



OFFICE OF MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON  
CITY OF CHICAGO

February 29, 2024

**VIA ELECTRONIC CORRESPONDENCE**

Alexandra Gelzin

[158671-92653390@requests.muckrock.com](mailto:158671-92653390@requests.muckrock.com)

**RE: Notice of Response to FOIA Request  
FOIA File No.: F067472**

Dear Alexandra Gelzin,

On behalf of the City of Chicago Office of the Mayor, I am responding to your Freedom of Information Act request received by this department on February 14, 2024, requesting:

*All of Jason Lee's text messages from February 6, 2024 - February 13, 2024.*

*Please note: This seeks texts Jason Lee sent and any group chat texts including Jason Lee related to city business. This also includes any messages sent through WhatsApp, Signal, or any other text messaging apps. If any app is used with a disappearing messages setting, please provide the setting on disappearing messages. Please search city and personal phones.*

As permitted by Section 5 ILCS 140/3(e) of the Act, the time was extended to conduct a thorough search for these records. Your request was reviewed by the undersigned. Information responsive to your request is available and attached.

Please be advised that certain information has been redacted from the enclosed responsive records pursuant to 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(b), 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(c), 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(f) and 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(v). Details of the redactions are set forth below:

Section 7(1)(b) exempts from disclosure “[p]rivate information, unless disclosure is required by another provision of this Act, a State or federal law or a court order.” 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(b). The FOIA, in 5 ILCS 140/2(c-5), defines “private information” as follows:

“Private information” means unique identifiers, including a person’s social security number, driver’s license number, employee identification number, biometric identifiers, personal financial information, passwords or other access codes, medical records,

home or personal telephone numbers, and personal email addresses. Private information also includes home address and personal license plates, except as otherwise provided by law or when compiled without possibility of attribution to any person.”

Therefore, personal telephone numbers were redacted as such information is exempt pursuant to Section 7(1)(b).

Please be advised that City issued cell phone numbers were also redacted pursuant to 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(c) of FOIA. Section 7(1)(c) exempts from inspection and copying the following:

“[P]ersonal information contained within public records, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy... ‘Unwarranted invasion of personal privacy’ means the disclosure of information is that highly personal or objectionable to reasonable person and in which the subject’s right to privacy outweighs any legitimate public interest in obtaining the information.” *Id.*

As publicly available City issued cell phone numbers would subject these employees to invasive and unsolicited communications, the disclosure of this information would burden employees’ privacy interest. Additionally, access to this information would not advance the public interest in understanding “the affairs of government and the official acts and policies of those who represent them[.]” 5 ILCS 140/1. Further, the landline numbers and other email addresses for these employees is available to the public, which further limits the de minimis public interest in the contact information of the requested employees. See *Shurtleff v. United States Environmental Protection Agency*, 991 F. Supp. 2d 1, 18 (D.D.C. Sept. 30, 2013) (“The EPA has proffered a substantial privacy interest at stake in disclosing the official internal email address of the EPA Administrator and the work email address of employees at the EOP: these few individuals have ‘a significant personal interest in preventing the burden of unsolicited emails and harassment.’”); *Buckovetz v. U.S. Department of the Navy*, Case No. 14-cv-2115-BEN, 2016 WL 4801335 at \*2-3 (S.D. Cal. Apr. 7, 2016) (affirming the redaction of an employee’s cell phone number, because “the [employee’s] privacy rights in this information outweigh the public’s interest in disclosure”).

We have withheld one attachment, as it is a draft document pursuant to Section 7(1)(f) of FOIA. That section exempts:

Preliminary drafts, notes, recommendations, memoranda and other records in which opinions are expressed, or policies or actions are formulated, except that a specific record or relevant portion of a record shall not be exempt when the record is publicly cited and identified by the head of the public body.

Lastly, please be advised that information concerning the Mayor's advance and security detail was redacted pursuant to 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(v). Section 7(1)(v) protects from disclosure [v]ulnerability assessments, security measures, and response policies or plans that are designed to identify, prevent, or respond to potential attacks upon a community's population or systems, facilities, or installations, the destruction or contamination of which would constitute a clear and present danger to the health or safety of the community, but only to the extent that disclosure could reasonably be



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expected to jeopardize the effectiveness of the measures or the safety of the personnel who implement them or the public. Information exempt under this item may include such things as details pertaining to the mobilization or deployment of personnel or equipment, to the operation of communication systems or protocols, or to tactical operations. To ensure the safety of the Mayor and Mayor's detail, such information has been redacted pursuant to Section 7(1)(v).

You have the right to a review under 5 ILCS 140-9.5(a) by the Public Access Counselor (PAC) at the Office of the Illinois Attorney General, 500 South 2nd Street, Springfield, Illinois 62706, Phone: (877)299-3642, Fax: (217)782-1396, E-mail: [public.access@ilag.gov](mailto:public.access@ilag.gov). You may also seek judicial review of a denial under 5 ILCS 140/11 by filing a lawsuit in the State Circuit Court.

Sincerely,

Hibo Aden  
FOIA Officer