



NEWS

William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

State House, Room 337
Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Contact: Debra O'Malley
Telephone: 617-727-9180

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SECRETARY GALVIN APPOINTS NEW SUPERVISOR OF PUBLIC RECORDS, RENEWS CALL TO EXPAND PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin has appointed attorney Manza Arthur as Supervisor of Public Records. Arthur replaces former Supervisor Rebecca Murray, who has been promoted to General Counsel.

An experienced public records attorney, Arthur has been with Secretary of the Commonwealth's Public Records Division since 2017, most recently serving as Senior Attorney and Assistant Director of the Division.

Born and raised in Ghana, Arthur immigrated to the United States in 2008. She is a graduate of Suffolk Law School and Worcester State University, and also attended the University of Cape Coast, in Ghana.

"I am very proud of the work that has been done in my office since the most recent overhaul of the Public Records Law in 2016," Galvin said today. "It is my hope that the Legislature will act swiftly in passing my proposal to make the next Governor subject to the Public Records Law, and that Supervisor Arthur will be able to oversee further expansions to the law next year."

Under the Massachusetts Public Records Law, the Supervisor is responsible for issuing determinations on public records appeals. Appeals may be filed if the requester believes that an agency has not complied with the Public Records Law, but Massachusetts governors have long claimed that their office is exempt from the law. The Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts has previously ruled that the records of the Governor are exempt, though the records of the agencies under the Governor remain in dispute.

Early this year, Galvin drafted a proposal that would explicitly apply the Public Records Law to the Governor's office, beginning with the new Governor's term in January 2023. Though Galvin supports making the Legislature subject to the law as well, his hope is that a more narrowly tailored expansion, supported by all of the current gubernatorial candidates, has a better chance of passage.



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“The Legislature has consistently resisted efforts to include itself in the Public Records Law. While I would like to see those records also available to the public, I believe this upcoming transition is the perfect opportunity to bring the Governor’s office in line with other agencies and cities and towns, which are all already subject to the law,” Galvin said. “All of the candidates for governor are on the record in support of making the office’s records available to the public, so now is the time to act.”

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