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**Data Governance Board Charter**

Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act of 2018 [Public Law 115-435]

&

Federal Data Strategy

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# Data Governance Board

## Purpose & Mission

The SSA Data Governance Board (DGB) is a forum for the agency to work across organizational components to collaborate and coordinate effectively on data strategy, management, and policy issues. The DGB will coordinate and oversee SSA data governance,[[1]](#footnote-2) data stewardship,[[2]](#footnote-3) data architecture,[[3]](#footnote-4) and data utilization.[[4]](#footnote-5)

The SSA DGB will fulfill the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) guidance on implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (EBPA), and will support the agency’s implementation of the Federal Data Strategy [FDS].[[5]](#footnote-6)

On July 10, 2019, OMB issued Phase 1 guidance on the implementation of EBPA in Memorandum M-19-23. As part of this guidance, the agency must establish a DGB with sufficient authority over the management and access to key data assets, including roles for developing, overseeing, and coordinating data management policy and resource allocation.

## Responsibilities & Requirements

The DGB will be responsible for the following activities:[[6]](#footnote-7)

1. Overseeing the creation and implementation of a data governance structure that establishes authority, roles and responsibilities, management, and decision-making parameters around the data created, collected, managed, maintained, accessed, used, or controlled by the agency.
2. Overseeing a comprehensive data inventory of data assets created by, collected by, under the control or direction of, or maintained by the agency. The inventory will include metadata on each data asset, including, to the maximum extent practicable, the following:
   1. A description of the data asset, including all variable names and definitions.
   2. The name or title of the data asset.
   3. An indication of whether or not the agency has determined or can determine if the data asset is—
      1. an open Government data asset;
      2. subject to disclosure or partial disclosure or exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5;[[7]](#footnote-8)
      3. a public data asset eligible for disclosure under subsection (b); or
      4. a data asset not subject to open format or open license requirements due to existing limitations or restrictions on government distribution of the asset; or
      5. as of the date of such indication, has not made such determination.
   4. Any determination made under section 3582, if available.[[8]](#footnote-9)
   5. A description of the method by which the public may access or request access to the data asset.
   6. The date on which the data asset was most recently updated.
   7. Each agency responsible for maintaining the data asset.
   8. The owner of the data asset.
   9. To the extent practicable, any restriction on the use of the data asset.
   10. The location of the data asset.
   11. Any other metadata necessary to make the comprehensive data inventory useful to the agency and the public, or otherwise determined useful by the Director.
3. Directing a data maturity assessment. The assessment consists of an analysis of all aspects of agency policies, procedures, and operations related to data and data infrastructure, including data governance, data management, data culture[[9]](#footnote-10), data systems and tools, data analytics, staff skills and capacity, resource capacity, and compliance with law and policy.
4. Overseeing the development of a data strategy to be set in the agency’s strategic plan that ties data investments to annual budget planning to leverage data as a long-term, cost-efficient, and mission-supporting asset.
5. Overseeing the implementation of the FDS and the implementation of data related components of the EBPA.

## Operating Procedures

The DGB will convene at least once a month. The DGB Chair will consult with DGB members to develop a meeting agenda. Any member may propose an agenda item. The Chair shall approve a final agenda and will distribute the agenda to members at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting. Within two weeks following the meeting, the Chair will send out a copy of meeting minutes.

While decision by consensus is the operating principle for the DGB, if a vote is necessary then the DGB decision is by majority rule. If the result of the vote is a tie, the DGB Chair will make the final decision. Executive-level members are all entitled a vote; if a member with voting authority is not able to attend, they may submit their vote in advance, or send a representative on their behalf. DGB members may appeal a DGB decision to the Chair who has the authority to grant or deny the appeal within five business days of formal vote.

The DGB will identify smaller working groups, consisting of appropriate project leaders and subject matter experts, to complete activities related to the EBPA, the FDS, and other data governance-related activities. The project leader for a specified activity will be responsible for producing a monthly progress report on an activity to the DGB. The DGB will determine the format for the progress report and will discuss progress on the activity at the DGB meeting.

The DGB will consult with other agency components on actions affecting the authority or scope of those components. For example, the DGB will consult with the relevant executives, such as OCCOMM and with consultation from OGC regarding decisions that affect actions and stakeholders pertaining to Open Government.

## Reports and Deliverables

1. At the beginning of the first and third quarters of the fiscal year, the DGB will deliver a report to the Commissioner, the Principle Deputy Commissioner, and the Deputy Commissioners on the state of data at SSA. The report will describe SSA’s data-related achievements and challenges in the preceding six-month period. It will describe the steps the agency will take to improve data utilization. Finally, the report will describe new developments related to EBPA, the FDS, and other factors that affect the way the agency manages, analyzes, and protects data.
2. The DGB is responsible for specifying the scope, format, and schedule for work performed by the smaller working groups described in the Operating Procedures section of this document. The DGB will consider guidance from key stakeholders (e.g., OMB). The leader of a working group will be responsible for producing a monthly progress report to the DGB on a specified activity, and delivering a final product to the DGB according to the DGB specifications.

