

Connecting the people and processes involved with data to promote communication between, and integration of, formerly siloed data, teams, and systems within executive branch agencies.

## Draft State Data Plan 2023-24

Submitted pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 4-67p

Office of Policy and Management  
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## Introduction

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The Connecticut State Data Plan serves as a framework for the state's executive branch agencies to engage in a consistent approach to data stewardship, use, and access. The State Data Plan is applicable to all data in the custody and control of executive branch agencies and covers open data, data sharing and data analysis, in accordance with [C.G.S. § 4-67p](#).

Specifically, the state data plan shall:

- establish management and data analysis standards across **executive branch agencies**;
- include specific, achievable goals within the two years following the adoption of such plan, as well as longer term goals;
- make recommendations to enhance standardization and integration of data systems and data management practices across **executive branch agencies**;
- provide a timeline for the review of any state or federal legal concerns or other obstacles to the internal sharing of data among agencies, including security and privacy concerns; and
- set goals for improving the open data repository.

The statutes also require that *information technology-related actions and initiatives of executive branch agencies must be consistent with the plan*. The plan is required to be updated every two years.

The 2021 – 2022 plan was organized around **Principles** which represent a framework under which state agencies should organize and operate; **Focal Points** where agencies should emphasize the sharing, integration, and availability of data; and **Goals** which represent the desired outcomes of plan implementation.

The 2023 – 2024 plan reports on outcomes from the prior plan and develops a new set of goals and implementation steps for 2023 – 2024.

## Mission

The purpose of this plan is to connect the people and processes involved with data to promote communication between, and appropriate integration of, formerly siloed data, teams, and systems. It seeks to promote process change, organizational realignment, value congruence, and the appropriate use of technology to facilitate relationships between everyone who handles and uses data.

By aligning the data-related work of agencies with the plan's Principles, agencies should begin to realize efficiencies and process improvements. Agencies must begin to closely connect the people who provide, collect and prepare the data, those who analyze the data, and those who put the findings from those analyses to good use.

## Scope

The plan supports agency efforts and brings those efforts into alignment to provide increased efficiency in the use of limited resources for data stewardship, use, and access. The plan goals and implementation steps provide a framework to support the use of data to improve agency outcomes and performance. The plan does not require agencies to dedicate additional resources to its implementation, nor does it generally require agencies to begin collecting or creating new data. Implementation of the plan relies on the Chief Data Officer, the efforts of individual Agency Data Officers, and support from the Office of Policy and Management and leadership of the other executive branch agencies.

While state agencies collect and manage data to operate programs and services and have used this information for reporting for decades, only recently have state officials begun to harness administrative records for analytical purposes to achieve desired goals or outcomes. Although this plan does not specifically address variations in the sensitivity of interagency data, it broadly addresses many underlying challenges associated with data collection and provides a standard framework that can be applicable across executive branch agencies.

## Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to establishing the State Data Plan, [C.G.S. § 4-67p](#) establishes the position of Chief Data Officer within the Office of Policy and Management, and requires each executive branch agency to designate an agency data officer, each with roles and responsibilities outlined below. Further, the statute requires that each agency conduct an inventory of its “high-value data” annually and formulate plans to enhance the availability of open data, known as “open data access plans.” The following are the roles and responsibilities of the Chief Data Officer and Agency Data Officer that are established by [C.G.S. § 4-67p](#):

### **Chief Data Officer:**

- Directing executive branch agencies on the use and management of data to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of state programs and policies;
- Facilitating the sharing and use of executive branch agency data (A) between executive branch agencies, and (B) with the public;
- Coordinating data analytics and transparency master planning for executive branch agencies;
- Creating the state data plan; and
- Providing a procedure for each agency head to report regarding the agency's progress toward achieving the plan's goals.

### **Agency Data Officer:**

- Coordinating and submitting agency high value data inventories annually;
- Coordinating and submitting agency open data access plans;
- Serving as the main contact person for inquiries, requests or concerns regarding access to the data of such agency; and
- Establishing procedures to ensure that requests for data that the agency receives are complied with in an appropriate and prompt manner in consultation with the Chief Data Officer.

