



2026 Chief FOIA Officer Report

Section I: FOIA Leadership and Applying the Presumption of Openness

The guiding principle underlying Department of Justice's (DOJ) 2022 [FOIA Guidelines](#) is the presumption of openness. The Guidelines also highlight the importance of agency leadership in ensuring effective FOIA administration. Please answer the following questions about FOIA leadership at your agency and describe the steps your agency has taken to ensure that the presumption of openness is being applied to all decisions involving the FOIA.

A. Leadership Support for FOIA

1. The FOIA requires each agency to designate a Chief FOIA Officer who is a senior official at least at the Assistant Secretary or equivalent level. See 5 U.S.C. § 552(j)(1) (2018). Is your agency's Chief FOIA Officer at or above this level?

- Yes.

2. Please provide the name and title of your agency's Chief FOIA Officer.

- *Michael Anthony, Chief Information Officer*

3. What steps has your agency taken to incorporate FOIA into its core mission? For example, has your agency incorporated FOIA milestones into its strategic plan?

- *The Chief FOIA Officer ensures FOIA is integrated into strategic objectives by embedding FOIA performance targets into planning, conducting quarterly reviews, and aligning FOIA responsiveness with transparency commitments*
- *The Chief FOIA Officer monitors and enforces the agency's FOIA plan and includes:*
 - *The ability to hire additional FOIA support when needed on surge or anticipated FOIA demands occurs and appropriated budget permits it.*
 - *Agency FOIA training.*
 - *Staff accountability for responses to requests for documents.*
 - *Process improvements and updates to the FOIA program as needed.*

B. Presumption of Openness

4. DOJ's 2022 FOIA Guidelines provides that "agencies should confirm in response letters to FOIA requesters that they have considered the foreseeable harm standard when reviewing records and applying FOIA exemptions." Does your agency provide such confirmation in its response letters?

- Yes.

5. In some circumstances, agencies may respond to a requester that it can neither confirm nor deny the existence of requested records if acknowledging the existence of records would harm an interested protected by a FOIA exemption. This is commonly referred to as a *Glomar* response. If your agency tracks Glomar responses, please provide:

- the number of times your agency issued a full or partial Glomar response during Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 (please separate full and partial if possible);
- the number of times a Glomar response was issued by exemption during FY 2025 (e.g., exemption 7(C) – 20 times, Exemption 1 – 5 times)

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6. Optional -- If there are any other initiatives undertaken by your agency to ensure that the presumption of openness is being applied, please describe them here.

Section II: Ensuring Fair and Effective FOIA Administration

DOJ's 2022 [FOIA Guidelines](#) provide that "[e]nsuring fair and effective FOIA administration requires . . . proper training, and a full understanding of FOIA obligations by the entire agency workforce." The Guidelines reinforce longstanding guidance to "work with FOIA requesters in a spirit of cooperation." DOJ also "urge[s] agency Chief FOIA Officers to undertake comprehensive review of all aspects of their agency's FOIA administration" as part of ensuring fair and effective FOIA administration.

A. FOIA Training

1. The FOIA directs agency Chief FOIA Officers to ensure that FOIA training is offered to agency personnel. See 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(j)(2)(F). Please describe the efforts your agency has undertaken to ensure proper FOIA training is made available and used by agency personnel.

- *The agency provides annual mandatory FOIA training supplemented with recorded sessions to review on-demand. Completion rates are tracked, and feedback collected to continually improve the training materials. FOIA training is also part of the on-boarding process for new employees.*

2. Did your FOIA professionals, or the personnel at your agency who have FOIA responsibilities attend substantive FOIA training during the reporting period, such as training provided by the Department of Justice?

- *Yes.*

3. If yes, please provide a brief description of the type of training attended or conducted and the topics covered.

- *Department of Justice – Quarterly and Annual reporting requirements*
- *ASAP – FOIA processes/FOIA Case Laws*
- *FOIA Software Training*
- *OMB Privacy Council Federal Privacy Boot Camp*

4. Please provide an estimate of the percentage of your FOIA professionals and staff with FOIA responsibilities who attended substantive FOIA training during this reporting period.

