FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | OCTOBER 12, 2026 | FLORIDA

DCF Reform Claims and Settlement Disclosures Demand a Public Accounting

This release concerns John Williams's civil action, Williams v. Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten, LLP, Suffolk Superior Court No. 2684CV02864, and Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC's most recent DCF investigation. [A] The investigation examines the 2023 settlement, child-safety assurances, subsequent reform outreach and the Commonwealth's recent reform claims. [B, I]

DCF reported implementing new foster-care policies in February 2023. Williams states that Commonwealth representatives contacted him personally about reform in November 2024 following a child's death, before Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC existed. On August 7, 2026, the Commonwealth announced further child-welfare reforms. **Public assurances deserve public evidence.** What became of Williams's recommendations? Which protections were implemented, when, and with what results? [I]

The Attorney General's FY2023 annual report documents a $7 million resolution of claims against the DCF defendants in the Blouin litigation. **The protections represented as being in place during that period warrant scrutiny of their implementation and effectiveness.** [B, I]

Separately, Kate R. Cook's public 2022 and 2023 disclosures identify her spouse, Thomas R. Donohue, as a BHPK partner and identify the underlying litigation. The records describe recusal, conflict screening and reassignment. What were clients told, and how were those procedures carried out? [F-G]

The Federal Bar Association's December 2010 Massachusetts Chapter newsletter lists Cook in awards and diversity roles and Leonard H. Kesten in an Annual Judicial Reception role. BHPK's public biography identifies Kesten as a founding partner. [H]

Governor Deval Patrick's July 16, 2014 announcement names Joshua Wall among Superior Court nominees. Cook's 2014 profile describes her oversight of judicial nominations as Patrick's chief legal counsel. These sources do not establish her participation in Wall's particular nomination or improper influence. [C-E]

Release the records showing how survivor recommendations were evaluated, which child-safety measures changed practice, and how results were measured. Produce the records of conflict screening, client disclosures and any judicial disclosures accompanying settlement approval.

The chronology raises questions; it does not establish that earlier assurances were false or that no action followed the outreach. Justice Is Exposure seeks documented answers and will report what the records support.

Transparency: John Williams is the plaintiff in the civil action and the founder and owner of Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC.

Media contact: Dr. Jessica Lynn Campbell | Chief Information Officer and Media Contact
exposureisjustice.org

Supporting documentation: The appendix links the public records and identifies Williams's personal account of the 2024 outreach. No private settlement agreement is reproduced.

Public Sources and Supporting Records

Letters on the release point to the materials below. Page numbers refer to this combined PDF. Public access and source provenance were checked on October 12, 2026.

SOURCE	PUBLIC MATERIAL AND PURPOSE	PAGES
A	Public court-record index: case caption, Suffolk docket 2684CV02864 and September 25, 2026 filing listing. No private pleading copy reproduced.	3
B	Official AGO FY2023 annual report, printed page 42 / PDF page 43: original extract documenting the $7 million resolution.	3
C-E	Public nomination announcement, published 2014 Cook profile and official constitutional appointment provision; precise references and links.	4
F	Cook's January 3, 2022 disclosure and determination: pages 1-3 downloaded from the public records repository; official state index linked.	5-7
G	Cook's January 26, 2023 disclosure and February 1 determination: pages 1-3 downloaded from the public repository; official index linked.	8-10
H	December 2010 FBA chapter newsletter: original entries from page 2, with the public firm biography identifying Kesten as a founding partner.	11
I	2023 DCF policy-implementation report; Williams's personal account of 2024 reform outreach; official August 7, 2026 reform announcement.	12

Source standard

Government records, a public court-record index and professional materials are linked and identified by source type. The 2024 outreach entry is attributed to John Williams personally. Public availability does not make a statement a court finding. Short extracts are labeled.

The Cook forms are original public PDF files, not the previously supplied compilation scans. The State Ethics Commission's annual indexes identify the disclosures as public records. StateReference identifies its public-record request to the Commission as the source of its repository. The three substantive pages of each form are reproduced; a blank fourth page is omitted.

This edition contains no supplied amended-complaint excerpts, tracking-order scan or settlement-approval motion. Public access to those exact records was not independently verified. Their omission does not establish that they are confidential or sealed.

The settlement statement is supported by the government's published annual report. No complete settlement agreement, individual distribution statement or private correspondence is attached.

A-B | Case Listing and Settlement Record

A | Public case identification

Trellis's publicly indexed Suffolk County court-record listings identify John Williams, formerly John Blouin, as plaintiff against Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten, LLP, with case number **2684CV02864** and a September 25, 2026 filing date.