It should be noted that, while [C.G.S. § 4-67p](#) requires Agency Data Officers to establish procedures to ensure that requests for data that the agency receives are complied with in an appropriate and prompt manner, as well as establish open data access plans, the law does not create a separate entitlement or an alternative to the Freedom of Information Act process.

## About the Process

The State Data Plan is developed through an iterative process, with opportunities for both public and agency input as follows.

**Draft Plan** - A draft of the State Data Plan must be presented to the Data Analysis Technology Advisory (DATA) board pursuant to [C.G.S. § 4-67p](#) and [C.G.S. § 2-79e](#), by November 1, with a public hearing held within 30 days. Additional outreach will be through state agencies, nonprofits and other data providers and users.

**Final Plan** – The final plan must be issued by December 31, 2022.

## Progress and Lessons Learned



The development of a new State Data Plan presents an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned over the past two years. The goals below were set as part of the 2021 – 2022 State Data Plan, and this section will review progress on the metrics and lessons learned.

### Goals and metrics from 2021 – 2022 State Data Plan:

#### Goal 1: Improve and increase relevance of the open data portal and related tools

Primary metrics to track progress on this goal will be:

- Site traffic, including to data stories and dashboards and other tools to reach a wider audience
- Frequency and consistency of updates, particularly to high-value or high-priority data

Secondary metrics can include:

- Qualitative feedback from stakeholders, through surveys, interviews or focus groups
- Development of tools to provide easier access to GIS data
- Specific instances of use of agency data, particularly open data, to inform policy and practice

#### Goal 2: Ensure that the data lifecycle promotes equity, particularly racial equity

We cannot move the needle on population-level outcomes solely by improving agency data management. However, we can track progress on this goal through the following metrics.

Primary metrics to track progress on this goal will be:

- Increased consistency in collection and reporting of demographic data across agencies
- Increased number and percentage of public datasets that are disaggregated by factors like race, ethnicity, gender, etc., and by the intersection of one or more of those factors
- Improved availability of metadata and documentation for high-value datasets
- Increased outreach and engagement with residents and nonprofits

Secondary metrics can include:

- Agency participation in training or capacity-building efforts
- Specific instances of change in state or agency practice (ex. developing formal methods for resident engagement, changes in informed consent processes)

#### Goal 3: Improve use of data to inform decision-making

Primary metrics to track progress on this goal will be:

- Reduced time to fulfill interagency data requests, including the time to complete interagency agreements and the time to match and analyze data
- Improved customer experience for data requestors
- Specific instances of change where data sharing was used to inform policy and practice

Secondary metrics can include:

- Increased number of external research partnerships
- Ability to identify performance metrics and evidence base for critical programs
- Improved outcomes for Connecticut service recipients
- Increased efficiencies + cost effectiveness in state services

## Goal 1: Improve and increase relevance of the open data portal and related tools

Site traffic to the open data portal has increased steadily during 2021 through 2022. Site analytics, including data on site traffic by agency and dataset, are now posted publicly on an [Analytics Dashboard](#). From January to October 2022, the portal has had approximately 200,000 downloads, 700,000 dataset views and 3.2 million data story views. API reads (automated feeds of data from the portal) are upwards of 19 million through October 2022. Data story views decreased slightly from 2021 to 2022, although this is largely due to decreased traffic to daily and weekly COVID-19 reporting. The number and breadth of data stories has increased with 28 different stories and dashboards on the portal as of this draft.

As part of the Analytics Dashboard, we have developed [Data Freshness](#) metrics. As of November 2020, roughly 70 percent of the datasets published on the portal had not been updated in the past year, and just over 30 percent have not been updated since 2015. Now, as of November 2022, 46 percent of datasets have been updated in 2022 and only 14 percent have not been updated since 2015, a marked improvement on both metrics.<sup>1</sup>

58 percent of datasets are still missing metadata on update frequency, and improvements to metadata will be a focus for the next two years. We have retired more than 250 datasets that are not maintained or duplicative, with each tracked in a [dataset of retired assets](#).

