



# **FOIAonline FOIA Public User Guide**

User Guide

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## Revision Log

Date	Version No.	Description	Author	Reviewer	Review Date
7/24/2012	0.01	Delivery of Draft FOIAonline User Guide	K. Cannava	J. Geiger	8/10/2012
8/22/2012	0.02	Redelivery of Draft FOIAonline User Guide Updated Screen Captures	K. Cannava	J. Geiger	8/23/2012
1/7/2013	0.03	Redelivery of FOIAonline User Guide Updated with comments from the user community and v1.2 enhancements	C. Waller	J. Geiger	1/10/12
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12/1/2014	0.05	Updated with Payment Enhancement Information Updated Screen Captures	E. Anamisis	K. Cannava	2/13/2015
3/02/2015	0.06	Updated formatting	R. Rivas Plata	K.Cannava	3/06/2015

# 1 Submitting a Request

The public benefits from submitting FOIA requests to fewer government websites, tracking the status of requests, and searching and reviewing public requests and agency responses. Participating agencies benefit through storing FOIA requests and responses in a repository for reuse, and report generation.

**Account creation is highly recommended.** Please see section 2.1 Benefits of an Account for more information. Some agencies only release records online directly to the requester, meaning that *you must have an account in order to receive releasable records online* from some agencies.

To see the list of current agencies available to submit requests, navigate to the FAQs in FOIAonline (see section 3.1.2 FAQs).

## 1.1 Create Request – Steps

1. While on the FOIAonline Home page, press the **Make a FOIA Request** button, as shown in Exhibit 1-1.

Exhibit 1-1 FOIAonline Home Page - Make a Request



2. To create a request as a guest user, press the **Continue as a Guest** button to advance, as shown in Exhibit 1-2 Guest Request Creation.
  - a. Continuing as a guest is only recommended if this is a one-time FOIA request submission. If you would like additional functionality and tracking (see 2.1 Benefits of an Account), then press the **Create an Account** button and submit a FOIA request as a registered requester.

## Exhibit 1-2 Guest Request Creation

**Create Request**

Are you sure you want to continue as a guest? Creating a FOIA request as a registered user provides added benefits:

- A personal dashboard to organize and view all of your requests and appeals
- Quick creation of requests using common request metadata
- Allows you to modify, withdraw, or appeal a request online

Make your selection by clicking the appropriate button below.

### 1.1.1 Create Request Form

On this page (see Exhibit 1-3 Create Request Page), enter, at minimum, the required fields (distinguishable with an asterisk). If a fee waiver or expedited processing request is made, then the corresponding justification fields are required. Attach files to send along with the request by pressing the Select Files button to launch a popup which allows the user to select multiple files from the computer's hard drive. Files display in a table in the Attach Supporting Files section, with a removal option.

3. Select an **Agency** to route the request.
  - a. Some agencies require you to select a **Sub-Agency** for more direct routing of the request.
  - b. If you need additional assistance, access the selected agency's FOIA website using the link: this agency's FOIA website."/>
4. Enter your **Contact Information**. If an **email address** is provided, then a system confirmation email is sent with the tracking number.
  - a. Providing an email address also allows the agency user to correspond and send releasable documents via email.
5. Enter a numerical amount in the **Will Pay Up To** field for any possible fees incurred during FOIA processing.
6. Enter the **Description** regarding the records requested.
  - a. Do **NOT** enter PII in your description. The agency will contact you directly if they need any additional information for processing.
7. *Optional – If the requester has requested either a fee waiver and/or expedited processing, then switch the applicable drop-down menus to **Yes**. This will display a free text field for you to enter the requester's justification.*
8. *Optional – Upload any **supporting documents** provided by the requester, which can include an electronic copy of the original request.*
9. Press the **Preview** button to display the Preview page.

## Exhibit 1-3 Create Request Page

**Create Request**

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a federal law that gives the public the right to make requests for federal agency records. Agencies may withhold information according to [nine exemptions](#) contained in the statute. The FOIA applies only to federal agencies. It does not apply to records held by Congress, the courts, or by state or local government agencies. Each state has its own public access laws that should be consulted for access to state and local records.

\* indicates a required field.

**Agency Selection**

**3** \* Agency:

\* Sub-Agency:

If you are looking for information regarding a specific property, you may obtain this information immediately without filing a FOIA request by using the MyProperty portal, accessible at <http://www.epa.gov/enviro/html/fji/myproperty.html>.

For more information, visit [this agency's FOIA website](#).

**4 Contact Information**

Prefix:

\* First Name:  \* Mailing:

Middle Initial:  Address Location:

\* Last Name:  \* Address Line 1:

Organization:  Address Line 2:

Email Address:  \* City:

Phone Number:  \* State/Province:

Fax Number:  \* Zip Code / Postal Code:

**5 Processing Fees**

\* Will Pay Up To: \$  [Why are fees required?](#)

**6 Description:** 53/2000

This is a FOIA request for a specific set of records.

**7 Request a Fee Waiver**

In certain limited circumstances, individual requests are entitled to a fee waiver. The following factors must be met. If you wish to request a fee waiver include the following sections in your request. 1. A clear statement whether subject of the requested records concerns "the operations or activities of the government." 2. Whether the disclosure is "likely to contribute" to an understanding of government operations or activities. 3. The contribution to an understanding of the subject by the public is likely to result from disclosure: Whether disclosure of the requested information will contribute to "public understanding." 4. The significance of the contribution to public understanding: Whether the disclosure is likely to contribute "significantly" to public understanding of government operations or activities. 5. The existence and magnitude of a commercial interest: Whether the requester has a commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure. 6. The primary interest in disclosure.

Make Request?  Yes 143/2000

I am requesting a fee waiver according to this agency's guidelines. Please see attached document for more information pertaining to my request.

**7 Request Expedited Processing**

In certain LIMITED circumstances, individual requests are entitled to be moved ahead of other requests on an expedited basis. The following factors must be met and certified to be true and correct: 1. Circumstances in which the lack of expedited treatment could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual; or 2. An urgency to inform the public about an actual or alleged Federal government activity, if the information is requested by a person primarily engaged in disseminating information to the public.

Make Request?  Yes 75/2000

I am requesting expedited processing according to this agency's guidelines.

**8 Attach Supporting Files**

No file selected.

Attached File	Type	Size (MB)	Remove
FOIA Fee Waiver Request.docx	Microsoft Word	0.02	<input type="button" value="X"/>

**9**

### 1.1.2 Preview Request Page

---

The Preview Request page offers the user one final chance to review the information entered before submission (see Exhibit 1-4 Preview Request Page).

10. *Optional - Press the **Edit Request** button to edit any information.*
11. Check the **Request Affirmations checkboxes**, indicating you agree to the Privacy Act Statement and that all information is true to the best of your knowledge.
12. Press the **Submit** button to submit the FOIA request online and send it to the agency for evaluation.

## Exhibit 1-4 Preview Request Page

**Preview Request** ?

---

**Agency Selection**

Agency : U.S Environmental Protection Agency  
Sub-Agency : Headquarters

**Contact Information**

Prefix :	Mailing Address : United States/U.S. Territories
First Name : John	Location :
Middle Initial :	Address Line 1 : 123 Example St
Last Name : Doe	Address Line 2 :
Organization :	City : Example
Email Address : j.doe@example.com	State/Province : Alaska
Phone Number :	Zip Code/Postal Code : 12345
Fax Number :	

**Processing Fees**

Will Pay Up To : \$ 25.00

**Description :**

This is a FOIA request for a specific set of records.

**Request a Fee Waiver**

Make Request ? Yes

I am requesting a fee waiver according to this agency's guidelines. Please see attached document for more information pertaining to my request.

**Request Expedited Handling**

Make Request ? Yes

I am requesting expedited processing according to this agency's guidelines.

**Attach Supporting Files**

No attachments were previously added.