1. The DGB will develop other reports at the Commissioner’s discretion.

## Structure and Personnel

The DGB shall include the following positions within the agency. The asterisk identifies positions specifically identified in OMB Memorandum M-19-23.[[10]](#footnote-11) Some executives may occupy more than one of the identified positions, but voting power is on an individual basis; one executive, one vote. Therefore, it will be the case that even in the case an executive holds more than one position, only one vote will be allowed for this individual.

1. Chief Data Officer and Chairperson\*
2. Statistical Official\*
3. Evaluation Officer\*
4. Chief Financial Officer\*
5. General Counsel\*
6. Chief Freedom of Information Act Officer\*
7. Senior Agency Official for Privacy\*
8. Chief Information Officer\*
9. Chief Information Security Officer\*
10. Performance Improvement Officer\*
11. Senior Agency Official for Geospatial Information\*
12. Senior Agency Official for Records Management\*
13. Chief Operating Officer\*
14. Chief Technology Officer\*
15. Chief Actuary
16. Deputy Commissioner of Human Resources
17. Executive Representative from Operations
18. Executive Representative from the Office of Hearings Operations

The DGB members should identify appropriate subject matter experts from their components who will support them with their DGB responsibilities. The DGB Chair will maintain a roster of the subject matter experts, and the subject matter experts may be included in DGB meetings and may offer input into DGB deliberations. However, the subject matter experts are not voting members of the DGB. In addition, the DGB will identify smaller working groups that will be responsible for completing activities determined by the DGB.

## Meeting Format and Schedule

The Chief Data Officer will schedule monthly meetings on a recurring basis throughout each fiscal year. Meetings will be approximately 60-90 minutes in duration and chaired by the Chief Data Officer. Members of the Board are required to attend, unless a compelling reason exists to be absent. In lieu of a compelling absence, members are expected to provide the name of a comparable substitute with proper background and familiarity with subject matter. When feasible, notice of this substitution must be provided at least 72 hours before the meeting. Excluding the monthly meeting expectation, the Chief Data Officer may schedule meetings on an ad hoc basis, as needed.

The Chief Data Officer will send a meeting agenda and relevant materials to DGB members at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

## Re-assessment of the Charter

At a minimum, the DGB will re-assess the charter on an annual basis and the Chief Data Officer will use the results of the re-assessment to revise the charter. This charter may be revised in order to reflect ongoing needs, expectations, mandates, or otherwise. As needed, the DGB will draft, circulate, and advise on all revisions made to the charter.

## Approving Revisions to the Charter

Revisions to the charter are subject to the preliminary approval of the Chief Data Officer, after consultation with the DGB; final approval will be decided by the Commissioner of Social Security.

## Changes to DGB Membership

Changes to the DGB membership are subject to the preliminary approval of the Chief Data Officer; final approval will be decided by the Commissioner of Social Security. Further structural or membership changes may occur as a result of OMB directives or applicable governing entities.

## References

OMB Memorandum M-19-23:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/M-19-23.pdf>

FDS: <https://strategy.data.gov/>

FDS Year 1 Action Plan: <https://strategy.data.gov/action-plan/>

OMB PowerPoint presentation “Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 Chief Data Officer (CDO) Orientation (Day One)”: Included as a separate attachment.

1. Data governance is the process of setting and enforcing priorities for managing data as a strategic asset in service of Social Security’s mission, including its strategic plan and other high-level priorities. The DGB will develop a data governance model that establishes authority, roles and responsibilities, management, and decision-making parameters around the data created, collected, managed, or otherwise controlled by the agency. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Data stewardship is the management of the agency’s data assets to promote high-quality data that is easily accessible in a consistent manner. The DGB will raise awareness and promote data management best practices across the agency. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Data architecture is a set of rules, policies, standards and models that govern and define the type of data collected and how it is used, stored, managed and integrated within the agency and its database systems. The DGB will assess the agency’s current data architecture and will make recommendations to the Commissioner on the investments necessary to strengthen the agency’s data architecture. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Data utilization is the process of using the agency’s data assets to support the agency’s mission, the agency Strategic Plan, and for other agency priorities. The DGB will promote the use of agency data as specified in the Foundations of Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 and the FDS. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. The FDS consists of principles and practices to leverage the value of the entire Federal Government data asset portfolio while protecting security, privacy, and confidentiality. The principles and practices deliver a more consistent approach to federal data stewardship, use, and access. The principles are a timeless, enduring framework for agencies, while the practices are actionable, yet aspirational, goals for a 5- to 10-year time horizon. The principles and practices were revised based on comments received from the public. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The activities listed in this section of the charter are described in the OMB Memorandum M-19-23, and in Chief Data Officer Orientation materials (see PowerPoint presentation “Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 Chief Data Officer (CDO) Orientation (Day One)”). Item 2 is specified in Section 202 (d) (1) of the EBPA, which amends Section 3511 of title 44, United States Code. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. See 5 U.S. Code § 552 regarding public information; agency rules, opinions, orders, records, and proceedings. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. See 44 U.S. Code § 3582 regarding expanding secure access to CIPSEA data assets. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Data culture is defined as: the institutional process that an agency uses in order to ensure all stakeholders are making decisions based on available data, evidence, and information. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. OMB also identifies the Chief Acquisition Officer. SSA has a statutory exemption from having a Chief Acquisition Officer and so the position is not included as part of the DGB. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)