In addition, we can report progress on the secondary metrics for open data:

*Qualitative feedback:* We began to gather qualitative feedback from users via several state agency feedback sessions in the summer of 2021 and 2022. In fall 2022, we launched two surveys of open data portal use: a survey of data publishers and editors and a community survey for open data portal users. Results from both surveys are in process and will inform the final plan, but current preliminary results highlight interest in:

- Agency training and capacity building
- Support for data visualization and automation

*GIS data:* We will launch a GIS data clearinghouse on GIS Day (November 16, 2022) to provide access to GIS data through a central portal. The GIS clearinghouse will be integrated with the open data portal so there is ‘no wrong door’ and data can be accessed via either site. In addition, in the past two years both Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and Department of Transportation (DOT) have launched portals for agency GIS data, which are also federated to the open data portal and will be federated to the GIS Clearinghouse.

*Use of data:* The [list of data stories](#) on the open data portal includes several examples where open data directly informed policy and practice, including:

- [School Learning Models](#): Data on COVID-19 was presented with school reopening conditions and distributed to districts and school leaders in 2020 and 2021 to inform local decision-making.
- [2020 U.S. Census Block Adjustments](#): Data resources on the 2020 U.S. census block population adjustments for incarcerated populations, for the purposes of determining legislative districts (often known as ‘prison gerrymandering’).

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<sup>1</sup> Many of these are datasets for program data from a particular year, such as 2012 or 2013 enrollment and are thus unlikely to be updated in the future. We have worked to consolidate many annual datasets into longitudinal data, but some cannot be due to changes in reporting or program administration.

- [Disproportionately Impacted Areas, Identified for Public Act 21-1](#) : Data resources on census tracts in Connecticut identified as "Disproportionately Impacted Areas" pursuant to P.A. 21-1, *An Act Concerning Responsible and Equitable Regulation of Adult-Use Cannabis*, used to determine eligibility for participation in the cannabis industry.
- [Childhood Lead Poisoning Surveillance Report](#) - A summary of key findings from the CT DPH Lead Poisoning Program
- [School Immunization Survey Data](#) - Data on school immunization in Connecticut, released for the first time in this format
- [Qualified Census Tracts by Town](#) - Information about the Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) in Connecticut, which are identified for the implementation of the federal Low-Income Housing Credit Program and administration of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

## **Goal 2: Ensure that the data lifecycle promotes equity, particularly racial equity**

Increased consistency in collection and reporting of demographic data across agencies was a goal of the prior plan. As noted under goal 1, it remains a work-in-progress to provide complete and up-to-date metadata on the open data portal. The Data Freshness section of the Data Analytics dashboard above will enable general tracking of metadata completeness. In addition, for P20 WIN, the state longitudinal data system, we launched a new data dictionary app, and a related Data Governance Manual to provide additional transparency.

Section 11 of [Public Act 21-35](#) (*An Act Equalizing Comprehensive Access to Mental, Behavioral and Physical Health Care in Response to the Pandemic*) provides the policy basis for increased consistency in collection and reporting of race, ethnicity and language (REL) data for a subset of health and human services agencies. Implementation of standardized REL data collection is underway for health and human services agencies, led by the Office of Health Strategy (OHS) which has developed the [reporting standards and implementation guidelines for REL data](#).

In order to identify further opportunities for outreach and engagement and improvements in state data, agency staff have convened in a voluntary equity affinity group since fall 2020, which has informed development of REL standards, selection of metrics for cross-agency efforts, development of standard tools and processes and methods for resident engagement. Representatives from the Office of Policy and Management, Department of Social Services and OHS are also participating in a learning community for equity in data integration, which will lead to development of a resident advisory board for P20 WIN, the state longitudinal data system, and tools for equity and ethics impact assessment of data requests.