**10**

EDIT REQUEST
CANCEL

**11**  Agree to [Privacy Act Statement](#). I have read the Privacy Act Statement and agree to the terms set forth.

**12**  Affirmation. Pursuant to 28 USC § 1746, I declare and affirm that under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that all of the foregoing information, statements, and signatures submitted in connection with this request and in any supporting documents are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

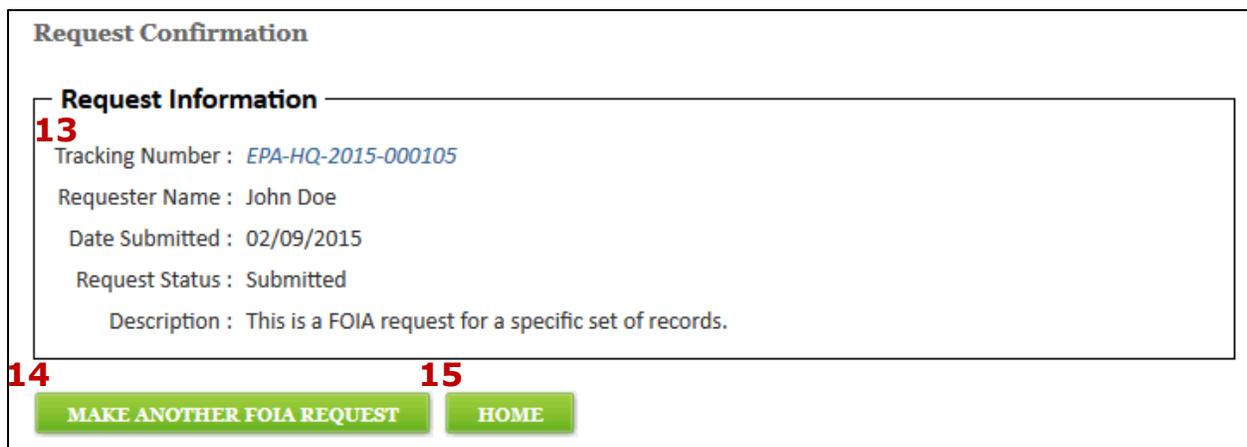
SUBMIT

### 1.1.3 Confirmation Page

The Confirmation page (see Exhibit 1-5 Request Confirmation Page) contains a summary of the created request, including the unique tracking number that is generated.

13. Click the **tracking number link** to display the Request Details page (see Exhibit 1-6 Request Details Page - Submitted).
  - a. If the requester does not have a registered user account, then the Request Details page will only display publically available information.
14. Press the **Make another FOIA Request** to return to the Create Request form.
15. Press the **Home** button to return to the Home page.

**Exhibit 1-5 Request Confirmation Page**



The screenshot shows a web page titled "Request Confirmation". It features a "Request Information" section with the following details: Tracking Number: EPA-HQ-2015-000105, Requester Name: John Doe, Date Submitted: 02/09/2015, Request Status: Submitted, and Description: This is a FOIA request for a specific set of records. Below this section are two green buttons: "MAKE ANOTHER FOIA REQUEST" and "HOME".

Upon submission, the public Request Details (Exhibit 1-6 Request Details Page - Submitted) page does not provide much information. It is up to the discretion of the agency user to release the name, organization, request description, and supporting files. The Phase Diagram automatically shifts as work is performed on the request:

- **Submitted** – The request for records has been submitted to the agency and is awaiting review.
- **Evaluation** – The agency is in the process of reviewing the request to determine if the description of records is sufficient to process.
- **Assignment** – The agency is routing the request for records to the appropriate agency employee to search for records and process the request.
- **Processing** – An agency employee is searching for records, assessing potential responsive records, making necessary redactions, and coordinating with other agency employees.
- **Closed** – The request for records has been processed and any responsive records have been released to the requester and/or public, as appropriate.

### Exhibit 1-6 Request Details Page - Submitted

**Request Details** **Tracking Number : EPA-HQ-2015-000105**

  
Submitted      Evaluation      Assignment      Processing      Closed

---

**Request Information**

Full Name : John Doe	Date Submitted : 02/09/2015
Organization : N/A	<span>?</span> Estimated Date of Completion : TBD
	Final Disposition : Undetermined

---

**Description :**

The description of this request is under Agency review.

---

**Released Records** ?

No records have been released.

[BACK TO SEARCH](#)      [HOME](#)

To inquire about the status of your request, visit the Contact Us link at the bottom of any page in order to view a list of the agencies' FOIA contacts, as shown below.

### Exhibit 1-7 Contact Us Page

**Contact Us**

For information regarding a specific FOIA request, contact the agency directly:

- [Department of the Navy](#)
- [Federal Labor Relations Authority](#)
- [Merit Systems Protection Board](#)
- [National Archives and Records Administration](#)
- [Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation](#)
- [U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#)
- [U.S. Department of Commerce](#)
- [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#)

## 2 Registered Requesters

### 2.1 Benefits of an Account

A public user with an account has the ability to:

- View and track all previously created requests in a centralized dashboard.
- Have the User Information pre-populate upon request creation.
- Communicate within the system to agency users.
- View Fee Estimates requested.
- View an outstanding balance and invoice on a request.
- Make payments via pay.gov for agencies configured with pay.gov.
- Create appeals for previously created requests via the system.
- Withdraw or modify a request.

#### *Impact*

A system account allows records to be delivered to the requester electronically which reduces reliance on paper and reduces copying costs. Since some agencies *only release responsive records directly to the requester*, account creation is highly recommended.

### 2.2 Account Creation

1. Press either the **Create an Account** button on the Home page (see Exhibit 2-1 Home Page), or

**Exhibit 2-1 Home Page**



2. Press the **Create an Account** button, as shown in the Exhibit 2-2 Create Request - Guest Submission Page.

## Exhibit 2-2 Create Request - Guest Submission Page

### Create Request

Are you sure you want to continue as a guest? Creating a FOIA request as a registered user provides added benefits:

- A personal dashboard to organize and view all of your requests and appeals
- Quick creation of requests using common request metadata
- Allows you to modify, withdraw, or appeal a request online

Make your selection by clicking the appropriate button below.

2

CREATE AN ACCOUNT

CONTINUE AS GUEST

CANCEL

3. Enter your contact information into the **User Information** section.
4. Enter your **password**.
5. Press the **Create Account** button to create the account, as shown in Exhibit 2-3 Create an Account Page.

## Exhibit 2-3 Create an Account Page

### Create A Public Account

Note: If you are an agency user requesting access to FOIAonline, please contact your FOIA Officer.

\* indicates a required field.

3

#### User Information

Prefix : <input type="text"/>	* Mailing <input type="text" value="United States/U.S. Territories"/>
* First Name : <input type="text"/>	Address Location :
Middle Initial : <input type="text"/>	? * Address <input type="text"/>
* Last Name : <input type="text"/>	Line 1 :
Organization : <input type="text"/>	Address Line 2 : <input type="text"/>
* Email Address : <input type="text"/>	* City : <input type="text"/>
* Confirm Email <input type="text"/>	* State/Province : <input type="text" value="--"/>
Address : <input type="text"/>	* Zip Code/ Postal Code : <input type="text"/>
Phone Number : <input type="text"/>	
Fax Number : <input type="text"/>	

4

#### Password

Password must be at least 8 characters and contain at least 3 of the following character types:

- Upper Case Letters
- Lower Case Letters
- Numbers
- Special Characters

\* Password :

\* Confirm Password :

5

CREATE ACCOUNT

CANCEL

The Confirmation page (see Exhibit 2-4 Account Confirmation Page) displays when the account has been successfully created.

## Exhibit 2-4 Account Confirmation Page

### Congratulations!

Your account has been established.

MAKE A FOIA REQUEST

HOME

## 2.3 Logging In

1. Enter your email address in the **Email Address** field.

2. Enter your password in the **Password** field.
3. Either press the **Enter** button on your keyboard, or click the **Sign In** link, as shown in Exhibit 2-5 Login Bar.

#### Exhibit 2-5 Login Bar

1  2  3 [SIGN IN](#) [FORGOT PASSWORD](#)

4. A Privacy & Use Notice displays that the user must acknowledge prior to signing in to FOIAonline (see Exhibit 2-6 Privacy and Use Notice).

#### Exhibit 2-6 Privacy and Use Notice

4

### Privacy and Use Notice

You are requesting access to an official United States Federal Government application. The use of this application is for authorized purposes only. The Federal Government may monitor or audit use and accessing this application constitutes consent to such surveillance. Unauthorized attempts to upload and/or change information on this website is strictly prohibited under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986 and Title 18, USC, Sec. 1001 and 1030(a)(4) and may carry a punishment of 5 years imprisonment and/or a \$250,000 fine.

