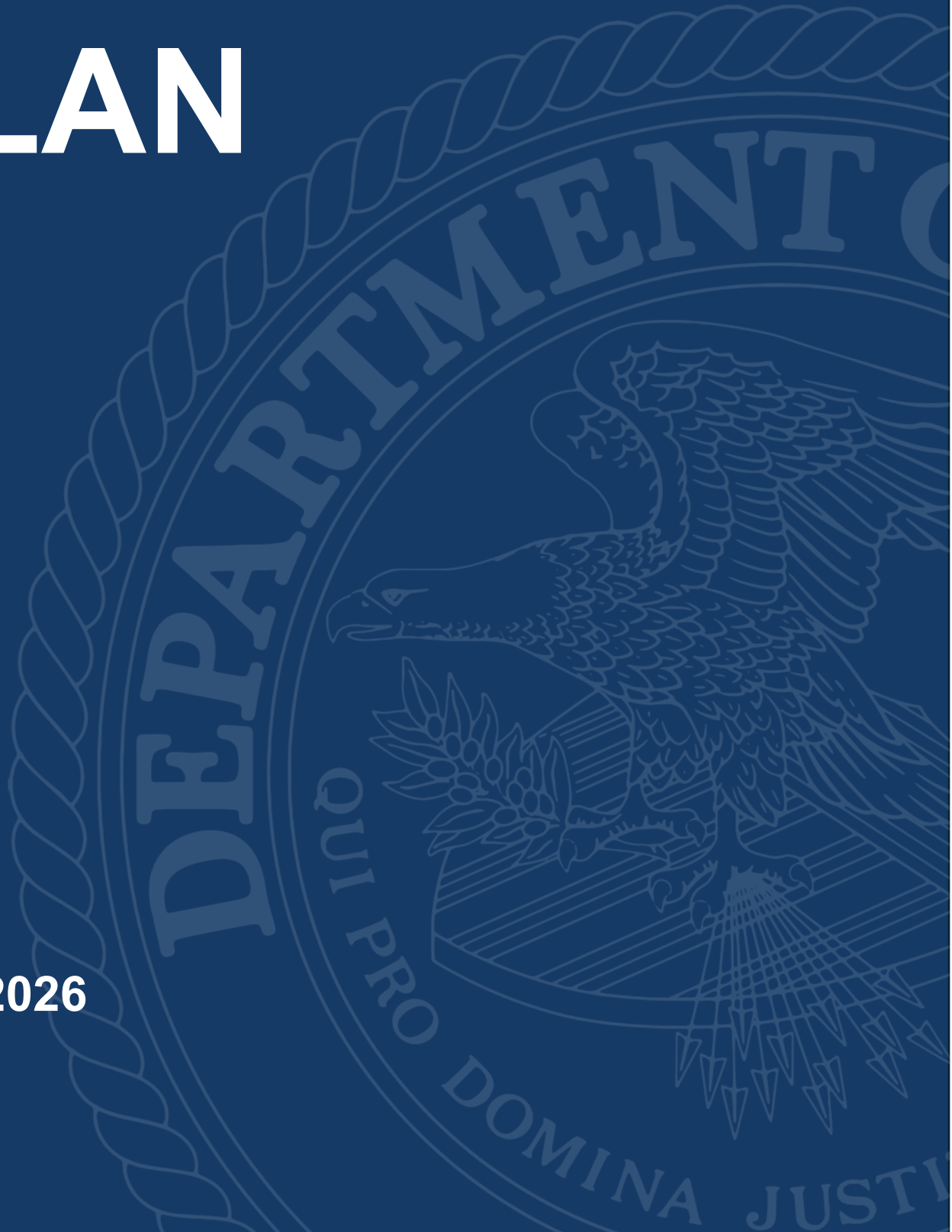


U.S. Department of Justice

OPEN DATA PLAN

April 2026



Open Data Plan

The Department of Justice (Department or DOJ) aims to fulfill its core mission through transparent, participatory, and collaborative use of data. DOJ strives to serve the public by making more data available, while safeguarding sensitive information from unauthorized disclosure.

The OPEN Government Data Act¹ established new requirements for data governance, data management, and transparent processes, and created the position of Chief Data Officer (CDO) at federal agencies.² Pursuant to the Act, the Department is publishing this Open Data Plan to describe its goals, ongoing initiatives, and completed projects regarding data management and publication.³ The Department's CDO drafted this plan in collaboration with the Department's Data Governance Board (DGB).

