

Good day Senate Committee on Government Operations:

I just wanted to follow up as I heard from another young person who requested his DCF records and hasn't heard back. He has been asking for access to his story for years. I have spoken with multiple deputy commissioners who have committed to getting them to him and then didn't follow up. He went through the process of requesting his [foster care records](#) after [173](#) was enacted. It is disappointing that he was let down once again. When this law passed, we were told that certain portions of an individual's records might be difficult to track down, but individuals will remain updated on the process and will receive pieces as they become available.

I am including Nate on this email, he was just featured in [VT Digger](#) in their story about restraint and seclusion practices. He serves on the Justice for Children Task Force, was on the Oversight Commission for the Office of Child, Youth and Family Advocate, supported the prudent parent standards and is a capable and fierce advocate for systems reform. He can correct me if I am misrepresenting what he shared with me about his experience thus far.

Please let me know if you have time to follow up on implementation during this extended session.

Amy
(802) 249-8473

On Tue, Mar 25, 2025 at 11:01 AM Amy Rose <amy@voicesforvtkids.org> wrote:
Good day,

As you likely recall - [Act 173](#) went into effect in June. H.644 was the bill that gave people who had experienced foster care access to their records. The Senate Committee on Government Operations worked with the Department, the Office of Child, Youth and Family Advocate, and impacted people to determine what records should be shared and what can be redacted.

Overall, Voices has heard gratitude for the work that created this new law. We have spoken with some young people who have recently transitioned out of state care who do not plan to access their records right now, but are pleased that the option is available to them. We have heard that some of the survivors from St. Joseph's Orphanage have received their records already and are pleased with what they received. It is our understanding that there has been a small number of requests made thus far and yet - there is already a significant backlog in processing. There is currently one temporary employee at DCF supporting the requests. We have heard wonderful things about the individual, but for stability, it would be helpful to have a permanent position for this role.

Voices heard from one person who requested her records in October and has not received them yet, we followed up on her behalf and DCF let her know that she is in the queue. We believe the delay is partly due to the time that it takes to review and redact files. It is our understanding that files are reviewed and redacted by the staff member, then a DCF attorney, then the staff member again.

Voices believes that the Department has been overly cautious in their redaction process. One of the witnesses who testified in support of H.644 shared that her mother's name was

redacted. Her mother is deceased and it is unclear how her mother's name matched the criteria below...

(3) In providing records or information pursuant to this subsection, the Department may withhold or redact the following:

(A) identifying information about any person, other than the subject, in which there is a substantial likelihood that a person's safety would be compromised if disclosed;

(B) information that creates a substantial likelihood that would compromise an active law enforcement investigation;

(C) reports or investigatory records about the subject of the record request in which there is a formal allegation that the subject committed an act of abuse or neglect

In addition, records are being shared with a cover letter that makes it clear that the recipient cannot share the records further, with named consequences for sharing the records further. This is their story.

I realize that you are very busy, but I'd be happy to connect the Committee with impacted people if you'd like to invite them in to testify on their experience with this new law.

Amy

--

Amy Rose

[Voices for Vermont's Children](#)

Pronouns: [she/her](#)

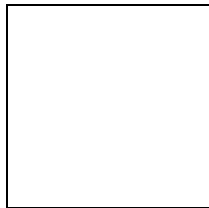
amy@voicesforvtkids.org

(802) 249-8473 (cell)

"May our children and our ancestors be healed, as we work to heal ourselves"

- Olga Gonzales

Please note that in addition to our deep commitment to relational work, our team size is limited. While my response may sometimes take longer than expected, your communication is important to me. If you do not hear back within 3-5 days or the matter is urgent, please let me know and I will follow-up as soon as possible.



--

Amy Rose

[Voices for Vermont's Children](#)

Pronouns: [she/her](#)

amy@voicesforvtkids.org
(802) 249-8473 (cell)

"May our children and our ancestors be healed, as we work to heal ourselves"
- Olga Gonzales

Please note that in addition to our deep commitment to relational work, our team size is limited. While my response may sometimes take longer than expected, your communication is important to me. If you do not hear back within 3-5 days or the matter is urgent, please let me know and I will follow-up as soon as possible.