By logging into this system, you acknowledge that you understand the responsibilities of using this system and will comply with the Rules of Behavior. See [Rules of Behavior](#) for additional details.

## 2.4 Forgot Password

If an invalid attempt to sign in is made via the Login Bar, then the Sign In page displays (see Exhibit 2-7 Sign In Page). The system only allows 5 unsuccessful login attempts within one hour before users are locked out of the system for a duration of 15 minutes.

1. Press the **Forgot Password** button to display the Forgot Password page.

#### Exhibit 2-7 Sign In Page

• Either the email address or password are not valid, please re-enter.

\* indicates a required field.

**Sign In**

\* Email Address :

\* Password :

1

2. Click the **Forgot Password** link at the top of the page to display the Forgot Password page. Enter the associated email address and press the **Submit** button to receive a temporary password via email. Enter the email address and the temporary password into

either the Login Bar or the Sign In page and press the Sign In link/button, as shown in Exhibit 2-8 Forgot Password Page.

### Exhibit 2-8 Forgot Password Page

\* indicates a required field.

**Forgot Password**

\* Email Address:

**2**

The Change Password page displays upon signing in with the temporary password (see section 2.7.1 Change Password). A user receives an invalid login message when entering a password that was used within the previous 12 passwords.

## 2.5 View My FOIA Requests Dashboard

After signing in to the registered user account and pressing the Proceed button in the Privacy and Use Notice popup (see section 2.3.4 Privacy and Use Notice), the View My FOIA Requests dashboard displays. This dashboard provides a central location for all requests and appeals that are created by the user. If a registered user signs into the system and has not yet created a request, then the text “No requests currently exist” displays.

### Exhibit 2-9 View My FOIA Requests Dashboard

View My FOIA Requests		Filter	All	Results	25	
18 items found, displaying all items.		1				
Tracking Number	Type	Track	Submitted	Due	Phase	Detail
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EPA-HQ-2015-002253	Request	Simple	02/09/2015	TBD	Evaluation	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008807	Request	Expedited	01/07/2015	02/05/2015	Closed	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008806	Request	Expedited	01/07/2015	02/05/2015	Closed	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008805	Request	Simple	01/07/2015	02/05/2015	Closed	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008804	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	TBD	Closed	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008789	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	TBD	Closed	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008803	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Assignment	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008802	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Assignment	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008801	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Assignment	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008799	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Assignment	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008798	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Assignment	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008797	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Assignment	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008796	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Assignment	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008795	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Assignment	<a href="#">▶</a>
CBP-2015-008794	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Assignment	<a href="#">▶</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CBP-2015-008793	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Closed	<a href="#">▶</a>

### Layout

The View My FOIA Requests dashboard displays requests and appeals in the following columns: Tracking Number, Type, Track, Submitted, Due, Phase, and Detail. The three actions that display in the left side menu are the View My FOIA Requests, Search FOIA Requests, and Make a FOIA Request. Clicking the Home tab will always return the user to the dashboard.

The number of maximum items that display at one time defaults to 25, but this can be changed by clicking the Results dropdown menu and selecting 10, 25, 50, or 100. Changing the default results dropdown is a one-time change and does not save after navigating away from the dashboard.

Requests that have new, unread correspondence have a mail icon next to the tracking number. (see Exhibit 2-10 New Correspondence).

**Exhibit 2-10 New Correspondence**

 EPA-HQ-2015-002253	Request	Simple	02/09/2015	TBD	Evaluation	
--	---------	--------	------------	-----	------------	---

Requests that are awaiting payment have a dollar sign icon next to the tracking number (see Exhibit 2-11 Awaiting Payment).

**Exhibit 2-11 Awaiting Payment**

 CBP-2015-008793	Request	Simple	12/18/2014	01/20/2015	Closed	
--	---------	--------	------------	------------	--------	--

### Sorting

The dashboard default sorts by the Submitted date. All columns except for Detail are sortable by clicking the column headers.

### Table Actions

- Clicking the Detail column header expands/collapses the Description for each of the rows.
- Clicking the arrow icon in the Detail column expands/collapses the individual row's Description.
- Clicking the Tracking Number link takes the user to the Details page.

## 2.6 Registered Requester - Request Details Page

The Request Details page displays additional information that is available to a public user, as shown in Exhibit 2-10.

1. The **Phase Diagram** displays at the top of the page, indicating where in the process the request is currently.
2. The **Contact Information** section displays the registered requester's contact information, which can be modified within the My Account user tab (see 2.7 Edit Account).
3. Detailed information related specifically to the request can be found in the **Request Information** section.
4. The status for Fee Waivers and Expedited Processing displays in the **Request a Fee Waiver** and **Request Expedited Handling** section, if they exist.

5. Supporting Files that were uploaded during the creation of the request display in the **Supporting Files** section of the request, if they exist.
6. Correspondence between the agency and the requester display in the **Correspondence to Requester** section.
7. Released responsive records display in the **Released Records** section.

\*Note: Records released to the public display as “Request – Public.” Records released to only the requester display as “Request – Direct.” These records released “direct” will never be publically searchable/available.

## Exhibit 2-12 Registered Requester - Request Details Page

**Request Details** Tracking Number : EPA-2015-002254

**1** 

**2** **Contact Information**

Full Name : REGISTERED REQUESTER	Mailing Location : United States/U.S. Territories
Organization :	Address Line 1 : 100 A. St.
Email Address : foiaregistereduser@yahoo.com	Address Line 2 :
Phone Number :	City : Washington
Fax Number :	State/Province : District of Columbia
	Zip Code/Postal Code : 20001

**3** **Request Information**

Agency : U.S Environmental Protection Agency	Request Phase : Closed
Will Pay Up To : \$25.00	Request Track : Simple
Date Submitted : 02/09/2015	Final Disposition : Partial grant/partial denial
Closed Date : 02/09/2015	

**Description :** 25/2000

FOIA request for records.

**Request a Fee Waiver**

Made Request ? No

**Request Expedited Handling**

Made Request ? No

**Supporting Files**

Attached Files :  
No attachments were previously added.

**Payments**

No payments to display.

**Invoice**

Total Amount Billed : \$0.00  
Date Sent :  
No invoice has been added.

**6** **Correspondence with Requester**

Subject	From	Date	Detail
Final Disposition, Request EPA-2015-002254	Jason Brown	2015-02-09	<a href="#">Detail</a>
FOIA Request EPA-HQ-2015-002254 Submitted		2015-02-09	<a href="#">Detail</a>

**7** **Released Records**

[DOWNLOAD ALL](#)

Filter by Title :  [SUBMIT](#) [CLEAR](#) Results 50

3 records found, displaying all records. 1

Download	Title	Type	Size (MB)	Release Date	Released With
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">lp-gwb-jan2014</a>	Microsoft Excel	0.03	02/09/2015	Request - Direct
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">george-hw-bush-library-fy13</a>	PDF	0.18	02/09/2015	Request - Public
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">operational-records-fy13</a>	PDF	0.82	02/09/2015	Request - Public

