



January 7, 2026

VIA WEBSITE ONLY

Arianne Perkins, FOIA Officer
Department of Health and Human Services
Freedom of Information Act Office
Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Room 729H
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201
FOIARequest@hhs.gov

RE: FOIA Request about the HHS's Minneapolis daycare fraud investigation

Dear Ms. Perkins:

This letter is a request ("Request") in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and the corresponding department/agency implementing regulations.

The Request is made by the American Center for Law and Justice ("ACLJ")¹ on behalf of its supporters.

To summarize, this Request seeks records pertaining to the United States Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS") ongoing or pending fraud investigations regarding daycares in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS") FOIA regulation 45 C.F.R. § 5.21(3), this Background "provide[s] details that will help . . . identify and find the records" requested to the extent known.

¹ The ACLJ is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the defense of constitutional liberties secured by law. The ACLJ regularly monitors governmental activity and works to inform the public of such affairs. The ACLJ and its global affiliated organizations are committed to ensuring governmental accountability and the ongoing viability of freedom and liberty in the United States and around the world.

In December 2025, a YouTube video highlighted Minnesota daycare facilities that have received millions of taxpayer dollars.² One facility included was the Quality Learning Center³ (Minnesota Department of Human Services (“MDHS”) License No. 1087038⁴) located in Minneapolis. The Quality Learning Center gained significant attention because it had a misspelled sign reading “Quality Learning Center.”⁵

Quality Learning Center (hereafter, Quality) has received \$1.9 million in funding from the Minnesota Child Care Assistance Program for fiscal year 2025.⁶ In late December, it “had all the appearances of being open[,]”⁷ but Commissioner Tikki Brown of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (“DCYF”) implied to Minnesota State Representative Nolan West that Quality had informed DCYF that it was closed.⁸ Licensing investigators then learned that Quality had decided to remain open when they made a visit ten days later.⁹

On December 30, 2025, the Nokomis Daycare Center (MDHS License No. 1082133¹⁰) in Minneapolis was robbed of documents, including records on enrollment, financial documents, and employment information.¹¹ The Minnesota Department of Human Services did not show a record of the Nokomis Daycare Center committing fraud.¹² Nokomis Daycare Center was not included in the viral YouTube video¹³ and did not have violations related to children’s records in its four licensing reviews and one licensing investigation since 2022.¹⁴

² Damita Menezes, *Feds Launch Massive Taxpayer Fraud Probe in Minnesota After Viral Video*, NEWSNATION (Dec. 30, 2025, 6:39 AM CST), <https://www.newsnationnow.com/crime/fed-taxpayer-fraud-probe-minnesota-video-expose/>.

³ *Id.*

⁴ *License Details: Quality Learning Center Inc*, MINN. DEP’T OF HUM. SERVS., <https://licensinglookup.dhs.state.mn.us/Details.aspx?l=1087038> (last visited Jan. 5, 2026).

⁵ Raya Quittaineh, *Minneapolis Daycare Denies Fraud Allegations After Viral Video Draws National Attention*, KARE (Dec. 29, 2025, 10:30 PM), <https://www.kare11.com/article/news/local/minneapolis-daycare-fraud-allegations-viral-video-national-attention/89-91413882-b0f9-4ec4-a4a4-4b4e3aeab39d>.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Ryan Raiche & Richard Reeve, *Review of Day Care Records Finds Safety Violations But No Mention of Fraud, Absence of Kids*, KTSP, <https://kstp.com/kstp-news/top-news/review-of-day-care-records-finds-safety-violations-but-no-mention-of-fraud-absence-of-kids/> (last updated Dec. 30, 2025, 11:53 PM).

⁸ Letter from Nolan West, State Representative, Minn. House of Representatives, to Tikki Brown, Comm’r, Minn. Dep’t of Children, Youth, & Fams. (Dec. 30, 2025), <https://kstp.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Nolan-West-Commissioner-Brown.pdf>.