The Open Data Plan addresses the following areas:

- Data Collection Processes for Open Formats
- Data Usage Information
- Collaboration with Data Users
- Open Data Point of Contact
- Improvement Processes
- Open Data Goal Requirements
- Prioritizing Public Data Asset Review
- Compliance Status

¹ The Open, Public, Electronic, and Necessary (OPEN) Government Data Act, Title II of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018, Pub. L. No. 115–435.

² OMB M-19-23 provides guidance on the requirements related to the designation of CDOs and the establishment of a CDO Council. OMB M-19-23, *Phase 1 Implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018: Learning Agendas, Personnel, and Planning Guidance*, at 21-25 (July 10, 2019), available at www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/M-19-23.pdf.

³ 44 U.S.C. § 3506(b)(2). OMB M-25-05 provides guidance on the contents of agency Open Data Plans. See OMB M-25-05, *Phase 2 Implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018: Open Government Data Access and Management Guidance* (Jan. 15, 2025), available at [M-25-05-Phase-2-Implementation-of-the-Foundations-for-Evidence-Based-Policymaking-Act-of-2018-Open-Government-Data-Access-and-Management-Guidance.pdf](https://www.evidentiarypolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/OMB-M-25-05-Phase-2-Implementation-of-the-Foundations-for-Evidence-Based-Policymaking-Act-of-2018-Open-Government-Data-Access-and-Management-Guidance.pdf).

Data Collection Processes for Open Formats

The Justice Data Catalog: DOJ's Comprehensive Data Inventory

DOJ is committed to ensuring that its data assets are stored in an open format. The Justice Data Catalog is an internal DOJ application accessible to all DOJ components that provides a central metadata inventory of all unclassified and declassified data assets collected throughout the Department. The Justice Data Catalog is interoperable with the Federal Data Catalog, is maintained in an open format (JSON), and conforms to standard metadata schema approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

The Justice Data Catalog's purpose is to:

- Collect standardized metadata about data assets
- Increase awareness of data available throughout the Department
- Encourage cross-component communities of interest and collaboration
- Align with DOJ and federal requirements for streamlined data management, sharing, and reuse
- Disclose the Department's open data to the public (via Data.gov integration)

DOJ's Data Governance Board oversees the Justice Data Catalog as a key tool supporting the data management objectives defined in the Department's Data Strategy, the Federal Data Strategy, Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018, and the Geospatial Data Act of 2018.

Leveraging OMB's quarterly Integrated Data Collection process, DOJ components are required to identify and account for their data assets within the Justice Data Catalog. The data call requires components to review their respective entries and make appropriate edits or additions to ensure all public and non-public data assets are accounted for. Once components complete their submission, the DOJ Data Management team validates the data to ensure the data assets submitted to Data.gov were ingested as intended.

Publishing data assets in open, machine-readable formats is a catalyst for unlocking the full potential of artificial intelligence (AI). The CDO will collaborate closely with the Chief AI Officer to mature enterprise data management and governance practices to advance enterprise AI readiness and promote efficient and appropriate data use.

Data Usage Information

Data Usage Information Published on Justice.gov

DOJ is dedicated to promoting the usage of its public data assets. The Department collects and analyzes usage metrics for both intra and inter-agency and public users. Public dataset metrics on [Data.gov](https://data.gov) include page views, downloads, and outbound link clicks. The Justice Data Catalog logs asset views and interactions as required by OMB M-25-05.

The Department will publicly report on the usage of public data assets on [Data.gov](https://data.gov) at least annually, as required by OMB M-25-05, and will coordinate with GSA to improve external reporting capabilities on [Data.gov](https://data.gov).

While Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) metadata is included in the Justice Data Catalog and listed on Data.gov, direct data access follows a specialized process due to the sensitive and confidential nature of criminal justice statistics. BJS data collections are made available through the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research using the Standard Application Process. This process ensures compliance with federal confidentiality requirements under 28 C.F.R. Part 22 and 34 U.S.C. § 10231(a) while making research data accessible to qualified researchers. Restricted data access modalities include Physical Data Enclave, Virtual Data Enclave, and Secure Download options, with access granted following application review and execution of data use agreements that protect respondent confidentiality.