3 records found, displaying all records. 1

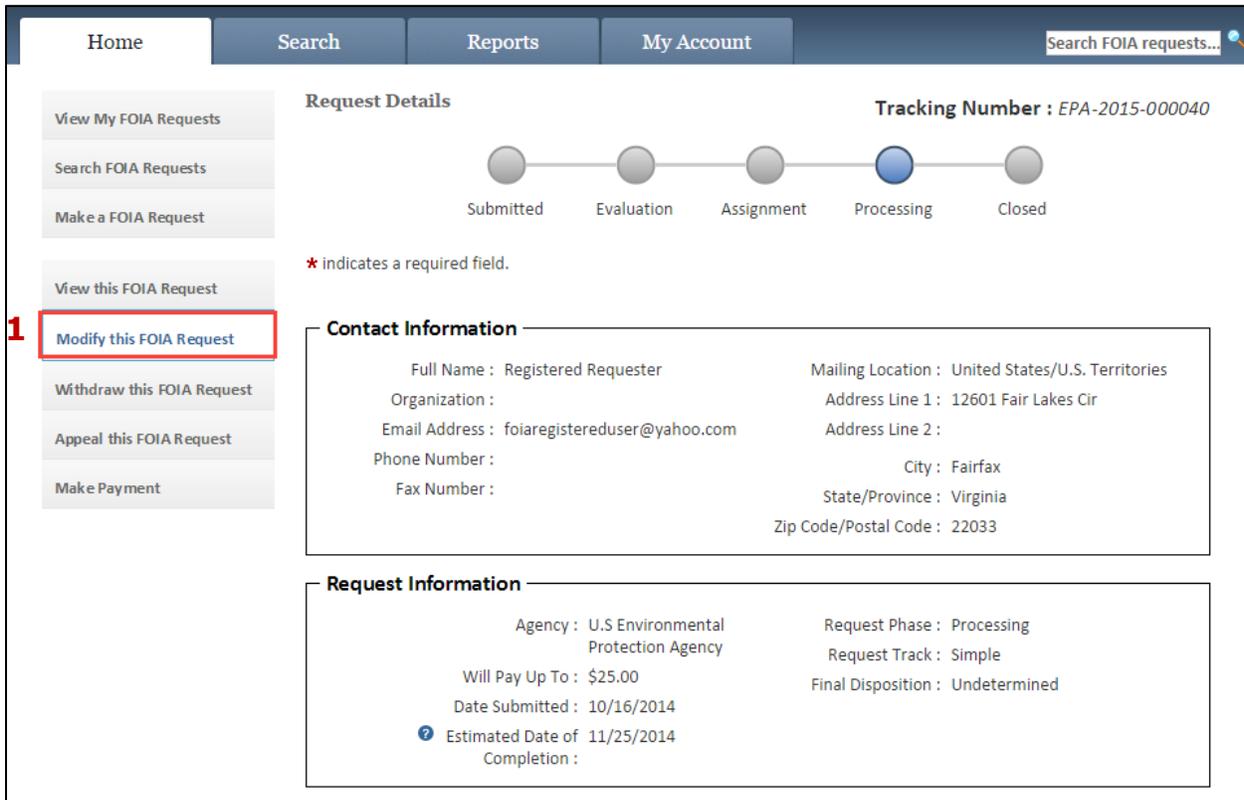
[DOWNLOAD](#)

[CANCEL](#)

## 2.6.1 Modify Request Description

1. Modify a request by clicking the **Modify this FOIA Request** action from the left side menu while on a request, as shown in Exhibit 2-13 Modify this FOIA Request Action.

**Exhibit 2-13 Modify this FOIA Request Action**



The screenshot shows the FOIAonline interface. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Search', 'Reports', and 'My Account', along with a search box for FOIA requests. The left sidebar contains a menu with the following items: 'View My FOIA Requests', 'Search FOIA Requests', 'Make a FOIA Request', 'View this FOIA Request', 'Modify this FOIA Request' (highlighted with a red box and a red '1'), 'Withdraw this FOIA Request', 'Appeal this FOIA Request', and 'Make Payment'. The main content area is titled 'Request Details' and shows a progress bar with five stages: Submitted, Evaluation, Assignment, Processing (current stage), and Closed. The tracking number is EPA-2015-000040. Below the progress bar, a note states '\* indicates a required field.' The 'Contact Information' section includes fields for Full Name (Registered Requester), Organization, Email Address (foiaregistereduser@yahoo.com), Phone Number, Fax Number, Mailing Location (United States/U.S. Territories), Address Line 1 (12601 Fair Lakes Cir), Address Line 2, City (Fairfax), State/Province (Virginia), and Zip Code/Postal Code (22033). The 'Request Information' section includes Agency (U.S Environmental Protection Agency), Request Phase (Processing), Request Track (Simple), Final Disposition (Undetermined), Will Pay Up To (\$25.00), Date Submitted (10/16/2014), and Estimated Date of Completion (11/25/2014).

2. Modify the editable **Description** field, as shown in Exhibit 2-14 Modify this FOIA Request Page.
3. *Optional – attach files to the **Supporting Files** section.*
4. Press the **Submit** button to save the modified description.

\*Note: The agency user processing the request is automatically notified of the update.

## Exhibit 2-14 Modify this FOIA Request Page

**Request Details** Tracking Number : EPA-HQ-2015-002253



\* indicates a required field.

**Contact Information**

Full Name : REGISTERED REQUESTER	Mailing Location : United States/U.S. Territories
Organization :	Address Line 1 : 100 A. St.
Email Address : foiaregistereduser@yahoo.com	Address Line 2 :
Phone Number :	City : Washington
Fax Number :	State/Province : District of Columbia
	Zip Code/Postal Code : 20001

**Request Information**

Agency : Headquarters	Request Phase : Evaluation
Will Pay Up To : \$25.00	Request Track : Simple
Date Submitted : 02/09/2015	Final Disposition : Undetermined
<span style="color: blue;">?</span> Estimated Date of Completion : TBD	

**\* Description** ?

This is a FOIA request.

**Request a Fee Waiver**

Made Request ? No

**Request Expedited Handling**

Made Request ? No

**Supporting Files**

Attached Files :  
No attachments were previously added.

Attach Additional Files :  
If you are having problems, or do not see the "Select Files" button, *switch to the basic uploader.*

SELECT FILES

No new attachments have been added.

**Payments**

No payments to display.

**Invoice**

Total Amount Billed : \$0.00  
Date Sent :  
No invoice has been added.

**Correspondence with Requester**

Subject	From	Date	Detail
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clarification Needed	Jason Brown	2015-02-09	<span style="color: blue;">▶</span>
FOIA Request EPA-HQ-2015-002253 Submitted		2015-02-09	<span style="color: blue;">▶</span>

**Released Records** ?

No records have been released.

SUBMIT
CANCEL

2

3

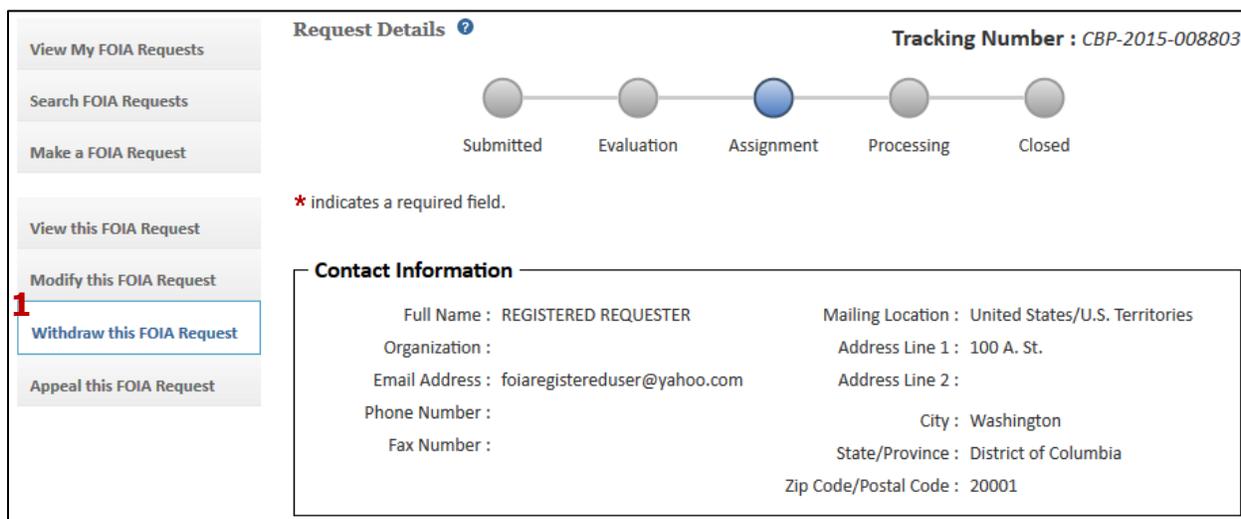
4

## 2.6.2 Withdraw Request

Withdrawing a request from within FOIAonline sends a notification to the agency user of the action, prompting the user to close the request. Fees may still be applied to a withdrawn request, depending on how much search and/or review time has been applied to the request.

1. Click the **Withdraw this FOIA Request** action from the left side menu, as shown in Exhibit 2-15 Withdraw Request Action.