⁹ Nick Lentz, *9 Minnesota Child Care Centers Discussed in Viral Video “Operating As Expected,” State Officials Say*, CBS NEWS (Jan. 2, 2026), <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/minnesota-child-care-centers-viral-video-operating-expected/>.

¹⁰ *License Details: Nokomis Daycare Center Inc*, MINN. DEP’T OF HUM. SERVS., <https://licensinglookup.dhs.state.mn.us/Details.aspx?l=1082133> (last visited Jan. 5, 2026).

¹¹ Kyra Miles & Regina Medina, *Somali Child Care Providers Report Vandalism, Threats After Viral Fraud Video*, MPR NEWS (Dec. 31, 2025), <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2025/12/31/somali-child-care-providers-report-vandalism-threats-after-viral-video>.

¹² Frankie McLister, *Day Care in Minneapolis Vandalized, and Children’s Information Stolen, After Viral Video Purporting Fraud*, CBS NEWS, <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/day-care-minneapolis-vandalized-viral-video-fraud/> (last updated Dec. 31, 2025, 2:42 PM CST).

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *License Details: Nokomis Daycare Center Inc.*, *supra* note 10.

Quality and Nokomis Daycare Center both had their licenses renewed on January 1, 2025.¹⁵ However, within seven months of those renewals, both centers had multiple violations recorded following licensing reviews (June 23, 2025 for Quality and October 30, 2025 for Nokomis Daycare Center).¹⁶

Prior violations in thirteen licensing investigations, licensing reviews, or conditional license reviews from 2022 to 2025 for Quality found violations including:

- (1) Staff not supervising children at all times;
- (2) Not reporting a death, serious injury, fire, or emergency that it was required to report;
- (3) Crib mattresses and/or sheets not meeting safety requirements and/or there being items in a crib for a less-than-twelve-month-old infant;
- (4) Indoor air temperature being below 68 degrees Fahrenheit;
- (5) Accessibility of hazardous objects and area to children;
- (6) Unmaintained fire extinguishers;
- (7) Lack of compliance with requirements of first aid training;
- (8) Lack of an emergency preparedness plan;
- (9) Lack of access to personal hygiene products for children;
- (10) Lack of handwashing with soap and water from staff or for children;
- (11) Unshielded or lack of tamper-proofing for electrical outlets; and
- (12) Lack of emergency equipment, among several other violations.¹⁷

For Nokomis Daycare Center, following one 2022 licensing review in compliance, there were four other visits resulting in violations from 2023 to 2025.¹⁸ These violations included (1) accessibility of hazardous objects to children; (2) lack of training requirement completion for staff; and (3) documentation not available to show a teacher satisfied qualification requirements.¹⁹ None were found under the category of children's records.²⁰

When confronted about being vacant, the manager of Quality said that the YouTube investigation occurred outside of the regular hours of the facility (Monday to Thursday, 2 to 10 P.M.).²¹ However, in 2015, the Quality Learning Center (then called the Salama Child Care Center²²) was raided by the FBI following allegations it had billed the child assistance program in

¹⁵ See *Licensing Details: Quality Learning Center Inc*, *supra* note 4; *Licensing Details: Nokomis Daycare Center Inc*, *supra* note 10.

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ *Licensing Details: Nokomis Daycare Center*, *supra* note 10.

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ Hugh Cameron, *Minnesota Daycare Center Hits Back At Fraud Accusations*, NEWSWEEK, <https://www.newsweek.com/minnesota-daycare-center-hits-back-at-fraud-accusations-11282952> (last updated Dec. 31, 2025, 8:09 AM EST).

²² *Care Center Raided by FBI Accused of Billing State for Non-Existent Children*, BRING ME THE NEWS, <https://bringmethenews.com/news/child-care-center-raided-by-fbi-accused-of-billing-state-for-non-existent-children> (last updated Mar. 8, 2018).