DOJ is currently analyzing traffic to its websites and will publish insights on how non-government users access and utilize public data assets on the DOJ Open Data website.

Collaboration with Data Users

DOJ believes that collaboration with external stakeholders improves its efficacy in accomplishing its mission. The Department welcomes collaboration with external stakeholders such as other federal agencies, state and local law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, academics, and the public. To achieve this, the Department established a plan outlining activities DOJ will perform to accomplish this goal, specifically hosting data challenges and events with public data and publishing information on the usage of public data assets.

The DOJ Data Governance Board (DGB), chaired by the DOJ CDO, will lead the agency-wide effort to host data challenges, competitions, events, or other open data-related initiatives (Challenges). To initiate public Challenges using DOJ public data assets, the DGB will build upon recent internal innovation competitions that had similar goals, as well as lessons learned from National Institute of Justice, which has experience hosting public Challenges.

For each Challenge cycle, the DGB will collect nominations of Challenge topics from members of Department data communities, including the Data Architecture Working

Group (DAWG) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Accelerator. DOJ may also source Challenge topics from identified areas of significant public interest where offices may have already cleared some information for public release. The CDO will also coordinate with the DOJ Evaluation Officer and Statistics Official to identify opportunities.

The DAWG will then facilitate the Challenge and coordinate next steps. DAWG representatives will work with DOJ governance authorities and representatives from the component who submitted the selected Challenge topic to prepare Challenge materials, review judging criteria, and assign judging panel members. DAWG representatives will also engage with the DOJ Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Communications team and relevant public affairs offices to provide final messaging and branding.

DOJ Data Insight Challenge to Improve the Nation's Public Safety Response to Drug Overdoses [2024]

In November 2024, DOJ conducted a data insights challenge with public participants focusing on the nation's drug epidemic. The challenge coincided with International Overdose Awareness Day and sought to determine how DOJ's publicly available data, in combination with other public health data, can help respond to drug overdoses and help guide policymaking while increasing public understanding.

The CDO team worked with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to clear DEA's Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) for public release, and to highlight DEA's National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS). The data challenge included three phases over a five-month period: Phase I required a two-page executive summary addressing the proposed data analysis and an overview of the new insights to be gained, and Phase II required a 10-page analysis report executing on the Executive Summary. Three teams from Phase II were selected for 30-minute presentations at the Finalists Forum, paneled by the DOJ CDO and two Component CDOs on the data quality, analysis, presentation, and applicability to DOJ. The winning team was announced on DOJ social media and was selected for delivering a compelling presentation focused on creating community-based outcome metrics that truly combine law enforcement and public health data that extend beyond individual-based metrics.

Open Data Point of Contact

The DOJ Data Management team actively manages the DataManagement@usdoj.gov distribution list to assist the public with open data inquiries. The email address is prominently displayed on the DOJ Open Data webpage and on Data.gov for external stakeholders to use. The Data Management team will continue to assist the public and to respond to quality issues, usability issues, recommendations for improvements, and complaints about adherence to open data requirements within a reasonable period.

Improvement Processes

DOJ ensures timeliness, completeness, consistency, accuracy, usefulness, and availability of open government data assets through the Justice Data Catalog. Over 1,400 datasets are currently available for the public to review. Consistent with the Department's AI Strategy and Data Strategy, metadata standards will continue to be matured with the goal of improving completeness, consistency, and accuracy of the data.

DOJ has defined and documented the roles and responsibilities for data stewards and is in the process of releasing updated data governance guidelines to formalize the designations. On a quarterly basis, the DOJ Data Management team, through the DAWG, will continue to work with data stewards in the components to audit their data assets in the Justice Data Catalog for accuracy and completeness.

Open Data Goal Requirements

Data is central to the Department's mission of law enforcement. The Department has on-going initiatives in accordance with the goals of the OPEN Government Data Act.

Training / Learning Opportunities

DOJ offers a compilation of learning opportunities and materials to support data skills and upskilling, including access to LearnDOJ, DOJ's on-demand Learning Management System. LearnDOJ provides employees with access to over 6,000 data-related courses, including how to repurpose data for analysis, how to efficiently analyze data, effectively managing information resources, and federal procurement data system training.