**Exhibit 2-15 Withdraw Request Action**



**Request Details** ? Tracking Number : CBP-2015-008803

Submitted Evaluation **Assignment** Processing Closed

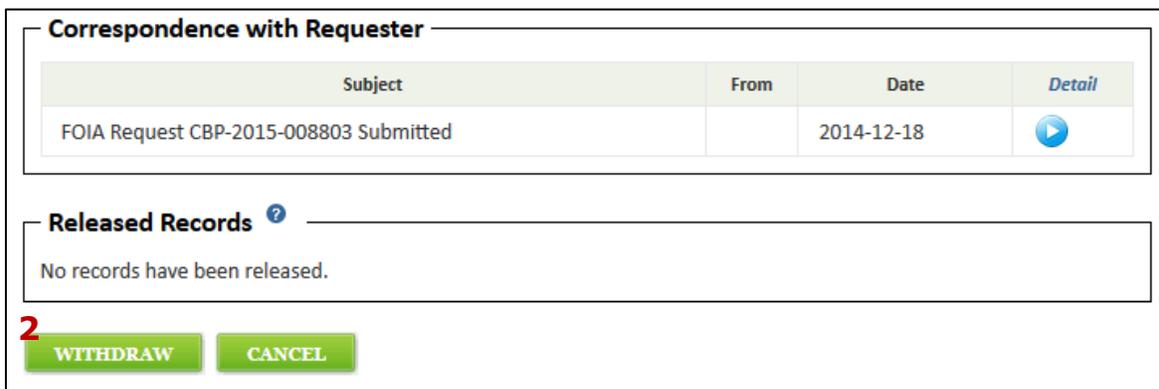
\* indicates a required field.

**Contact Information**

Full Name : REGISTERED REQUESTER      Mailing Location : United States/U.S. Territories  
 Organization :      Address Line 1 : 100 A. St.  
 Email Address : foiregistereduser@yahoo.com      Address Line 2 :  
 Phone Number :      City : Washington  
 Fax Number :      State/Province : District of Columbia  
 Zip Code/Postal Code : 20001

2. Press the **Withdraw** button, as shown in Exhibit 2-16 Withdraw Request Page.

**Exhibit 2-16 Withdraw Request Page**



**Correspondence with Requester**

Subject	From	Date	Detail
FOIA Request CBP-2015-008803 Submitted		2014-12-18	

**Released Records** ?

No records have been released.

**2**

A confirmation message of the withdrawal displays at the top of the dashboard (see Exhibit 2-17 Withdrawal Confirmation). Withdrawing a request sends an email to the agency individual assigned to process the request, and also logs the withdrawal in the Correspondence section of the case file (see section 2.6.3 Correspondence).

### Exhibit 2-17 Withdrawal Confirmation

• The request was withdrawn. The requester may be responsible for accrued fees.

View My FOIA Requests Results 25 ▾

3 items found, displaying all items. 1

Tracking Number	Type	Track	Submitted	Due	Phase	Detail
EPA-2012-000519	Request	TBD	08/03/2012	TBD	Processing	
EPA-2012-000503	Appeal	Simple	07/30/2012	08/27/2012	Processing	
 EPA-2012-000502	Request	Simple	07/27/2012	08/24/2012	Processing	

The withdrawn request’s phase will display as “Processing” until the request is manually closed by the agency. Depending on the amount of fees that have accrued between the submittal and the time of withdrawal, the requester may still receive an invoice.

### 2.6.3 Correspondence

1. Requests with new, unread correspondence display a **mail icon** next to the tracking number from the dashboard, as shown in Exhibit 2-18 Unread Correspondence Icon. Click the tracking number link to display the Request Details page.

#### Exhibit 2-18 Unread Correspondence Icon

View My FOIA Requests Filter All ▾ Results 25 ▾

19 items found, displaying all items. 1

Tracking Number	Type	Track	Submitted	Due	Phase	Detail
EPA-2015-002254	Request	Simple	02/09/2015	03/10/2015	Closed	
<b>1</b>  EPA-HQ-2015-002253	Request	Simple	02/09/2015	TBD	Processing	
CBP-2015-008807	Request	Expedited	01/07/2015	02/05/2015	Closed	
CBP-2015-008806	Request	Expedited	01/07/2015	02/05/2015	Closed	

2. Correspondence sent to the requester can be accessed in the Correspondence with Requester section. To view details and attachments associated with a specific correspondence file click the **blue arrow icon** in the Details column, as shown in Exhibit 2-19 Reply to Correspondence.
3. Click the **Reply** link to expand the Reply section.
  - a. The Reply link does not display for system automated correspondence.
4. Enter text into the **Body** of the Reply section.
5. Press the **Send Reply** button to send the correspondence within the system.

## Exhibit 2-19 Reply to Correspondence

**Correspondence with Requester**

Subject	From	Date	Detail
Clarification Needed	Jason Brown	2015-02-09	<b>2</b> 

The request you submitted on 02/09/2015 for request EPA-HQ-2015-002255 is too vague: This is a FOIA request for records.

Please narrow down the scope of your request.

**3** [Reply](#)

FOIA Request EPA-HQ-2015-002255 Submitted	2015-02-09	
---	------------	---

**Reply**

Subject :

**4 \*** Body :

**B** ***I*** **U** |    | Font Size  |  

**5**

### 2.6.4 Pay.gov Payments

Registered requesters can only submit online payments in FOIAonline if the agency is configured to accept pay.gov payments. An agency is configured to accept pay.gov payments if you see the “Make Payment” action in the left side menu, or the “Pay on Pay.gov” button in the Payment section, as shown in Exhibit 2-20 Pay on Pay.gov. These two options only display if there is an outstanding balance on a request.

The Payments section stores a log of both manual and pay.gov payments made toward the Total Amount Billed. Agency users have the ability to enter manual payments received from a requester offline. Manual payments entered by an agency user will display within this table.

1. Press the **Pay on Pay.gov** button.

### Exhibit 2-20 Pay on Pay.gov

**Payments**

Total Amount Owed: \$174.00

No payments to display.

**Add Payment**

**1** PAY ON PAY.GOV

Send payments online via pay.gov, or offline via check mailed to the agency's billing address. If you received an invoice, agency-specific information may be included in the invoice's comments and instructions section.

2. Press the **Yes** button in the popup.

### Exhibit 2-21 Pay.gov Notification

You are now being taken to Pay.gov and leaving FOIAonline. Continue to Pay.gov?

**2**

YES
NO

Once in Pay.gov, enter your payment information and submit the online payment. FOIAonline will automatically update with the information.

Once full payment has been made and the Total Amount Owed equals \$0.00, the Pay on Pay.gov button will no longer display.

The Total Amount Owed equals the Total Invoice Amount minus Payments made.

Fee Estimates that are sent from an agency user display at the top of the Invoice section.

Estimates marked for required payment will be indicated by a red asterisk, display a Total Amount Owed and activate the Pay on Pay.gov button. An invoice that is sent with an Interim Release or Final Disposition Notice will override the red asterisk indicating required payment and the Total Amount Owed.

The most recent Total Amount Billed and its Date Sent display in the Invoice section, as shown in Exhibit 2-22 Invoice Section.

### Exhibit 2-22 Invoice Section

**Invoice**

Total Amount Billed : \$174.00  
Date Sent : 12/18/2014

Title	Invoice Date	Amount
CBP-2015-008793 Invoice 20141218.pdf	12/18/2014	\$174.00

## 2.6.5 Appeal

---

Only users with a registered account have the ability to appeal a request that they previously submitted. In order to create an appeal, access the Appeal Existing Request page by clicking the Appeal this FOIA Request action available in the left side menu when viewing a request.

### *Appeal Existing Request*

On this page (see Exhibit 2-23 Appeal Existing Request Page), a public user enters, at minimum, the required fields (distinguishable with an asterisk). Attach files to send with the appeal by pressing the Select Files button to launch a popup which allows the user to select multiple files from the computer's hard drive. Files display in a table in the Attach Supporting Files section, with a removal option.

## Exhibit 2-23 Appeal Existing Request Page

**Appeal Existing Request**
**Tracking Number : EPA-HQ-2013-000154**

\* indicates a required field.

