

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
(By email)

Our Ref: MGLA211020-7927

22 October 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request about councils' welfare decisions, which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 21 October 2020.

You requested:

I am writing under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request information about the use of automation in welfare decisions made by your council. Specifically, I am asking the following:

1. *Does any stage of decision making across benefits and welfare (defined as including but not limited to allocation of social housing, personal social care budgets, council tax support and the assessment of fraud within) presently involve automation, AI or algorithms at your council?*
 1. *For clarity, automation may include (non-exhaustively), predictive analytics (ie to assess rent arrears or child welfare risks), risk assessment of claims (commonly known as risk based verification), the use of computer programs or algorithms to guide resource allocation, the use of datasets to guide how benefits are processed and disbursed.*
2. *If Yes, please provide details:*
 1. *Of the algorithms or automated decision-making programs you use;*
 2. *If you use a commercial product or whether you have developed your own system;*
 3. *Of the purpose for which the algorithm or automated decision-making system operates;*
 4. *Of the decisions the algorithm or automated decision-making system is asked to make;*
 5. *Of the type, classification and amount of data that the algorithm or automated decision-making system uses to make its decision;*
 6. *If a commercial product, how much has it cost the council over the past three years.*
3. *If no, has your council stopped using this kind of automation in the last three years and what automation/algorithms were previously used?*
4. *Does your council use Amazon Rekognition software, and if yes, what for?*

Our response is below:

1. The GLA is London's strategic government and does not operate in the same way as local councils. The GLA is not responsible for Welfare decisions. In London you would need to contact the Borough Councils, including the City of London and Westminster City Council for information for information on welfare decisions processing:
<https://www.london.gov.uk/in-my-area>.
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. No

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference MGLA211020-7927

Yours sincerely


Information Governance Officer

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:
<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>