Public Suffolk tort-case index | Original complaint listing
trellis.law/coverage/massachusetts/suffolk/torts
trellis.law/doc/291410082/complaint-electronically-filed

Source type: third-party public index of court records. The indexed listing supports case identification only. Direct document retrieval was unavailable during this review. It does not verify the filing or text of a later amended complaint. No original or amended complaint is reproduced here.

B | Official government settlement record

The Office of the Attorney General's Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2023, printed page 42 / PDF page 43, identifies the Blouin litigation and reports a $7 million resolution of all claims against the DCF defendants.

Original PDF extract

> Court successfully negotiated a resolution of all claims against the DCF defendants for $7 million.

The extract above reproduces the end of the relevant paragraph. The original report uses the words "Trial Court" in that paragraph; the extract preserves the original text. It is evidence of the government's reported resolution, not a reproduction of the executed agreement.

Official AGO annual-report PDF | State Library archive record
mass.gov/doc/ago-fiscal-year-23-annual-report/download
State Library: Annual Report Fiscal Year 2023, Office of the Attorney General

What this record establishes

The aggregate $7 million resolution is documented in a publicly issued government report. This extract does not establish an individual plaintiff's distribution, the terms of a private release, or the date and identity of the judge who approved the settlement.

C-E | Public-Source Extracts

The following are attributed extracts and editorial summaries, not facsimiles of complete publications.

C | Wall nomination - July 16, 2014

Governor Patrick's announcement, preserved by the State Library of Massachusetts, identifies Joshua Wall among three Superior Court nominees. The announcement begins on PDF page 1; the sentence continues on page 2, which also contains Wall's biography.

Exact extract, page 1: "nominations of Thomas Drechsler, Gregg J. Pasquale and Joshua Wall"

This supports the nomination date, court and nominating governor. It does not identify Cook as participating in Wall's nomination.

State Library archive record | Original announcement PDF
Archive handle: 2452/213262; filename: ocn795183245-2014-07-16.PDF

D | Cook's judicial-nomination responsibilities - 2014

Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly, 2014 Top Women of Law, Cook profile: printed page 10 / PDF page 12. The profile identifies Cook as Patrick's chief legal counsel and describes her general nomination responsibilities.

Exact extract: "Cook oversees the judicial nominating process."

The profile also reports her work interviewing judicial candidates and assisting the governor. It does not identify involvement in Wall's particular nomination.

Publisher's original special-section PDF
Verified against the publisher's indexed original; a fresh direct download was unavailable. Only the short extract above is reproduced.

E | Judicial appointment authority

Massachusetts Constitution, Part II, Chapter II, Section I, Article IX assigns judicial nomination and appointment to the governor, with the Council's advice and consent.

Relevant extract: "shall be nominated and appointed by the governor, by and with the advice and consent of the council"

This identifies formal appointment authority. It does not resolve who advised the governor about a particular nominee.

Official Massachusetts Constitution | Part II, Chapter II, Section I, Article IX

F | Cook public disclosure and determination - 1 of 3

Public original PDF | 2022 | State Ethics Commission record, reproduced by StateReference
Public PDF | Government disclosure index | Repository provenance

DISCLOSURE BY NON-ELECTED STATE EMPLOYEE OF FINANCIAL INTEREST AND DETERMINATION BY APPOINTING AUTHORITY AS REQUIRED BY G. L. c. 268A, § 6

	STATE EMPLOYEE INFORMATION
Name:	Kate R. Cook
Title or Position:	First Assistant Attorney General
State Agency:	Attorney General's Office
Agency Address:	Office of Attorney General Maura Healey One Ashburton Place Boston, MA 02108
Office Phone:	
Office E-mail:	Kate.cook@mass.gov
	My duties require me to participate in a particular matter, and I may not participate because of a financial interest that I am disclosing here. I request a determination from my appointing authority about how I should proceed.
	PARTICULAR MATTER
Particular matter E.g., a judicial or other proceeding, application, submission, request for a ruling or other determination, contract, claim, controversy, charge, accusation, arrest, decision, determination, or finding.	Please describe the particular matter. The list of particular matters are matters handled by the law firm, Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten, LLP set forth below and the list is subject to periodic amendment. This disclosure is intended to include any future matter handled by Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten, LLP in which the AGO is involved. • *Doe et al v. Blouin et al*, Middlesex Superior Court, No. 1981CV03788 (Trial Division, AAG Abigail Fee) • *Tammy Cagle v. Thomas Estes*, USDC No. 18-10123-KAR (Trial Division, AAG Anne McLaughlin) • "Soldiers Home litigation"; *Kwesi Ablordeppey v. Bennett Walsh et al,* USDC No. 3:21-cv-11314 -MGM (Medicaid Fraud Division) • Commonwealth of Massachusetts *Ex Rel.* Mykel Powell, Commonwealth Second *Amendment, Inc. and Brent Carlton*; *Mykel Powell v. Holmes* (Stoughton) et al – USDC No. 1:18-cv-11336-FDS • *Pina v Barnstable Co. Sheriff's Office*, Barnstable Superior Court No. 1572CV00004 • *Weichel v. Braintree et al*, USDC 1:20-cv-11456-IT