**Contact Information for Appeal**

Prefix :

\* First Name :

Middle Initial :

\* Last Name :

? Created on behalf of :

Organization :

Email Address :

Phone Number :

Fax Number :

\* Mailing Address Location :

? \* Address Line 1 :

Address Line 2 :

\* City :

\* State/Province :

\* Zip Code/Postal Code :

**Request Information**

Tracking Number : EPA-HQ-2013-000154

Request Phase : Assignment

Full Name : Melissa Kirby

Request Track : TBD

Date Submitted : 04/16/2013

Final Disposition : Undetermined

**Appeal Information**

\* Submitted Date :  

Perfected Date :  

\* **Basis for Appeal :** 54/2000

This is an appeal for FOIA Request EPA-HQ-2013-000154.

**Attach Supporting Files**

If you are having problems, or do not see the "Select Files" button, [switch to the basic uploader.](#)

Attached File	Type	Size (KB)	Remove
<a href="#">Test FOIAonline Doc 2.docx</a>	Microsoft Word	19.69	<input type="button" value="X"/>
<a href="#">Test FOIAonline Doc 1.docx</a>	Microsoft Word	17.77	<input type="button" value="X"/>

## Preview Appeal

The Preview Appeal page offers the user a final chance to review the information entered before submission (see Exhibit 2-24 Preview Appeal).

### Exhibit 2-24 Preview Appeal

**Preview Appeal** ?
**Tracking Number :** EPA-R1-2013-000219

\* indicates a required field.

**Contact Information for Appeal**

Prefix :	<span style="color: red;">*</span> Mailing Address : United States/U.S. Territories
<span style="color: red;">*</span> First Name : Jane	Location :
Middle Initial :	<span style="color: red;">*</span> Address Line 1 : 22398 South St.
<span style="color: red;">*</span> Last Name : Doe	Address Line 2 :
Created on behalf of :	<span style="color: red;">*</span> City : Fairfax
Organization :	<span style="color: red;">*</span> State/Province : Virginia
Email Address : janemdoe@gmail.com	<span style="color: red;">*</span> Zip Code/Postal Code : 22033
Phone Number :	
Fax Number :	

**Request Information**

Tracking Number : EPA-R1-2013-000219	Request Phase : Evaluation
Full Name : Jane Doe	Request Track : TBD
Date Submitted : 04/25/2013	Final Disposition : Undetermined

\* **Basis for Appeal :** 54/2000

This is an appeal for FOIA Request EPA-R1-2013-000219.

**Supporting Files**

Attached File	Type	Size (KB)
Test FOIAonline Doc 2.docx	Microsoft Word	19.69
Test FOIAonline Doc 1.docx	Microsoft Word	17.77

EDIT APPEAL
CANCEL

Agree to [Privacy Act Statement](#). I have read the Privacy Act Statement and agree to the terms set forth.

Affirmation. Pursuant to 28 USC § 1746, I declare and affirm that under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that all of the foregoing information, statements, and signatures submitted in connection with this appeal and in any supporting documents are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

SUBMIT

1. *Optional - Edit the appeal by pressing the **Edit Appeal** button as displayed in Exhibit 2-25 Edit Appeal Button to return to the Appeal Existing Request page.*

### Exhibit 2-25 Edit Appeal Button

**1**

**Supporting Files**

No attachments were previously added.

**EDIT APPEAL** **CANCEL**

2. Check the **affirmation checkboxes**.
3. Press the **Submit** button to display the Appeal Confirmation page, as shown in Exhibit 2-26 Appeal Affirmations.

### Exhibit 2-26 Appeal Affirmations

**2**

Agree to [Privacy Act Statement](#). I have read the Privacy Act Statement and agree to the terms set forth.

Affirmation. Pursuant to 28 USC § 1746, I declare and affirm that under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that all of the foregoing information, statements, and signatures submitted in connection with this request and in any supporting documents are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

**3**

**SUBMIT**

#### *Confirmation*

The Confirmation page contains a summary of the created appeal, including the unique tracking number that is generated.

Click the tracking number link to display the registered requester's view of the Appeal Details page (see 2.6.5.1 Appeal Details – Registered Requester).

4. Return to the Home page by clicking the Home button.

## Exhibit 2-27 Appeal Confirmation Page

### Appeal Confirmation

#### Original Request Information

Tracking Number : [EPA-R1-2013-000219](#)  
Requester Name : Jane Doe  
Date Submitted : 04/25/2013  
Request Status : Appealed  
Request Track : Simple

#### Appeal Information

Appeal Number : [EPA-HQ-2013-000224](#)  
Requester Name : Jane Doe  
Date Appealed : 04/29/2013  
Basis for Appeal : This is an appeal for FOIA Request EPA-R1-2013-000219.

4

[HOME](#)

### 2.6.5.1 Appeal Details – Registered Requester

The registered requester's view of the appeal is extremely similar to the Request Details page (see 2.6 Registered Requester - Request Details Page). The phase diagram progresses automatically as the agency user evaluates and processes the appeal, as shown in Exhibit 2-28 Registered Requester - Appeal Details.

## Exhibit 2-28 Registered Requester - Appeal Details

Appeal Details
Tracking Number : EPA-HQ-2015-002256



**Contact Information**

Full Name : REGISTERED REQUESTER	Mailing Location : United States/U.S. Territories
Organization :	Address Line 1 : 100 A. St.
Email Address : foiaregistereduser@yahoo.com	Address Line 2 :
Phone Number :	City : Washington
Fax Number :	State/Province : District of Columbia
	Zip Code/Postal Code : 20001

**Appeal Information**

Agency : Office of General Counsel	Request Phase : Submitted
Date Submitted : 02/10/2015	Request Track : Simple
Estimated Date of Completion :	Final Disposition : Undetermined

**Request Information**

Tracking Number : EPA-2015-002254	Request Phase : Closed
Full Name : REGISTERED REQUESTER	Request Track : TBD
Date Submitted : 02/09/2015	Final Disposition : Partial grant/partial denial

**Basis for Appeal :** 25/2000

Took too long to process.

**Supporting Files**

Attached Files :  
No attachments were previously added.

**Payments**

No payments to display.

**Invoice**

Total Amount Billed : \$0.00  
Date Sent :  
No invoice has been added.

**Correspondence with Requester**

Subject	From	Date	Detail
FOIA Appeal EPA-HQ-2015-002256 Submitted		2015-02-10	<a href="#">▶</a>

**Released Records**

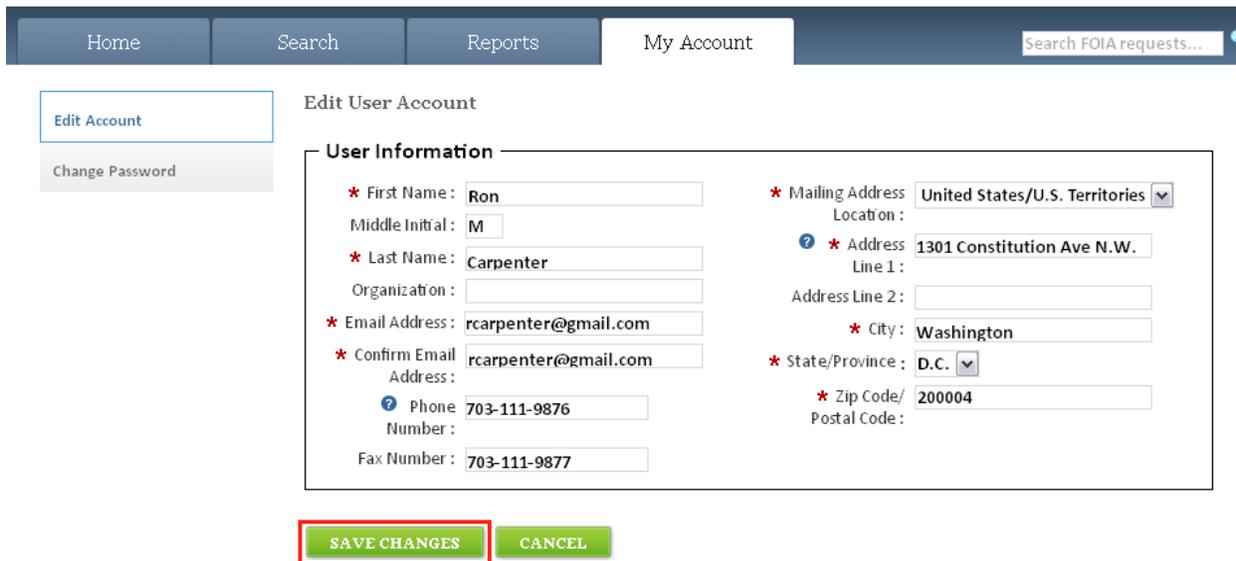
No records have been released.

