



City of Boston
Mayor Martin J. Walsh
Public Records

March 20, 2020

Emiliano Falcon
efalcon@aclum.org

Re: [February 14, 2020 Public Records Request \(B000270-021420\)](#)

Dear Emiliano:

The City of Boston (City) has received your request for public records from the Boston Police Department (Department). See A Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, p. 32, n.115. It is expected that a custodian of records must use her superior knowledge of her records with respect to responses to public records requests. 950 CMR 32.04(5). Specifically, you stated:

Clearview AI ("Clearview"), a facial recognition technology start-up, makes available to law enforcement a product that attempts to match photos of unknown people to images in a database. Clearview AI's database reportedly contains billions of pictures scraped from social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Venmo.2 According to newspapers, Clearview AI markets this product to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. This company is just one of many that market their facial recognition technology to government agencies.

ACLUM has significant concerns about the use of facial recognition in Massachusetts. We therefore seek records pertaining to Clearview AI and other facial recognition companies and products.

The Department has informed me that it has no facial recognition technology and no plans to acquire or use it in the future. Should you wish to continue this request please let me know, as I will need to petition the Supervisor of Records to permit the Department to assess fees to search for records responsive to your request.

Very truly yours,

Shawn A. Williams, Esq.
Director of Public Records