Under the purview of the DGB, the AI Accelerator and DAWG chairs regularly share links to training opportunities and learning seminars that cover a wide range of topics, spanning various aspects of data management to emerging AI capabilities. For example:

- The AI Accelerator is advancing AI literacy across the Department by identifying knowledge gaps and leveraging existing Component-level AI training resources

to create Department-wide AI training packages tailored to specific organizational personas.

- Within the Geospatial Community of Interest, co-chairs from DEA, ATF, and FBI are partnering with Federal Law Enforcement Training Center instructors to upskill their workforce. Additionally, the DEA Geospatial Information Officer developed a geospatial training curriculum and a dashboard to monitor DEA's workforce proficiency.
- The CDO and chairs from the various data-related Communities of Interest share training opportunities they learn from attending Federal Council and Committee meetings. These opportunities are communicated during bi-monthly meetings, emailed, or posted on the collaborative Teams channel, created for the purpose of information sharing.

Procurement Standards

The Department's Office of Acquisition Management maintains procurement standards and policies in accordance with OMB guidance and existing laws, regulations, and policies that allow for the acquisition of innovative solutions from public and private sectors. In accordance with Executive Order 14179, Removing Barriers to American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence and OMB Memorandum M-25-22, Driving Efficient Acquisition of Artificial Intelligence in Government, DOJ is currently revising existing procurement guides and policies to allow for the acquisition of innovative solutions from public and private sectors to improve government efficiency and mission effectiveness. To ensure economies of scale and re-use, components are instructed to first consider enterprise shared services and license agreements for data sourcing and use such services and agreements as appropriate.

Prioritizing Public Data Asset Review

In addition to datasets made public pursuant to DOJ policy, the Department has identified and published high-value datasets. Pursuant to OMB guidance, the Department is updating its policy for identifying and publishing priority public data sets.⁴ The criteria for prioritizing public data assets include data sets that:

- i. are already in the process of being disseminated through the Federal Data Catalog;
- ii. are used to generate "influential information" as described in OMB M-19-15, Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Agencies;
- iii. are used to develop, test, or measure the performance of an artificial intelligence system or use case, as described in OMB M-25-21, Accelerating Federal Use of AI through Innovation, Governance, and Public Trust or other OMB guidance on the topic of artificial intelligence;

⁴ OMB M-25-05, at 29-30.

- iv. respond to a specific user need or demand identified by the public (e.g., through public consultation or public feedback);
- v. might have a direct or deep impact on the public, further the core mission of an agency, or meet other needs of the Federal Government;
- vi. might improve communication or collaboration or support decision-making at federal, state, local, territory, or tribal level;
- vii. directly support the delivery of a service or benefit to the public;
- viii. improve reproducibility of research findings;
- ix. might spur innovation or progress in science or technology; and
- x. are related to a timely topic in the public interest (e.g., related to public or news media inquiries); are subject to or likely to be subject to frequent FOIA requests; or otherwise have high usage or public interest.

In the Justice Data Catalog, Access Level is a metadata field that describes the degree to which a dataset could be made publicly-available, regardless of whether it has been made available. An Access Level is a required input when inventorying a dataset. The three (3) Access Level options are driven by the federal open data schema:

- Public - The dataset is or could be made publicly available to all without restrictions (i.e., a member of the public can walk into DOJ and obtain the dataset, even if there are no files online).
- Restricted Public - The dataset is or could be made available under certain use restrictions (i.e., only available under certain conditions or to certain audiences, such as researchers who sign a waiver).
- Non-Public - The dataset is not and cannot be made available to members of the public (i.e., could never be made available to the public for privacy, security, or other reasons).

The metadata for Public and Restricted Public datasets is visible to all Justice Data Catalog users and is published to the Data.gov federal open data website. The metadata for Non-Public datasets is visible to select Justice Data Catalog users and is not published to Data.gov.

The public can request specific datasets be made public by e-mailing DOJ's Open Data point of contact: datamanagement@usdoj.gov. The CDO team will work with DOJ's FOIA Office to develop rules for prioritizing data assets for public dissemination.

Compliance Status

DOJ will comply with all requirements of Memorandum M-25-05, Phase 2 Implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018: Open Government Data Access and Management Guidance and the requirements of 44 U.S.C. § 3511 when disseminating a public data asset pursuant to the Act.