F | Cook public disclosure and determination - 2 of 3

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Public PDF | Government disclosure index | Repository provenance

Your required participation in the particular matter: E.g., approval, disapproval, decision, recommendation, rendering advice, investigation, other.	Please describe the task you are required to perform with respect to the particular matter. Generally, the First Assistant Attorney General oversees, participates in, and approves litigation strategy and decision-making for the office.
	FINANCIAL INTEREST IN THE PARTICULAR MATTER
Write an X by all that apply.	___ I have a financial interest in the matter. _X__ My immediate family member has a financial interest in the matter. ___ My business partner has a financial interest in the matter. ___ I am an officer, director, trustee, partner or employee of a business organization, and the business organization has a financial interest in the matter. ___ I am negotiating or have made an arrangement concerning future employment with a person or organization, and the person or organization has a financial interest in the matter.
Financial interest in the matter	Please explain the financial interest and include a dollar amount if you know it. My spouse, Thomas R. Donohue, is a partner at the law firm Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten, LLP ("BHPK"). Accordingly, there are certain cases in which I have or may have a financial interest under G.L. c. 268A, § 6, by virtue of the fact that my spouse is a partner at BHPK. I will be recused and screened from participation in any matter being handled by BHPK or any of its employees or affiliated attorneys. In addition, the Attorney General's Office has put appropriate screening measures in place to memorialize my recusal and to prevent the sharing of any confidential information with me. Finally, I will be out of the reporting structure for all aspects of any of the matters handled by BHPK.
Employee signature:	***/s/ Kate R. Cook***
Date:	January 3, 2022

DETERMINATION BY APPOINTING OFFICIAL

	APPOINTING AUTHORITY INFORMATION
Name of Appointing Authority:	Maura Healey, Attorney General By, Juliana deHaan Rice
Title or Position:	General Counsel
Agency/Department:	Office of the Attorney General

F | Cook public disclosure and determination - 3 of 3

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Agency Address:	One Ashburton Place Boston, MA 02108
Office Phone:	617 963 2583
Office E-mail	Juliana.Rice@mass.gov
	DETERMINATION
Determination by appointing authority: **Write an X by your selection.**	As appointing official, as required by G.L. c. 268A, § 6, I have reviewed the particular matter and the financial interest identified above by a state employee. __X_ I am assigning the particular matter to another employee, or ___ I am assuming responsibility for the particular matter, or ___ I have determined that the financial interest is not so substantial as to be deemed likely to affect the integrity of the services which the Commonwealth may expect from the employee.
Appointing Authority signature:	
Date:	January 3, 2022
Comment:	Appropriate screening measures have been put in place internally to remove Kate from all participation in these matters.

Attach additional pages if necessary.

File copy with:

State Ethics Commission, One Ashburton Place, Room 619, Boston, MA 02108

Form Revised February, 2012

G | Cook public disclosure and determination - 1 of 3

Public original PDF | 2023 | State Ethics Commission record, reproduced by StateReference
Public PDF | Government disclosure index | Repository provenance

DISCLOSURE BY NON-ELECTED STATE EMPLOYEE OF FINANCIAL INTEREST AND DETERMINATION BY APPOINTING AUTHORITY AS REQUIRED BY G. L. c. 268A, § 6

