



## **OXFORD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

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Timothy G. Turner, Chairman ♦ Lisa M. Keim ♦ H. Sawin Millett

LD, 1788 An Act to Strengthen the Freedom of Access Act by Categorizing Commercial Requesters

May 2, 2025

Good afternoon, Chair Carney, Chair Kuhn, and honorable Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. My name is Abby and I live in Norway. I am here representing the Oxford County Administration Office as the main point of contact for FOAA requests in our agency. I work with our legal team and department heads to acknowledge and fulfill these requests.

I have worked in the Oxford County Administration Office since 2015 and have experienced firsthand the progression of FOAA requests. Not only has the number of requests multiplied, but the nature of the requests themselves has also shifted.

Oxford County is determined to be as transparent as possible to our constituents and the general public; however, most of the requests we receive are deviating from that notion. When I first started at Oxford County, FOAA requests were fairly rare and typically from journalists, reporters, or members of the public regarding budgeting matters, personnel practices, or anything that would relate to the management and oversight of county operations. The majority of requests we receive today seem to be related to more specific matters, such as data compilation and individual disputes/legal matters.

We are not sure what is causing it, but there has been a clear increase of attorneys and pro se defendants utilizing the FOAA system to expedite or circumvent the discovery process. These requests entail police reports, bodycam footage, 911 call information, etc. which will be provided to them twice now.

Responding to these requests are costly in time, money, and resources. The number of requests and how frequently they are received has resulted in a backlog of requests which makes managing the requests even more difficult and distracts essential personnel from other business matters.

Oxford County has incurred over \$63,000 in legal fees associated with responding to the influx of FOAA requests in the past two years alone, and over \$13,000 the first quarter of 2025. Although current FOAA rules allow for recovering a portion of the fees associated with responding to requests, the billing and oversight process of managing that system in itself would incur more time and resources than we would be able to recoup.

Oxford is not the only county in Maine being impacted by the increase in FOAA requests. It is the topic at many events where County Officials come together to discuss general business. Attached to my testimony is a sample log of recent requests of which 30% are from attorneys who will otherwise receive these documents in discovery, 12.5% from private companies compiling data for sale online, and 57% are regarding individual legal matters or disputes such as a car accident or argument with a neighbor – essentially topics that the general public wouldn't care or know about unless directly involved.

Oxford County is proud of our mission and our employees' dedication to serving the public. We want to do everything we can to be open and engage the public with county governmental matters which is why we are seeking a change to the FOAA system guidelines to ensure we are prioritizing our duties appropriately.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Abby Shanor".

Abby Shanor

Deputy County Administrator

Oxford County, Maine

Requestor	Content of Request
Neil Lanteigne	Resubmission of 5/12/2023 FOAA request to include requested Paris Proprietors Records information from 1/01/2019 to present
Elizabeth A. Kayatta	All records relating to 8/25/23 accident in Town of Canton
Carly Cosgrove, Esq.	All records related to Chrystal Perri pro ami Chase Verrill re: dog bite on 6/13/23
Christopher Rand	Records relating to 7/28/23 motorcycle accident involving Robert Hazeltine and Matthew Walton in Town of Canton
Edward Dilworth Esq.	All reports/911 calls re: Troy Webber, Joy Medford, Leon Medford, Stephanie Knightly and/or Shannon Dorr from 10/27/23 - 10/29/23
Gillian Graham of Portland Press Herald	All public records requests (FOAAs) received by county between 6/01/23 and 12/02/2023 as well as responses
Christopher Berryment Esq.	All reports and documents re: calls for service at 250 Vernon Street, Bethel, between 5/1/23 and 7/1/23
Aimee Leach of EWU Media LLC	re: Tzara Jones and All evidence related to murder of Aremean Mayo, 93 and Michael Willett, 69
Neil Lanteigne	Two arrests that occurred on Finn Road in West Paris on or about 10/14/23 - specifically Troy Masterman and Amber Rugg
Sheldon J. Tepler, Esq.	All records relating to an accident that occurred on 11/11/23 on Bethel Road in West Paris
Chelsea O'Donnell	All reports and records related to J&K Sporting Goods in West Paris from 2021 to present

Requestor	Content of Request
Graham S.O. Louis	All records related to Cindy Walker and her meeting with Alvina Day of Town of Brownfield; any interactions with OC officer and Alvina Day on 12/14/23; and any complaints Cindy Walker made re: employees of the Town of Brownfield.
Chris Costa	Copies of non-disclosure agreement between Oxford County and specified list of employees
Neil Lanteigne	Request for Unredacted copy of "Complaint letter and Exhibits referring to Oxford County Complaint to Governor Mills
Stephen C. Smith	All reports re: Mr. Jesse Arsenault from 1/1/23 to present
Kelly A. Jarvis	Information re: incident of 1/22/24 at 995 Brownfield Road in Porter, ME
Neil Lanteigne	11/07/23 FOAA and 2/17/24 discovery request for information related to Officer Zane Loper
Heidi Baker of Smart Procure	All current County employee/staff contact information
Amy Lyn	Employee non-disclosure agreements listed in request
John Terhune of Portland Press Herald	All records relating to a police chase through the Town of Fryeburg and "related crashes"
Tara Levesque	All records/reports from 10/19/23 accident Peru Maine intersection of Greenwoods Mt. Road and Auburn Road
Good Citizen	any and all 911 calls * AND* radio communications re: post office at 488 Main St. Fryeburg on 4/10/24