## **Goal 3: Improve use of data to inform decision-making**

A critical component of using data to inform decision-making is having high-quality data ready to go. While we have implemented process improvements for data sharing, there is still room for improvement. Review of the current process with third-party data requestors identified 'pain points' for data requestors. In response, the process to fill interagency data requests through P20 WIN has been streamlined to reduce the number of steps and to use simpler forms and templated data sharing agreements. The template data sharing agreements cover the following legal and regulatory frameworks. In addition, the Executive Board has developed a Learning Agenda to identify key priorities and a

dashboard to track the completion of requests, and the distribution of requests from P20 WIN participating agencies or from third-party analysts or researchers.<sup>2</sup>

Development of evaluation and mapping efforts increase the opportunities to inform policy and practice and to develop external research partnerships. The State Department of Education and institutions of higher education launched a Connecticut COVID-19 Education Research Collaborative (CCERC) to support evaluation of education initiatives funded through pandemic-related funds. An Evaluation and Impact unit for Federal Funding at OPM will focus on development of evaluation plans and high-quality evidence for ARPA investments, which will also require leveraging external applied research and evaluation partnerships. Broadband mapping will generate the first high-quality data on broadband coverage in the state, data which will directly inform broadband expansion efforts and the allocation of state and federal funds. In addition, the new mapping data will be used to generate external research and analysis to identify the drivers and root causes of the digital divide and to measure success of broadband expansion efforts.

The secondary metrics for this goal include improved outcomes for Connecticut service recipients and increased efficiencies and cost effectiveness in state services. Achievement of these kinds of programmatic goals are a long-term effort for which we can make incremental progress during each two-year plan.

## Principles



The Principles below represent an ongoing framework for agencies to mature and enhance their management, use, sharing, and analysis of data. The Principles remain the same as in the inaugural 2019 – 2020 plan to serve as guidelines for continuous improvement and to inform decision-making on an ongoing basis.

### Data Governance and Quality

- ① Appreciate that the data we collect require a considerable investment of resources and have value beyond the purpose for which they are collected.
- ② Perform continuous data quality and analytics improvement to ensure the value of data is protected and maximized.
- ③ Ensure standardized data governance in order to protect data and improve its quality and utility.
- ④ Create, acquire, use, and disseminate data deliberately and thoughtfully; in compliance with federal law and state statute, and considering, quality, consistency, privacy, equity, client data dignity, value, reuse, and interoperability from the start.
- ⑤ Coordinate and prioritize data needs and uses, utilize data from multiple sources, and acquire new data only when necessary.

### Privacy and Ethics

- ⑥ Protect individual privacy and maintain confidentiality using effective data stewardship and governance, and by maintaining modern data security practices and technology.
- ⑦ Employ ethical standards in the use, analysis, sharing, and integration of data to avoid intrusion into the lives of Connecticut residents, and disparate impact.

<sup>2</sup> Both available at: <https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/P20Win/>



## Data Sharing Between Agencies

- ⑧ Improve data sharing and access with ongoing input from users and other stakeholders, including those whose personal and protected data are collected in state agency systems.
- ⑨ Create clear and predictable pathways for data sharing which are necessary for effective data use and sharing.
- ⑩ Manage a data asset one time and use it for multiple purposes, to the extent possible, within legal and regulatory constraints.

## Culture of Continuous Learning and Collaboration

- ⑪ Promote a culture of continuous and collaborative learning, with data and about data.
- ⑫ Embrace openness, transparency, and accountability.

## Goals



The overarching purpose of the State Data Plan is to facilitate the lawful and responsible sharing and use of data amongst executive branch agencies in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of state policies and programs. This must occur in a manner that recognizes and supports the rights, privacy, dignity, and protection of clients/consumers whose data are collected in state data systems. The Goals represent areas where state agencies will emphasize the availability, sharing, integration, and use of data and where data from multiple state agencies are necessary to drive effective policy, or to inform the effective and efficient delivery of programs and services. Given that this plan is limited to specific executive branch agencies, areas that would require data from the judicial branch or Constitutional offices have not been included. All efforts undertaken to support these Goals should be carried out in accordance with the Principles as articulated by the plan.

