

# EMPOWER OVERSIGHT

*Whistleblowers & Research*



January 13, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION: [DCYF.DATAREQUEST@STATE.MN.US](mailto:DCYF.DATAREQUEST@STATE.MN.US)

Tikki Brown  
Commissioner  
Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families  
Attention: Data Request  
444 Lafayette Rd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**RE: Request for Records Related to Oversight of the  
Child Care Assistance Program**

Dear Commissioner:

## INTRODUCTION

Empower Oversight is a nonpartisan, nonprofit educational organization, which is dedicated to enhancing independent oversight of government and corporate wrongdoing. The organization works to help insiders safely and legally report waste, fraud, abuse, corruption, and misconduct to the proper authorities, and seeks to hold those authorities accountable to act on such reports by, among other means, publishing information concerning the same.

## BACKGROUND

The Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is responsible for the administration of the Minnesota Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Under this program, the Department distributes millions of dollars every year to daycare providers across the State. The purpose of the fund is ostensibly to give low-income families financial support for child care services so they can participate in the workforce. A significant amount of the money for this program comes from the federal government through the Child Care and Development Fund, which combines the Child Care and Development Block Grant and the Child Care Entitlement to States. Nationally, this is roughly \$12 billion annually, with approximately \$185 million in federal funds going to Minnesota each year. Since 2019, roughly \$1 to \$1.2 billion in federal taxpayer dollars has gone to the State in total.

However, recent widespread attention has come to this program over concerns about widespread fraud and misuse of state and federal taxpayer dollars. DCYF is responsible for overseeing providers, a serious oversight responsibility. Yet it is unclear what DCYF knew about

these problems or has done about them. Reports suggest that despite a history of repeated regulatory violations across many providers, the licenses remain active and funding flows. There are also troubling reported connections between providers and the Feeding Our Future scandal.

The U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform recently held a hearing to examine fraud and misuse of federal funds in Minnesota.<sup>1</sup> At the hearing, Chairman James Comer observed that “in Minnesota’s social services programs, . . . [f]ederal prosecutors estimate these criminals have stolen at least \$9 billion.”<sup>2</sup> Minnesota Representative Kristin Robbins, Chair of the House Fraud Prevention Committee, testified that “these are actual crimes that must be punished.”<sup>3</sup> Minnesota Representative Walter Hudson testified: “The recent focus on childcare fraud is not an isolated scandal. It is the latest manifestation of a pattern that has repeated itself for decades across different programs, populations, and funding streams.”<sup>4</sup>

## **DATA REQUEST**

Accordingly, pursuant to the Minnesota Data Practices Act, Empower Oversight requests electronic copies of the following:

1. Investigative reports finding no children present at a provider since January 7, 2019.
2. All communications since January 7, 2019, with or regarding providers that have Aimee Bock currently or previously listed as point of contact.
3. All communications since January 7, 2019, with or regarding providers that served as purported Feeding Our Future distribution sites.
4. All communications since January 7, 2019, regarding fraud or misuse of the Child Care Assistance Program.
5. All other Data Practices Act requests related to the Child Care Assistance Program since January 7, 2019, and their responses.

## **DEFINITIONS**

“COMMUNICATION(S)” means every manner or method of disclosure, exchange of information, statement, or discussion between or among two or more persons, including but not limited to, face-to-face and telephone conversations, correspondence, memoranda, telegrams, telexes, email messages, voice-mail messages, text messages, Slack messages, meeting minutes, discussions, releases, statements, reports, publications, and any recordings or reproductions thereof.

“REFERS,” “REFERRING TO,” “REGARDS,” REGARDING,” “RELATES,” “RELATING TO,” “CONCERNS,” “BEARS UPON,” or “PERTAINS TO” mean containing, alluding to, responding to, commenting upon, discussing, showing, disclosing, explaining, mentioning, analyzing, constituting, comprising, evidencing, setting forth, summarizing, or characterizing, either directly or indirectly, in whole or in part.

“INCLUDING” means comprising part of, but not being limited to, the whole.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oversight.house.gov/hearing/oversight-of-fraud-and-misuse-of-federal-funds-in-minnesota-part-i>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://oversight.house.gov/release/charman-comer-opens-hearing-on-massive-fraud-in-minnesotas-social-programs>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Robbins-Written-Testimony.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Hudson-Written-Testimony.pdf>.

## INSTRUCTIONS

The words “and” and “or” shall be construed in the conjunctive or disjunctive, whichever is most inclusive.

The singular form shall include the plural form and vice versa.

The present tense shall include the past tense and vice versa.

In producing the records described above, please segregate them by reference to each of the numbered items of this request.

For ease of administration and to conserve resources, we ask that documents be produced in a readily accessible electronic format. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

If you deny any or all of this request, please cite each specific exemption you feel justifies the refusal to release the information.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Bobby Cheren by e-mail at [bcheren@empowr.us](mailto:bcheren@empowr.us).

## FEE WAIVER REQUEST

Empower Oversight is a non-profit educational organization as defined under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, which helps insiders safely and legally report waste, fraud, abuse, corruption, and misconduct to the proper authorities, and seeks to hold those authorities accountable to act on such reports by, among other means, publishing information concerning the same.

Further, the information that Empower Oversight seeks is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to the public’s understanding of potential fraud in the Child Care Assistance Program.

Empower Oversight is committed to government accountability, public integrity, and transparency. In the latter regard, the information that Empower Oversight receives that tends to explain the subject matter of this request will be disclosed publicly via its website, and copies will be shared with other news media for public dissemination.

Cordially,  
/Tristan Leavitt/  
Tristan Leavitt  
President