	STATE EMPLOYEE INFORMATION
Name:	Kate R. Cook
Title or Position:	Chief of Staff to Governor Maura T. Healey
State Agency:	Office of the Governor
Agency Address:	Office of Governor Maura T. Healey State House Room 360 Boston, MA 02133
Office Phone:	617-725-4005
Office E-mail:	Kate.R.Cook@mass.gov
	My duties may require me to participate in a particular matter, and I may not participate because of a financial interest that I am disclosing here. I request a determination from my appointing authority about how I should proceed.
	PARTICULAR MATTER
Particular matter E.g., a judicial or other proceeding, application, submission, request for a ruling or other determination, contract, claim, controversy, charge, accusation, arrest, decision, determination, or finding.	Please describe the particular matter. The list of particular matters are matters handled by the law firm, Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten, LLP set forth below and the list is subject to periodic amendment. This disclosure is intended to include any future matter handled by Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten, LLP in which the Commonwealth is involved. • Ablordeppey v. Bennett Walsh, et al [Soldier's Home Litigation] - USDC, Case No.: 21-cv-11314-MGM; First Circuit Court of Appeals, Case No.: 22-1833 • Doe, et al v Blouin and DCF, et al - Middlesex Superior Court, Case No.: 1981CV03788 • Downey v. Earl Johnson and Massachusetts Department of State Police - Suffolk Superior Court, Case No.: 18-01875C; Mass Appeals Court, Docket No.: 2022 • Fahey v. Town of Andover and Director of the Division of Unemployment Assistance - Lawrence District Court, Case No.: 2218CV000531 • Fraser v. MBTA, et al - Suffolk Superior Court, Case No.: 2084CV01554 • Frigon, et al v Riley, et al - Suffolk Superior Court, Case No.: 2284CV000344 • Harvey v. Edward J. Dolan, Commissioner of Probation and Office of the Commissioner of Probation - Suffolk Superior Court, Case No.: 2284-02806 • Hurley, et al v Robert Curtis, et al - USDC, Case No.: 22-cv-12167-PBS • Kennedy v. Commonwealth of MA, et al - USDC, Case No.: 22-cv-11152-NMG • Oversen v. University of Massachusetts Dartmouth and Haydee Martinez, MCAD, Docket No.: 22NEM02255 • Perez v. Wenham and Massachusetts Police Training Commission - MCAD, Docket No.: 20BEM02420 • Watson v. MBTA, et al - USDC, Case No.: 21-cv-11147 -FDS • Weichel v. Braintree, et al - USDC, Case No.: 20-cv-11456-IT

G | Cook public disclosure and determination - 2 of 3

Public original PDF | 2023 | State Ethics Commission record, reproduced by StateReference
Public PDF | Government disclosure index | Repository provenance

	Closing soon: • Commonwealth of Mass *Ex Rel.* Mykel Powell, et al v. Holmes (Stoughton), et al - USDC, Case No.: 18-11336 - FDS
Your required participation in the particular matter: E.g., approval, disapproval, decision, recommendation, rendering advice, investigation, other.	Please describe the task you are required to perform with respect to the particular matter. As a general matter, the Governor's Chief Legal Counsel is the person principally responsible for consulting with the Attorney General's Office and managing litigation strategy and decision-making in litigation against the Commonwealth and, where appropriate, approving settlements with litigants. Consequently, the Governor's Chief of Staff generally is not involved in decisions about litigation. Occasionally, however, there may be instances where the Governor's Chief Legal Counsel consults with or advises the Chief of Staff regarding significant litigation matters.
	FINANCIAL INTEREST IN THE PARTICULAR MATTER
Write an X by all that apply.	___ I have a financial interest in the matter. _X__ My immediate family member has a financial interest in the matter. ___ My business partner has a financial interest in the matter. ___ I am an officer, director, trustee, partner or employee of a business organization, and the business organization has a financial interest in the matter. ___ I am negotiating or have made an arrangement concerning future employment with a person or organization, and the person or organization has a financial interest in the matter.
Financial interest in the matter	Please explain the financial interest and include a dollar amount if you know it. My spouse, Thomas R. Donohue, is a partner at the law firm Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten, LLP ("BHPK"). Accordingly, there are certain cases in which I have or may have a financial interest under G.L. c. 268A, § 6, by virtue of the fact that my spouse is a partner at BHPK. I will be recused and screened from discussing or otherwise participating in decision-making in any matter being handled by BHPK or any of its employees or affiliated attorneys. In addition, the Governor's Office has put appropriate screening measures in place to memorialize my recusal and to prevent the sharing of any confidential information with me. Finally, I will be out of the reporting structure for all aspects of any of the matters handled by BHPK.
Employee signature:	***/s/ Kate R. Cook***
Date:	January 26, 2023

G | Cook public disclosure and determination - 3 of 3

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Public PDF | Government disclosure index | Repository provenance