- *100%*

5. OIP has [directed agencies](#) to “take steps to ensure that all of their FOIA professionals attend substantive FOIA training at least once throughout the year.” If your response to the previous question is that less than 80% of your FOIA professionals attended training, please explain your agency’s plan to ensure that all FOIA professionals receive or attend substantive FOIA training during the next reporting year.

- *N/A as a result of response to question 4.*

6. Describe any efforts your agency has undertaken to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under the FOIA. In particular, please describe how often and in what formats your agency provides FOIA training or briefings to non-FOIA staff; and if senior leaders at your agency received a briefing on your agency’s FOIA resources, obligations and expectations during the FOIA process?

- *The agency, including non-FOIA professionals, receive mandatory virtual FOIA training which remains available on demand.*

- *The Chief FOIA Officer briefs Senior leaders on the FOIA program which includes the type of resources or efforts needed to aid in enhancing the FOIA program.*
- *The FOIA program is available and individual FOIA guidance is provided as needed.*

B. Outreach

7. As part of the standard request process, do your FOIA professionals proactively contact requesters concerning complex or voluminous requests in an effort to clarify or narrow the scope of the request so requesters can receive responses more quickly? Please describe any such outreach or dialogue and, if applicable, any specific examples.

- *Yes, requesters are contacted concerning their requests to clarify the information. In some instances, the scope is narrowed or withdrawn as the information is publicly available.*

8. Outside of the standard request process or routine FOIA Liaison or FOIA Requester Service Center interactions, did your FOIA professionals engage in any outreach or dialogue, with the requester community or open government groups regarding your administration of the FOIA? For example, did you proactively contact frequent requesters, host FOIA-related conference calls with open government groups, or provide FOIA training to members of the public? Please describe any such outreach or dialogue and, if applicable, any specific examples of how this dialogue has led to improvements in your agency's FOIA administration.

- *Although no outreach was conducted outside standard processes, limited request demand and resource constraints influenced this.*

9. The FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 requires additional notification to requesters about the services provided by the agency's FOIA Public Liaison. Please provide an estimate of the number of times requesters sought assistance from your agency's FOIA Public Liaison during Fiscal Year 2025 (please provide a total number or an estimate of the number for the agency overall).

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C. Other Initiatives

10. Has your agency evaluated the allocation of agency personnel resources needed to respond to current and anticipated FOIA demands? If so, please describe what changes your agency has or will implement.

- *The agency assesses FOIA resource needs through monthly workload reviews and can activate contractor support during workload spikes to ensure timely processing, subject to available budget allocations.*

11. How does your agency use data or processing metrics to ensure efficient management of your FOIA workload? For example, case management reports, staff processing statistics, etc. In addition, please specifically highlight any data analysis methods or technologies used.

- *The agency's FOIA software generates reports that support effective management of FOIA workload and performance metrics.*

12. Optional -- If there are any other initiatives undertaken by your agency to ensure fair and effective FOIA administration, please describe them here.

Section III: Proactive Disclosures

DOJ's 2022 [FOIA Guidelines](#) emphasize that "proactive disclosure of information is . . . fundamental to the faithful application of the FOIA." The Guidelines direct agencies to post "records online quickly and systematically in advance of any public request" and reiterate that agencies should post records "in the most useful, searchable, and open formats possible."

1. Please describe what steps your agency takes to identify, track, and post (a)(2) proactive disclosures.

The NTSB posts the following to the public website:

- *Information about the agency, some of its policies, and its key mission work.*
- *Transportation accident dockets which contain factual reports, and the evidence investigators consider in developing a probable cause. These reports are available in a search tool that the public can access.*
- *The Case Analysis and Reporting Online (CAROL) query tool, allows individuals to make comprehensive searches of surface modal accident data, aviation accident data and safety recommendation data.*
- *Accident Reports are one of the main products of an NTSB investigation. The reports provide details about the accident, analysis of the factual data, conclusions and the probable cause of the accident, and the related safety recommendations.*
- *NTSB monitors accident investigations and where safety recommendations are warranted and developed, these records are also posted to the public website.*
- *Opinions and orders are written and when completed these records are posted to the NTSB public website.*

2. Does your agency post logs of its FOIA requests?

- If so, what information is contained in the logs?
- Are they posted in CSV format? If not, what format are they posted in?
- Please provide a link to the page where any FOIA logs are posted. If applicable, please provide component links.
 - Yes, FOIA logs are posted in Excel and include FOIA request number, request received date, request description, final disposition and close date.
 - [NTSB FOIA Portal-Reading Room](#)

3. Provide examples of any material (with links) that your agency has proactively disclosed during the past reporting year, including records that have been requested and released three or more times in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(2)(D).

