

From: [Farnsworth, Karen](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [Mishaan, Jessica](#); [Gray, Molly](#)
Subject: Public Records Request
Date: Monday, April 6, 2020 5:16:03 PM
Attachments: [2020-04-06 Response to SNAP Public Records Request.pdf](#)

Mr. Belloocchio,

Attached please find the response to your public records request received April 1, 2020. If you have any questions, please contact our office. Thank you.

Karen M. Farnsworth

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April 6, 2020

Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests (SNAP)

Attn: John Bellocchio

[REDACTED]
Hackensack, New Jersey 07601

VIA EMAIL: [REDACTED]

Re: Public Records Request

Dear Mr. John Bellocchio:

On Wednesday, April 1, 2020 you requested the following, "all investigative records held by the Attorney General of the State of Vermont pertaining to the investigation of the former St. Joseph's Orphanage of Burlington, Vermont. Specifically: names (both victims and assailants) uncovered during the investigation, proof of any payments made to victims without public disclosure prior to the investigation, victim impact statements, and statements from staff, including staff belonging to the Roman Catholic Clergy, both male and female, regarding the abusive history of the property."

In light of the ongoing criminal investigation here in Vermont and relevant exemptions, the Office is obliged to decline your request.

Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317(c)(5)(A), records dealing with the investigation of a crime are exempt from production where production "(i) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings; (ii) would deprive a person of a right to a fair or an impartial adjudication;" or "(iii) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy".

As you may be aware, in September 2018 this Office together with the Burlington Police Department and other local and statewide officials launched a Task Force to investigate allegations of abuse, sexual abuse and murder at the St. Joseph's Orphanage in Burlington, Vermont. The Orphanage operated for roughly 125 years until 1974 and housed approximately 8,000 children over that period. The Roman

Catholic Diocese of Burlington, Vermont Catholic Charities and the Sisters of Providence remain under investigation for their involvement in overseeing and operating the Orphanage. The Task Force's investigation also includes other reports of abuse by priests or others affiliated with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington.

The criminal investigation of numerous allegations arising over an extensive period in Vermont remains active and ongoing. As such, requiring that documents relevant to these allegations and the time period in question be disclosed would interfere with enforcement proceedings. Additionally, this Office and the Task Force continues to identify those who could possibly face criminal charges. As such, the release of documents would potentially deprive individuals of a right to a fair or an impartial adjudication.

Finally, this Office and the Task Force remain committed to protecting the personal privacy of those involved in the investigation, particularly the dozens of victims who have come forward and are presently meeting with investigators and victim's advocates. In the strongest possible terms, we must underscore the need, considering the sensitive nature of the allegations and the deeply personal stories of those involved, to prevent any unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

We hope the above information is helpful to you. To the extent you feel records have been wrongfully withheld, you may appeal to Deputy Attorney General Josh Diamond.

Sincerely,

/s/

Molly R. Gray
Assistant Attorney General

Electronically Transmitted