

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Administrative Code - Timelines and Procedures for Releasing Open Data]

Ordinance amending the Administrative Code to establish or improve open data standards, improve the protection of citizen privacy, and set deadlines for releasing open data.

Existing Law

Chapter 22D of the San Francisco Administrative Code provided open data policies and procedures for City Departments, the Chief Data Officer and Departmental Data Coordinators.

Amendments to Current Law

This legislation amends the City's existing open data ordinance in three ways: (1) it adds timelines for the appointment of a City Data Officer (CDO), Department Coordinators (DC), and the creation of departments' open data plans; (2) it adds a requirement that the CDO create a process for private citizens to access to their own City held data; and (3) it provides guidance to the CDO for the design of technical standards to be used in the release of departmental open data.

The following deadlines are triggered by the effective date of the ordinance:

- Within one month, the Mayor shall appoint a CDO;
- Within three months, city departments shall designate Department Data Coordinators to oversee implementation and compliance with the open data policy within his/her respective department;
- Within six months, each Department shall conduct a review of their progress on providing access to data sets requested by the public through the designated web portal;
- Within six months, Departments shall publish on DataSF a catalogue of their Department's data that can be made public, including both raw datasets and APIs; and
- Within one year, the CDO shall present updated citywide Open Data implementation plan to COIT, the Mayor and Board of Supervisors.

Since the City is also a custodian of private data, the CDO will be charged with creating a plan for the release of this data in a format and on systems so that people can securely access their own data on themselves, for example, digital versions of their own medical records and/or their own permit applications. The release of individual citizens data is intended to fuel the market of third-party solution providers that can transform individual data into valuable new products and services.

By establishing technical guidelines for the government data released by departments, the CDO and DC's will make the data more accessible and useful. Thus, the data should be released with metadata descriptions, the documentation for Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), and a description of licensing requirements. In addition, common core metadata shall, at a minimum, include fields for every dataset's title, description, tags, last update, publisher, contact information, unique identifier, and public access level. Required metadata clarifications and updates shall include, but are not necessarily limited to the following for each metadata description:

- Cardinality
- Required nature of sub-elements
- Accepted values
- Usage notes
- Syntax example

The CDO will also make reasonable efforts to make the published data sets on DataSF available in human and machine-readable formats that are non-proprietary. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: 1) JavaScript Object Notation (JSON), 2) Comma-Separated Values (CSV), 3) Extensible Markup Language (XML), 4) Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML), and 5) Plain text.

Background Information

San Francisco has been a leader in open data policy in the United States. On October 21, 2009, Mayor Newsom issued Executive Directive 09-06, entitled Open Data ("the Directive"). The Directive stated the City's commitment to transparency in government by declaring that all appropriate data sets would be published through a designated website.

The Board of Supervisors passed the City's Open Data Policy Ordinance (Ordinance 293-10) in 2010. The ordinance empowered San Francisco's Committee on Information Technology (COIT) to establish Rules and Standards applicable to all City departments regarding the release of data to the city's online data portal.

This year, on April 16, 2013, the Board passed the Citywide Coordination of Open Data Policy and Procedures (Ordinance 69-13) creating the position of Chief Data Officer (CDO), Department Data Coordinators (DC) and furthering the goals of the City's Open Data Policy.

On May 9, 2013, President Obama signed an Executive Order, "Making Open and Machine Readable the New Default for Government Information." [78 FR 28111] In the Order, the Federal Government encouraged the general principles of Open Government. This Ordinance reflects San Francisco's interest in creating a local plan to which mirrors the federal order.