- **Accident Investigation Records:**
<https://data.nts.gov/Docket/Forms/searchdocket>
- **Published Reports:**
<https://www.nts.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Pages/Reports.aspx>
- **Safety Recommendations**
data.nts.gov/carol-main-public/basic-search
- **FOIA Reading Room:**
<https://foiarequest.nts.gov/App/ReadingRoom.aspx>
- **Legal Matters: Opinion and Orders**
<https://www.nts.gov/legal/alj/Pages/ONOQuery.aspx>

4. Please provide a link (or component links, if applicable) where your agency routinely posts its frequently requested records.

- [NTSB FOIA Portal-Reading Room](#)

5. Beyond posting new material, is your agency taking steps to make the posted information more useful to the public, especially to the community of individuals who regularly access your agency's website? If yes, please provide examples of such improvements, such as steps taken to post information in open and machine-readable formats. If your agency is not taking steps to make posted information more useful, please explain why.

- Yes. The NTSB developed a Case Analysis and Reporting Online (CAROL) query tool, which allows individuals to make comprehensive searches of accident data and safety recommendation data: <https://data.nts.gov/carol-main-public/basic-search4>. CAROL enables users to download data in JSON and CSV format both are open, machine-readable, and machine-actionable formats.

- *NTSB provides datasets containing all aviation investigation data from 1962 to the present, updated monthly in Microsoft Access format:
https://www.nts.gov/safety/data/Pages/Data_Stats.aspx*
- *NTSB also provides a monthly list of aviation accidents.
<https://www.nts.gov/safety/data/Pages/monthly-dashboard.aspx>*

6. Does your proactive disclosure process or system involve any collaboration with agency staff outside the FOIA office, such as IT or data personnel? If so, describe this interaction.

- *Yes, collaboration takes place with the Office of the Managing Director, Chief Information Officer, Office of Safety Recommendations on management and dissemination of data via external agency website.*

7. Optional -- Please describe the best practices used to improve proactive disclosures and any challenges your agency faces in this area.

Section IV: Steps Take to Greater Utilize Technology

A key component of FOIA administration is using technology to make information available to the public and to gain efficiency in FOIA processing. DOJ's 2022 [FOIA Guidelines](#) emphasize the importance of making FOIA websites easily navigable and complying with the [FOIA.gov](#) interoperability requirements. Please answer the following questions to describe how your agency is using technology to improve its FOIA administration and the public's access to information.

1. Has your agency reviewed its FOIA-related technological capabilities to identify resources needed to respond to current and anticipated FOIA demands?

- *Yes.*

2. Please briefly describe any new types of technology your agency uses to support your FOIA program.

- *NTSB is piloting FOIAXpress Artificial Intelligence (AI) to aid in the document reviews.*

3. Does your agency currently use any technology to automate record processing? For example, does your agency use machine learning, predictive coding, technology assisted review or similar tools to conduct searches or make redactions? If so, please describe and, if possible, estimate how much time and financial resources are saved since implementing the technology.

- *Yes. Our agency is piloting AI-enabled software to support records processing. These tools assist with document review, keyword and metadata searches, and automated redaction through built-in “find and redact” features. The AI functionality significantly cuts down on the need for manual redactions, reducing review time. While exact cost time and cost savings vary by the scope of the request, the implementation of AI has reduced staff hours, and improved overall response time. Formal metrics are still being refined as part of ongoing evaluation efforts.*

4. OIP issued [guidance](#) in 2017 encouraging agencies to regularly review their FOIA websites to ensure that they contain essential resources and are informative and user-friendly. Has your agency reviewed its FOIA website(s) during the reporting period to ensure it addresses the elements noted in the guidance?