Three interrelated areas will be Goals for the 2021 – 2022 State Data Plan:

- 1) Improve and increase relevance of the open data portal and related tools: This goal is repeated from the 2021 – 2022 Plan, as the open data efforts are central to the purpose of the State Data Plan. Progress is underway (with concrete results reported earlier in the Plan), but there is always room for improvement. The 2023 – 2034 plan should focus on specific improvements in user experience, metadata, integration of GIS and open data resources, and access to Census data.
- 2) Identify opportunities to support agency data and analytics capacity: While federal pandemic-related funding has provided a temporary windfall and support for state agency data and analytics capacity, this is not a long-term solution. With a federal funding cliff and potential economic downturn on the horizon, the state needs to develop realistic approaches to support agencies to make effective use of data. The Cliff Retirements Adding Efficiency, Accountability, and Technology to Economize State Government (CREATES) report<sup>3</sup> identified several opportunities to modernize, streamline, rationalize or digitize state resources, including for data and analytics. The centralization of information technology resources is a further effort that can support state data

<sup>3</sup> Issued March 2021: <https://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2021/03-2021/Governor-Lamont-Receives-Report-With-Suggestions-on-Government-Efficiency>

efforts. The 2023 – 2024 plan should focus on identifying ways in which state agencies can plan for the future while ensuring a focus on equity remains central in those efforts.

- 3) Using data to inform decision-making: This goal is again repeated from the 2021 – 2022 plan due to the broad scope of this goal and the focus on analysis standards and integration of data systems in the purpose of the Plan. While progress is also already underway, there is much work to be done in the next two years. The 2023 – 2024 plan should focus on specific improvements in standards for demographic data, interagency data sharing, increased use of existing tools by the state and the development of ways to augment state capacity through external partnerships and internal coordination.

In 2021 – 2022 plan, equity was an explicit goal in the plan. In the 2023 – 2024 plan, equitable use of data is included in each of the goals, to ensure that it is embedded in the day-to-day implementation of the plan, not as an afterthought.

For each goal, the table below lists proposed implementation steps. However, these steps can and should be revised through the advice of residents, data users and agency staff through the completion of the plan by December 31, 2022.

#### Improve and increase relevance of the open data portal and related tools

***Implementation steps:***

Proposed implementation steps for this goal for 2023 – 2024 include:

- Improve navigation and access for datasets on core state programs and services
- Improve access to Census data and quality of Census population data, through collaboration and support for the Census State Data Center
- Identify process improvements for timeliness, completeness, quality and standardization of parcel, property and address data statewide, through the GIS Office
- Improve metadata for open data and GIS data to provide additional context

#### Identify opportunities to support agency data and analytics capacity

***Implementation steps:***

Proposed implementation steps for this goal for 2023 – 2024 include:

- Identify opportunities for coordination with new Bureau of Information Technology Services (BITS) to support principles and implementation of State Data Plan, including to align data, privacy and security processes and resources
- Develop a ‘knowledge hub’ for shared processes and tools for state agency use to improve onboarding and reduce the impact of staff turnover
- Analyze existing state agency capacity and identify models for efficient use of limited staff resources
- Identify tools for
- Identify tools for incorporating equity into the data lifecycle for agencies to use
- Identify opportunities for training, skill-building and career pathways to build capacity for existing state analytical and GIS staff

#### Using data to inform decision-making

***Implementation steps:***

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Proposed implementation steps for this goal for 2023 – 2024 include:

- Continue use of learning agendas to identify and enable action on state priorities for analysis and research
  - Report progress on the P20 WIN learning agenda and data request process to identify areas for further process improvement and use of data to answer key agency policy and research questions
  - Continue support for efforts to improve collection and standardization of race, ethnicity and language data and to share health and human services data, as identified in the Five-Year Statewide Health IT Plan<sup>4</sup> and updated REL standards.
  - Build on and learn from successful models for evidence-building, evaluation and impact through pandemic-related funds
  - Identify options to address legal and technical questions on consent management to improve provision of services and safe, ethical and secure data sharing
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## Metrics



As a companion to the Goals, the metrics below will allow us to determine whether we are advancing these objectives.

### ① Improve and increase relevance of the open data portal and related tools

Primary metrics to track progress on this goal will continue to be:

- Site traffic, including to data stories and dashboards and other tools to reach a wider audience
- Frequency and consistency of updates, particularly to high-value or high-priority data
- Increased consistency in collecting and reporting of demographic data across agencies
- Increased number and percentage of public datasets that are disaggregated by factors like race, ethnicity, gender, etc., and by the intersection of one or more of those factors
- Improved availability of metadata and documentation for high-value datasets

Secondary metrics can include:

- Qualitative feedback from stakeholders, through surveys, interviews or focus groups
- Development of tools to provide easier access to GIS data
- Specific instances of use of agency data, particularly open data, to inform policy and practice