CANCEL

## 2.7 Edit Account

Click the My Account tab to display the Edit Account page. Update the information that displays automatically when creating a request, edit the information on the Edit Account page, and press the Save Changes button, as shown in Exhibit 2-29 Edit Account.

**Exhibit 2-29 Edit Account**



### 2.7.1 Change Password

The Change Password page, as shown in Exhibit 2-30 Change Password Action, is accessed by either logging in for the first time after receiving a temporary password, logging in after the password expires, or by selecting the Change Password action from the left side action menu. You cannot use the previous 12 passwords.

**Exhibit 2-30 Change Password Action**



The Change Password page (see Exhibit 2-31 Change Password Page) requires the email address, old password, and the new password (twice for validation). Pressing the Change Password button sets the new password and restarts the 90 day expiration clock.

## Exhibit 2-31 Change Password Page

**Edit Account**

**Change Password**

### Change Password

Once you change your password it will expire in 90 days.

\* indicates a required field.

#### Change Password

Password must be at least 8 characters and contain at least 3 of the following character types:

- Upper Case Letters
- Lower Case Letters
- Numbers
- Special Characters

\* Email Address : foiaregistereduser@yahoo.com

\* Current or Temporary Password : ●●●●●●●●

\* New Password : ●●●●●●●●

\* Confirm New Password : ●●●●●●●●

**CHANGE PASSWORD** **CANCEL**

### 3 Searching

There are two ways a public user can access the Search page from the Home page: by clicking either the Search tab or the Search FOIA Requests button. A user can skip the Search page and quickly access search results by entering criteria in the text field that is located on the upper right corner of every page, see Exhibit 3-1 Search Bar. The Search Bar searches all agencies for requests only.



**Exhibit 3-1 Search Bar**

Once criteria are entered in the text field, the user can either press the Enter button on the keyboard, or click the magnifying glass icon to begin the search.

#### *Search Criteria*

A public user can search for all previously created requests, appeals, any publically available responsive records, and referrals.

Exhibit 3-2 Search Page shows the layout of the Search page and the fields on which users can search.

1. **Search For** all previously created requests, appeals, any publically available responsive records, and referrals.
2. The **Request Type checkboxes** default to checked, but a user can uncheck certain criteria in order to return more specific results.

- The **Agency** field is a multi-select field, so a user can search for multiple agencies by pressing the CTRL button on the keyboard and then clicking the agency names. To deselect an agency, press the CTRL button and then the desired agency to remove.

**Exhibit 3-2 Search Page**

**Search**

[Information you can search varies by agency.](#) You may search by keyword(s), a phrase (place it in quotation marks), tracking number, or fiscal year.

\* indicates a required field.

**Search Criteria**

**1** \* Search For :

**2** \* Type :  Request  
 Appeal  
 Record (Full-Text)  
 Referral

**3** Agency :   
General Services Administration  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

### Search Results

Search results display in a table with the following columns: Tracking Number, Type, Status, Requester, Submitted, Assigned To, Due, and Detail, as shown in Exhibit 3-3 Search Results. Each column can be sorted, with the exception of the Detail column, by clicking the column header.

1. Clicking the **Refine Search** link loads the previous page with the previously entered criterion.
2. The **Results** dropdown menu can filter results to display 10, 25, 50, or 100 at a time; pagination buttons exist on top of the table; the search term(s) entered highlight(s) in the Search Results table.
3. Clicking the **Detail column** header expands the Description row of all of the search results.
4. Clicking the **Tracking Number** link for a Request in the Search Results table displays the Request Details page, see Exhibit 1-6 Request Details Page - Submitted.
5. **Export** options display beneath the Search Results table. Clicking either of the links exports the results into an Excel spreadsheet (see Exhibit 3-4 Search Results Excel Export), either in a CSV or XLS format.

**Exhibit 3-3 Search Results**

**Search Results**

You searched for the terms (Veronica) from (Simple, Complex, Expedited) documents of type (Appeal, Record, Referral, Consultation) from the following agencies: EPA. [Refine Search](#) <sup>1</sup>

5 items found, displaying all items. Results 25 <sup>2</sup> 1 <sup>3</sup>

Tracking Number	Type	Status	Requester	Submitted	Assigned To	Due	Detail
<a href="#">EPA-R2-2013-000075</a>	Record	Research Records	Veronica Stevens	12/05/2012	R2	N/A	
<a href="#">EPA-HQ-2013-000071</a>	Appeal	Submitted	Veronica Stevens	12/04/2012	OGC	01/02/2013	
<a href="#">EPA-HQ-2013-000081</a>	Appeal	Submitted	Veronica Stevens	12/05/2012	OGC	01/03/2013	
<a href="#">EPA-HQ-2013-000072</a>	Appeal	Submitted	Veronica Stevens	12/04/2012	OGC	01/02/2013	
<a href="#">EPA-R2-2013-000075</a>	Record	Research Records	Veronica Stevens	12/05/2012	R2	N/A	

5 items found, displaying all items. 1

Export options: [CSV](#) | [Excel](#) <sup>5</sup>

START NEW SEARCH
BACK TO SEARCH

### Exhibit 3-4 Search Results Excel Export

A1		fx Tracking Number						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Tracking Number	Type	Status	Requester	Submitted	Assigned To	Due	Description/Basis for Appeal
2	EPA-R2-2013-000075	Record	Research Record	Veronica Stevens	12/05/2012	R2	N/A	Upload AAP
3	EPA-HQ-2013-000071	Appeal	Submitted	Veronica Stevens	12/04/2012	OGC	01/02/2013	This appeal is being tested to ensure that additional files can be uploaded to it.
4	EPA-HQ-2013-000081	Appeal	Submitted	Veronica Stevens	12/05/2012	OGC	01/03/2013	Checking an email response and creating an appeal.
5	EPA-HQ-2013-000072	Appeal	Submitted	Veronica Stevens	12/04/2012	OGC	01/02/2013	Appealing this Request during the Make assignment Stage.
6	EPA-R2-2013-000075	Record	Research Record	Veronica Stevens	12/05/2012	R2	N/A	Untitled 1

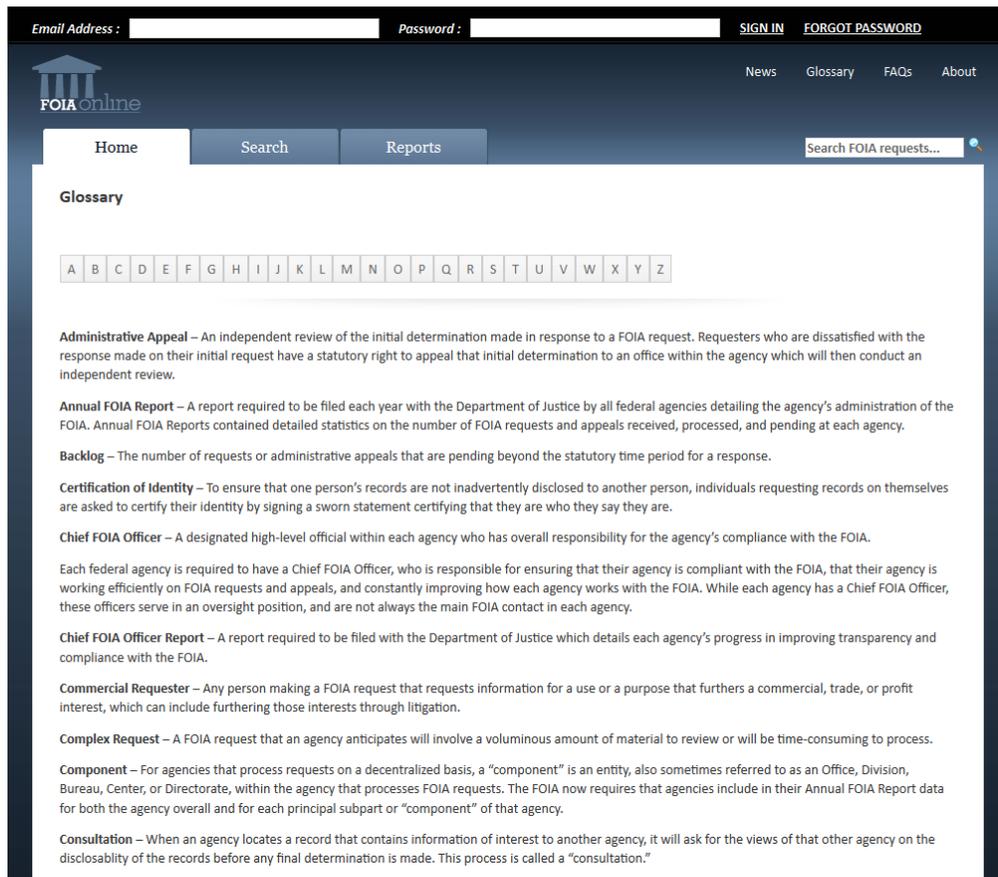
### 3.1 Quick Links

The Glossary, FAQs, Resources and About quick links display at the top of every page.