- Yes.

5. Did all four of your agency's [quarterly reports](#) for Fiscal Year 2025 appear on FOIA.gov?

- Yes.

6. If your agency did not successfully post all quarterly reports on FOIA.gov, please explain why and provide your agency's plan for ensuring that such reporting is successful in Fiscal Year 2026.

- N/A.

7. The FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 requires all agencies to post the raw statistical data used to compile their Annual FOIA Reports. Please provide the link to this posting for your agency's Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report and, if available, for your agency's Fiscal Year 2025 Annual FOIA Report.

- [2024 Raw Statistical Data](#)
- [2025 Raw Statistical Data](#)

8. In February 2019, DOJ and OMB issued joint [Guidance](#) establishing interoperability standards to receive requests from the National FOIA Portal on FOIA.gov. Are all components of your agency in compliance with the guidance?

- Yes.

9. Optional -- Please describe the best practices used in greater utilizing technology and any challenges your agency faces in this area.

Section V: Steps Taken to Remove Barriers to Access, Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests, and Reduce Backlogs

DOJ's 2022 [FOIA Guidelines](#) instruct agencies "to remove barriers to requesting and accessing government records and to reduce FOIA processing backlogs." Please answer the following questions to describe how your agency is removing barriers to access, improving timeliness in responding to requests, and reducing FOIA backlogs.

A. Remove Barriers to Access

1. Has your agency established alternative means of access for any categories of first party requested records, outside of the typical FOIA or Privacy Act process?

- Yes.

2. If yes, please provide examples. If no, please indicate why not. Please also indicate if you do not know.

- CFR § 837.4 - Other material

3. Please describe any other steps your agency has taken to remove barriers to accessing government information.

- *NTSB makes proactive disclosures of its investigative records as described in Section III Proactive Disclosures above.*

B. Timeliness

4. For Fiscal Year 2025, what was the average number of days your agency reported for adjudicating requests for expedited processing? Please see Section VIII.A. of your agency's Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report.

- 25.6

5. If your agency's average number of days to adjudicate requests for expedited processing was above ten calendar days, according to Section VIII.A. of your agency's Fiscal Year 2025 Annual FOIA Report, please describe the steps your agency will take to ensure that requests for expedited processing are adjudicated within ten calendar days or less.

- *Requests will be monitored for expedited processing and appropriate steps taken to accurately indicate the expedited processing request.*

6. Does your agency utilize a separate track for simple requests?

- *Yes.*

7. If your agency uses a separate track for simple requests, according to Annual FOIA Report section VII.A, was the agency overall average number of days to process simple requests twenty working days or fewer in Fiscal Year 2025?

- *No.*

8. If not, did the simple track average processing time decrease compared to the previous Fiscal Year?

- *No.*

9. Please provide the percentage of requests processed by your agency in Fiscal Year 2025 that were placed in your simple track. Please use the following calculation based on the data from your Annual FOIA Report: (processed simple requests from Section VII.C.1) divided by (requests processed from Section V.A.) x 100.

- *59.6%.*

10. If your agency does not track simple requests separately, was the average number of days to process all non-expedited requests twenty working days or fewer?

- *N/A*

C. Backlogs

Backlogged Requests

11. If your agency had a backlog of requests at the close of Fiscal Year 2025, according to Annual FOIA Report Section XII.D.2, did that backlog decrease as compared with the backlog reported at the end of Fiscal Year 2024?

- *No.*

12. If not, according to Annual FOIA Report Section XII.D.1, did your agency process more requests during Fiscal Year 2025 than it did during Fiscal Year 2024?

- *No.*

13. If your agency's request backlog increased during Fiscal Year 2025, please explain why and describe the causes that contributed to your agency not being able to reduce its backlog. When doing so, please also indicate if any of the following were contributing factors:

- *The backlog increase resulted from staff reductions, complex data requests involving emails and calendars, and technical system issues.*
- *We do not anticipate hiring new federal staff anytime soon due to hiring freeze.*

14. If you had a request backlog, please report the percentage of requests that make up the backlog out of the total number of requests received by your agency in Fiscal Year 2025. Please use the following calculation based on data from your Annual FOIA Report: (backlogged requests from Section XII.A) divided by (requests received from Section V.A) x 100. This number can be greater than 100%. If your agency has no request backlog, please answer with "N/A."