Requestor	Content of Request
Neil Lanteigne	response letter from Sheriff Wainwright to Commissioner's complaint on 4/10/24 (see request for more requests)
Verne Paradis Esq.	Any police reports re: complaints on Torrance Cody for period of 1/01/22 - 4/18/24
Samantha Bartles	911 call from 4/11/24 @ 1:50 pm
Brenda Stickney	All documents related to MSAG 911 Road Name Change
Ann Fifield	Recording from 5/03/24
James Nelson	911 call on 5/03/24 regarding Nelson Family
Caleigh Milton	Entire catalogue of Oxford County Sheriff Dept. SOPs
Christopher L'Hommedieu, Esq.	All records re: Rose Buckmore (dob: 4/2/90) for period of 1/1/21 to present
New England CW	All information re: OC Communications Dispatcher/Contractor #1421
Andrew Carlton	all Oxford County full time employee employment-related information
Neil Lanteigne	Renewed request of June 5th discovery request
Varsha Singh of KPMG Global Services	Copy of outstanding/uncashed check report (over \$500) from 1/1/2003 to present
Laura Indis	Any police reports, dispatcher logs and traffic incidents within a 5-year time period from this date re: Christopher Field (dob: 5/1980)
Brittney Wilkins	911 Emergency recording on 6/13/24 (06-13-24 08.40.43 Emergency (APU2).wav
Frank Curry	Copy of invoices, bills, & subscription statements for all software, internet servcies, etc., from June 2023 to presdent. Include most recent invoice for all related purchases for agency and latest billing document for each vendor, even outside this date range.

Requestor	Content of Request
Jonathan R. Liberman	All reports and investigative materials re: death of Gilles Anctil in Peru, Maine
Neil Lanteigne	Renewed request seeking information from previous FOAA request dated February 20, 2024
Neil Lanteigne	All documents, transcripts and recordings re: Deirdre Binney complaint of 10/12/19 and 10/30/19
Neil Lanteigne	Same requested documents, etc from existing FOAA requests dated 7/30/24, 7/17/24, 2/20/24, 7/08/24, and 11/07/23
Neil Lanteigne	Same requested documents, etc from existing FOAA requests dated 7/30/24, 7/17/24, 2/20/24, 7/08/24, and 11/07/23, but requesting unredacted versions
Abbas Khan	All purchasing records form 7/01/20 to date for all departments
Laura Maher	Complete file on vehicle accident of 9/30/24 in Sweden, Maine involving Thomas Welch, Dube Environmental, Inc. and Shawn Witham
Megan McCormick	Transcripts of calls to 911/OCRCC and the non-emergency line involving Karen and Frank Holcomb from 9/01/21 to present
Jeffrey Sherman, Esq.	See FOAA request for details of request (9 different requests)
Christopher Berryment, Esq.	All reports, et al, relating to an incident leading to arrest of Shannon Alanskas on 10/20/24
Brandon Berg, Esq.	all call logs and audio recordings for any calls made to OCRCC by Gregory Morse & Tammy Morse from 2019 to present

Requestor	Content of Request
Daniel Bernard	The Fatal book for Jared Roger Bernard - fatal accident in Canton, Maine; Crash Reconstruction report, and report for Canton Maine Big Apple Incident on 5/26/24
Sam MacKenzie and Rob Garver	All public records/videos re: murders of James Whitehurst, Julie Bullard, Selby Bullard and Cindy Beaston and arrest of Charles Nielsen
Darcy Fisher	All written agreements, etc. between Oxford County and all providers of communication services between inmates housed at correctional facilities and their attorneys from 1/01/24 through 12/31/24
Brian Young	Request for salary/benefit information on Officer Bowie and body cam footage of Oxford PD on 10/10/24 relating to his OUI
Rick Emery	Call log for 11/20/2024
Lorne Fairbanks	Public information on disciplinary actions/proceedings taken on Jonathan Wainwright, Matt McDonnell, Michael Rioux, and Michael Fitzmorris
Benjamin Bornstein	All video recordings, transcripts of 911 calls, recorded audio communications, written reports, etc. regarding incident of 9/30/24 involving decedent Thomas T. Welch
Peter Clifford	All transcripts and audio recordings of any emergency calls on 7/14/21 re: the incident involving Lester Bell at Mayville Road at Bridge Construction (see request letter for detailed request)