### ② Identify opportunities to support agency data and analytics capacity

Primary metrics to track progress on this goal will be:

- Increased contribution to and use of shared resources and guidance documents
- Agency participation in training or capacity-building efforts

Secondary metrics can include:

- Specific instances of change in state or agency practice (ex. developing formal methods for resident engagement, changes in informed consent processes)
  - Improved ability to attract and retain agency data and analytics staff and resources
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<sup>4</sup> Posted at: <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Services/HIT-Health-Innovation-Consumer-Engagement/Health-Information-Technology/Five-Year-Statewide-Health-IT-Plan>

### ③ Improve use of data to inform decision-making

Primary metrics to track progress on this goal will continue to be:

- Reduced time to fulfill interagency data requests, including the time to complete interagency agreements and the time to match and analyze data
- Improved customer experience for data requestors
- Increased usage and specific instances of change where data sharing was used to inform policy and practice

Secondary metrics can include:

- Increased scope of external research partnerships
- Ability to report outcomes and identify evidence base for critical programs
- Improved outcomes for Connecticut service recipients
- Increased efficiencies + cost effectiveness in state services

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## Glossary of Terms

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**Data:** The final version of statistical or factual information that: (A) is reflected in a list, table, graph, chart or other non-narrative form that can be digitally or nondigitally transmitted or processed; (B) is regularly created or maintained by, or on behalf of, an executive branch agency; and (C) records a measurement, transaction or determination related to the mission of the agency or is provided to the agency by third parties pursuant to law.

**Data dignity:** The data subject's human dignity, legitimate interests and fundamental rights, with particular regard to the transparency of processing, or the transfer of personal data.

**Data lifecycle:** The different stages from data collection to use. Definitions vary, but can include: planning, data collection, data access, use of algorithms and statistical tools, data analysis and reporting and dissemination,<sup>5</sup> or acquisition, conception, instrumentation, collection, processing and analysis, dissemination and disposition.<sup>6</sup>

**Executive branch agency:** Any agency listed in section 4-5 of the general statutes.

**High value data:** Any data that the department head determines (A) is critical to the operation of an executive branch agency; (B) can increase executive branch agency accountability and responsiveness; (C) can improve public knowledge of the executive branch agency and its operations; (D) can further the core mission of the executive branch agency; (E) can create economic opportunity; (F) is frequently requested by the public; (G) responds to a need and demand as identified by the agency through public consultation; or (H) is used to satisfy any legislative or other reporting requirements.

**Open data:** Any data that (A) is freely available in convenient and modifiable format and can be retrieved, downloaded, indexed and searched; (B) is formatted in a manner that allows for automated machine processing; (C) does not have restrictions governing use; (D) is published with the finest possible level of detail that is practicable and permitted by law; and (E) is described in enough detail so users of the data have sufficient information to understand (i) the strengths, weaknesses, analytical limitations and security requirements of the data, and (ii) how to process such data.

**Public data:** Any data collected by an executive branch agency that is permitted to be made available to the public, consistent with any and all applicable laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, resolutions, policies

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<sup>5</sup> Hawn Nelson, A., Jenkins, D., Zanti, S., Katz, M., Berkowitz, E., et al. (2020). [A Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration](#). Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy, University of Pennsylvania.

<sup>6</sup> Gaddy, Marcus and Kassie Scott. (2020). [Principles for Advancing Equitable Data Practice](#). Urban Institute.

or other restrictions, requirements or rights associated with the data, including, but not limited to, contractual or other legal restrictions, orders or requirements.

**Protected data**: Any data the public disclosure of which would (A) violate federal or state laws or regulations; (B) endanger the public health, safety or welfare; (C) hinder the operation of the federal, state or municipal government, including criminal and civil investigations; or (D) impose an undue financial, operational or administrative burden on the executive branch agency. "Protected data" includes any records not required to be disclosed pursuant to subsection (b) of section 1-210 of the general statutes.

**Personal data**: Any Protected data that contains personally identifiable information or protected health information.

**Private data**: Any Protected data that is subject to federal or state laws related to individual privacy or confidentiality.