- *54.6%.*

Backlogged Appeals

15. If your agency had a backlog of appeals at the close of Fiscal Year 2025, according to Section XII.E.2 of the Annual FOIA Report, did that backlog decrease as compared with the backlog reported at the end of Fiscal Year 2024?

- *N/A*

16. If not, according to section XII.E.1 of the Annual FOIA Report, did your agency process more appeals during Fiscal Year 2025 than it did during Fiscal Year 2024?

- *No.*

17. If your agency's appeal backlog increased during Fiscal Year 2025, please explain why and describe the causes that contributed to your agency not being able to reduce its backlog. When doing so, please also indicate if any of the following were contributing factors:

- *N/A*

18. If you had an appeal backlog, please report the percentage of appeals that make up the backlog out of the total number of appeals received by your agency in Fiscal Year

2024. Please use the following calculation based on data from your Annual FOIA Report: (backlogged appeals from Section XII.A) divided by (appeals received from Section VI.A) x 100. This number can be greater than 100%. If your agency did not receive any appeals in Fiscal Year 2024 and/or has no appeal backlog, please answer with "N/A."

- N/A

D. Backlog Reduction Plans

19. In the 2025 guidelines for Chief FOIA Officer Reports, any agency with a backlog of over 1000 requests in Fiscal Year 2024 was asked to provide a plan for achieving backlog reduction in the year ahead. Did your agency implement a backlog reduction plan last year? If so, describe your agency's efforts in implementing this plan and note if your agency was able to achieve backlog reduction in Fiscal Year 2025?

- N/A

20. If your agency had a backlog of more than 1,000 requests in Fiscal Year 2025, please explain your agency's plan to reduce this backlog during Fiscal Year 2026.

- N/A

E. Reducing the Age of Requests, Appeals, and Consultations

Ten Oldest Requests

21. In Fiscal Year 2025, did your agency close the ten oldest pending perfected requests that were reported in Section VII.E. of your Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report?

- No

22. If no, please provide the number of these requests your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section VII.E of your Fiscal Year 2025 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest requests to close, please indicate that.

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23. Beyond working on the ten oldest requests, please describe any steps your agency took to reduce the overall age of your pending requests.

- *Managed requests and resources for responsive documents and prioritized the ten oldest requests for closing.*

Ten Oldest Appeals

24. In Fiscal Year 2025, did your agency close the ten oldest appeals that were reported pending in Section VI.C.5 of your Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report?

- *N/A*

25. If no, please provide the number of these appeals your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section VII.C.(5) of your Fiscal Year 2025 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest appeals to close, please indicate that.

- *N/A*

26. Beyond work on the ten oldest appeals, please describe any steps your agency took to reduce the overall age of your pending appeals.

- *N/A*

Ten Oldest Consultations

27. In Fiscal Year 2025, did your agency close the ten oldest consultations that were reported pending in Section XII.C. of your Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report?

- *There were no pending consultations at the end of Fiscal Year 2025.*

28. If no, please provide the number of these consultations your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section XII.C. of your Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest consultations to close, please indicate that.

- *N/A*

Additional Information Regarding Ten Oldest

29. If your agency did not close its ten oldest pending requests, appeals, or consultations, please explain why and provide a plan describing how your agency intends to close those "ten oldest" requests, appeals, and consultations during Fiscal Year 2026.

- *N/A*

F. Additional Information about FOIA Processing

30. Were any requests at your agency the subject of FOIA litigation during the reporting period? If so, please describe the impact on your agency's overall FOIA request processing and backlog. If possible, please indicate:

- The number and nature of requests subject to litigation
 - *N/A*
- Common causes leading to litigation
 - *N/A*
- Any other information to illustrate the impact of litigation on your overall FOIA administration
 - *N/A*