Minnesota for more children than present at the location.²³ Further, of the violations listed for safety purposes, Quality had violations of lacking complete attendance records in 2022; lacking files for each child in 2022; and lacking required items in children's records in 2022, 2023, and 2024.²⁴

As of January 2, 2026, DCYF stated that investigators with the agency were looking into four of nine child care centers that received funding from the Minnesota Child Care Assistance Program in fiscal year 2025, but did not specify if the review included the Quality Learning Center (Nokomis Daycare Center was not included on the list).²⁵

RECORDS REQUESTED

For purposes of this Request, the term “record” means “any information” that qualifies under 5 U.S.C. § 552(f), and includes, but is not limited to, the original or any full, complete and unedited copy of any log, chart, list, memorandum, note, correspondence, writing of any kind, policy, procedure, guideline, agenda, handout, report, transcript, set of minutes or notes, video, photo, audio recordings, or other material. The term “record” also includes, but is not limited to, all relevant information created, stored, received or delivered in any electronic or digital format, e.g., electronic mail, instant messaging or Facebook Messenger, iMessage, text messages or any other means of communication, and any information generated, sent, received, reviewed, stored or located on a government *or private* account or server, consistent with the holdings of *Competitive Enter. Inst. v. Office of Sci. & Tech. Policy*, 827 F.3d 145 (D.C. Cir. 2016) (rejecting agency argument that emails on private email account were not under agency control, and holding, “If a department head can deprive the citizens of their right to know what his department is up to by the simple expedient of maintaining his departmental emails on an account in another domain, that purpose is hardly served.”).

For purposes of this Request, all terms otherwise used herein have the definitions given by FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552 *et seq.*

For purposes of this Request, and unless otherwise indicated, the timeframe of records requested herein is January 1, 2020, to the date this request is processed.

The ACLJ hereby requests HHS to produce the following records.

1. Any and all records discussing federal or state investigations or pending federal or state investigations into fraudulent activity or conduct in violation of any contractual or funding requirements by Quality Learning Center, Inc. or Quality Learning Center, if so titled, (1411 Nicollet Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55403) and Nokomis Daycare Center, Inc. (4010 Bloomington Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55407).

²³ Charlotte Hazard, *Childcare Center in Recent Minnesota Fraud Scheme Was Raided by FBI in 2015: Report*, KRCR (Dec. 30, 2025, 12:22 PM), <https://krcrtv.com/news/nation-world/childcare-center-in-recent-minnesota-fraud-scheme-was-raided-by-fbi-in-2015-report-dhs-minneapolis-department-of-homeland-security>.

²⁴ *Licensing Details: Quality Learning Center*, *supra* note 4.

²⁵ Nick Lentz, *supra* note 28.

2. Any and all records of active childcare operations at Quality Learning Center, Inc. (or Quality Learning Center, if so titled), and Nokomis Daycare Center, Inc., respecting child privacy *but excluding any personal identifiers of children*, including (1) enrollment numbers, (2) attendance records, (3) tuition or payments for attendance (if applicable), and (4) proof of curriculum since 2020.

REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF FEES

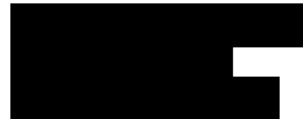
The ACLJ requests a waiver of all fees for this request. Disclosure of the requested information to us is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in our commercial interest. The documents requested are to provide transparency on the expenditure of funds by the HHS. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

CONCLUSION

If this Request is denied in whole or in part, the ACLJ requests that, within the time requirements imposed by FOIA, you support all denials by reference to specific FOIA exemptions and provide any judicially required explanatory information, including but not limited to, a *Vaughn* Index.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this Request. Please furnish all applicable records and direct any responses to:

Jordan Sekulow, Executive Director
Benjamin P. Sisney, Senior Litigation Counsel
John A. Monaghan, Senior Litigation Counsel
American Center for Law and Justice



Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jordan Sekulow".

Jordan Sekulow
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John A. Monaghan".

John A Monaghan
Senior Litigation Counsel

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben P. Sisney".

Benjamin P. Sisney
Senior Litigation Counsel