DETERMINATION BY APPOINTING OFFICIAL

	APPOINTING AUTHORITY INFORMATION
Name of Appointing Authority:	Governor Maura T. Healey
Title or Position:	Governor
Agency/Department:	Office of the Governor
Agency Address:	Office of Governor Maura T. Healey State House Room 360 Boston, MA 02133
Office Phone:	617-725-4005
Office E-mail	maura.healey@mass.gov
	DETERMINATION
Determination by appointing authority: **Write an X by your selection.**	As appointing official, as required by G.L. c. 268A, § 6, I have reviewed the particular matter and the financial interest identified above by a state employee. __X_ I am assigning the particular matter to another employee, or ___ I am assuming responsibility for the particular matter, or ___ I have determined that the financial interest is not so substantial as to be deemed likely to affect the integrity of the services which the Commonwealth may expect from the employee.
Appointing Authority signature:	Ma T. Heal
Date:	February 7, 2023
Comment:	Appropriate screening measures have been put in place internally to remove Kate from all participation in these matters.

Attach additional pages if necessary.

File copy with:

State Ethics Commission, One Ashburton Place, Room 619, Boston, MA 02108

Form Revised February, 2012

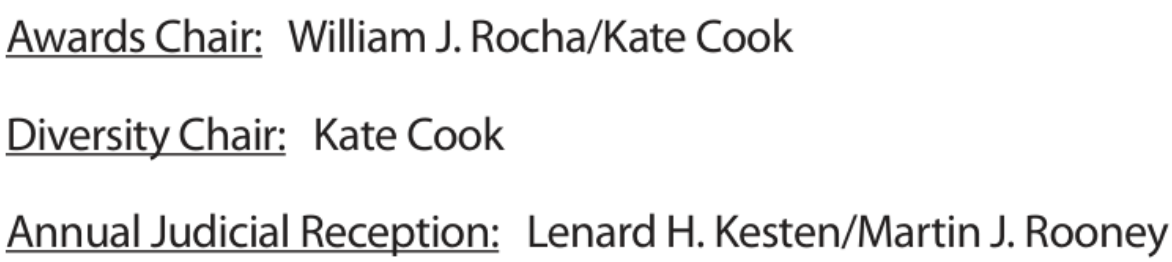
H | 2010 Bar-Association Record

Federal Bar Association, Massachusetts Chapter

Original newsletter extracts | December 2010 | entries on printed page 2

The issue date appears on page 1. These three entries are separate crops from page 2; intervening entries are omitted. The wording and printed name spellings are unchanged.





Original record: Federal Bar Association newsletter PDF
fedbar.org/massachusetts-chapter/ > Fall2010-pdf.pdf
Eight-page issue; date on page 1, chapter roles on page 2.

BHPK partner identification

Exact extract from the firm's public biography:
"Leonard H. Kesten is a founding partner at BHPK Law."

Source: BHPK Law - Leonard H. Kesten biography
bhpklaw.com/leonard-h-kesten/

Name spelling: The newsletter omits the letter "o" in Kesten's first name. The firm's biography supplies the spelling used in the release.

What the record establishes

The newsletter documents Cook and Kesten in roles within the same chapter in 2010. The firm's current biography documents Kesten's partner status. These records do not establish that the chapter association affected the 2023 settlement.

I | DCF Reform: Assurances and Follow-Through

2023 | The agency reported policies in place

DCF's FY2024 Annual Progress and Services Report, dated June 30, 2023 and resubmitted September 14, 2023, reports that two new foster-care policies took effect in February 2023. Page 133 identifies licensing and placement policies and separates licensing, foster-family and kinship responsibilities.

Original report extract | printed page 133 / PDF page 133

In February 2023, the Department implemented two new foster care policies:

Official DCF report PDF
mass.gov/doc/fy24-annual-progress-services-report/download

2024 | Reform outreach to John Williams personally

John Williams states that Commonwealth representatives contacted him personally on November 8, 2024 about DCF reform following a child's death, before Justice Is Exposure Media, LLC existed. He says he subsequently submitted recommendations and seeks an accounting of what action followed.

2026 | Further reform publicly announced

The Governor's Office announced on August 7, 2026 that legislation strengthening child-welfare protections had been signed. The announcement describes a foster-child bill of rights, support for families and stronger transparency and accountability provisions.

Official August 7, 2026 reform announcement
mass.gov/news/governor-healey-signs-landmark-child-welfare-reform-legislation

The question requiring records

What became of the recommendations, and what evidence shows that promised protections worked? The government records document reported policies and a later reform announcement; Williams supplies his personal account of the outreach. These materials do not establish that earlier assurances were false, that no action followed the outreach, or that the later legislation resulted from Williams's submission.