#### 3.1.1 Glossary

The Glossary page (see Exhibit 3-5 Glossary Page) displays the FOIA.gov glossary with quick links at the top of the page to jump within the page.

### Exhibit 3-5 Glossary Page



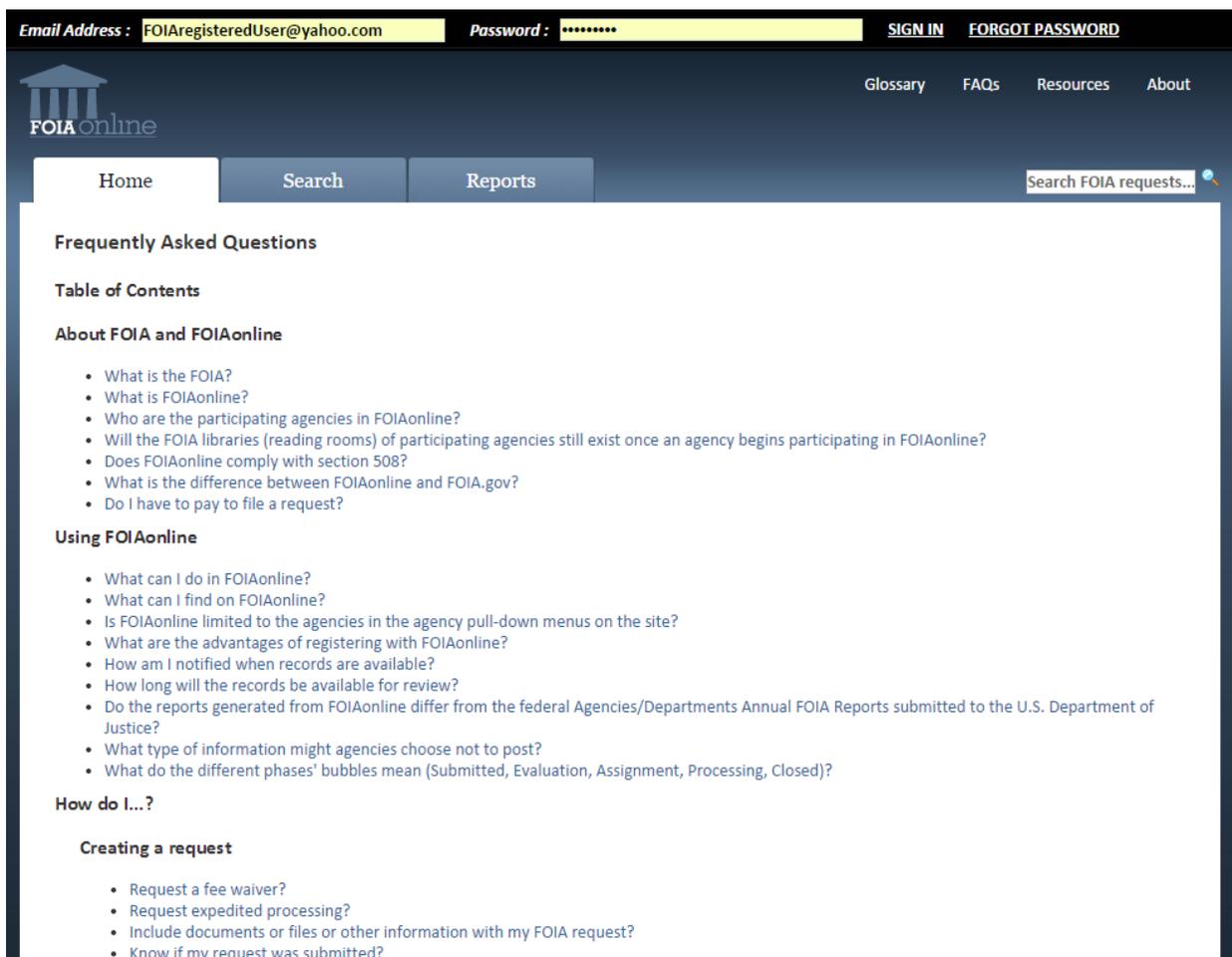
The screenshot shows the FOIAonline website interface. At the top, there are input fields for 'Email Address' and 'Password', along with 'SIGN IN' and 'FORGOT PASSWORD' links. The FOIAonline logo is on the left, and navigation links for 'News', 'Glossary', 'FAQs', and 'About' are on the right. Below the logo, there are 'Home', 'Search', and 'Reports' buttons, and a search bar labeled 'Search FOIA requests...'. The main content area is titled 'Glossary' and features a horizontal menu of letters from A to Z. Below the menu, several definitions are listed, including:
 

- Administrative Appeal** – An independent review of the initial determination made in response to a FOIA request.
- Annual FOIA Report** – A report required to be filed each year with the Department of Justice by all federal agencies.
- Backlog** – The number of requests or administrative appeals that are pending beyond the statutory time period for a response.
- Certification of Identity** – To ensure that one person's records are not inadvertently disclosed to another person.
- Chief FOIA Officer** – A designated high-level official within each agency who has overall responsibility for the agency's compliance with the FOIA.
- Chief FOIA Officer Report** – A report required to be filed with the Department of Justice which details each agency's progress in improving transparency and compliance with the FOIA.
- Commercial Requester** – Any person making a FOIA request that requests information for a use or a purpose that furthers a commercial, trade, or profit interest.
- Complex Request** – A FOIA request that an agency anticipates will involve a voluminous amount of material to review or will be time-consuming to process.
- Component** – For agencies that process requests on a decentralized basis, a "component" is an entity, also sometimes referred to as an Office, Division, Bureau, Center, or Directorate, within the agency that processes FOIA requests.
- Consultation** – When an agency locates a record that contains information of interest to another agency, it will ask for the views of that other agency on the disclosability of the records before any final determination is made.

### 3.1.2 FAQs

The FAQs page (see Exhibit 3-6 FAQs Page) contains answers to Frequently Asked Questions about FOIA and FOIAonline.

**Exhibit 3-6 FAQs Page**



**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Table of Contents**

**About FOIA and FOIAonline**

- What is the FOIA?
- What is FOIAonline?
- Who are the participating agencies in FOIAonline?
- Will the FOIA libraries (reading rooms) of participating agencies still exist once an agency begins participating in FOIAonline?
- Does FOIAonline comply with section 508?
- What is the difference between FOIAonline and FOIA.gov?
- Do I have to pay to file a request?

**Using FOIAonline**

- What can I do in FOIAonline?
- What can I find on FOIAonline?
- Is FOIAonline limited to the agencies in the agency pull-down menus on the site?
- What are the advantages of registering with FOIAonline?
- How am I notified when records are available?
- How long will the records be available for review?
- Do the reports generated from FOIAonline differ from the federal Agencies/Departments Annual FOIA Reports submitted to the U.S. Department of Justice?
- What type of information might agencies choose not to post?
- What do the different phases' bubbles mean (Submitted, Evaluation, Assignment, Processing, Closed)?

**How do I...?**

**Creating a request**

- Request a fee waiver?
- Request expedited processing?
- Include documents or files or other information with my FOIA request?
- Know if my request was submitted?

### 3.1.3 Resources

The Resources page (see Exhibit 3-7 Resources Page) contains videos on how to search for FOIA requests, make FOIA requests and Create an Account. The Public User Guide can also be found on this page.

**Exhibit 3-7 Resources Page**



**Resources**

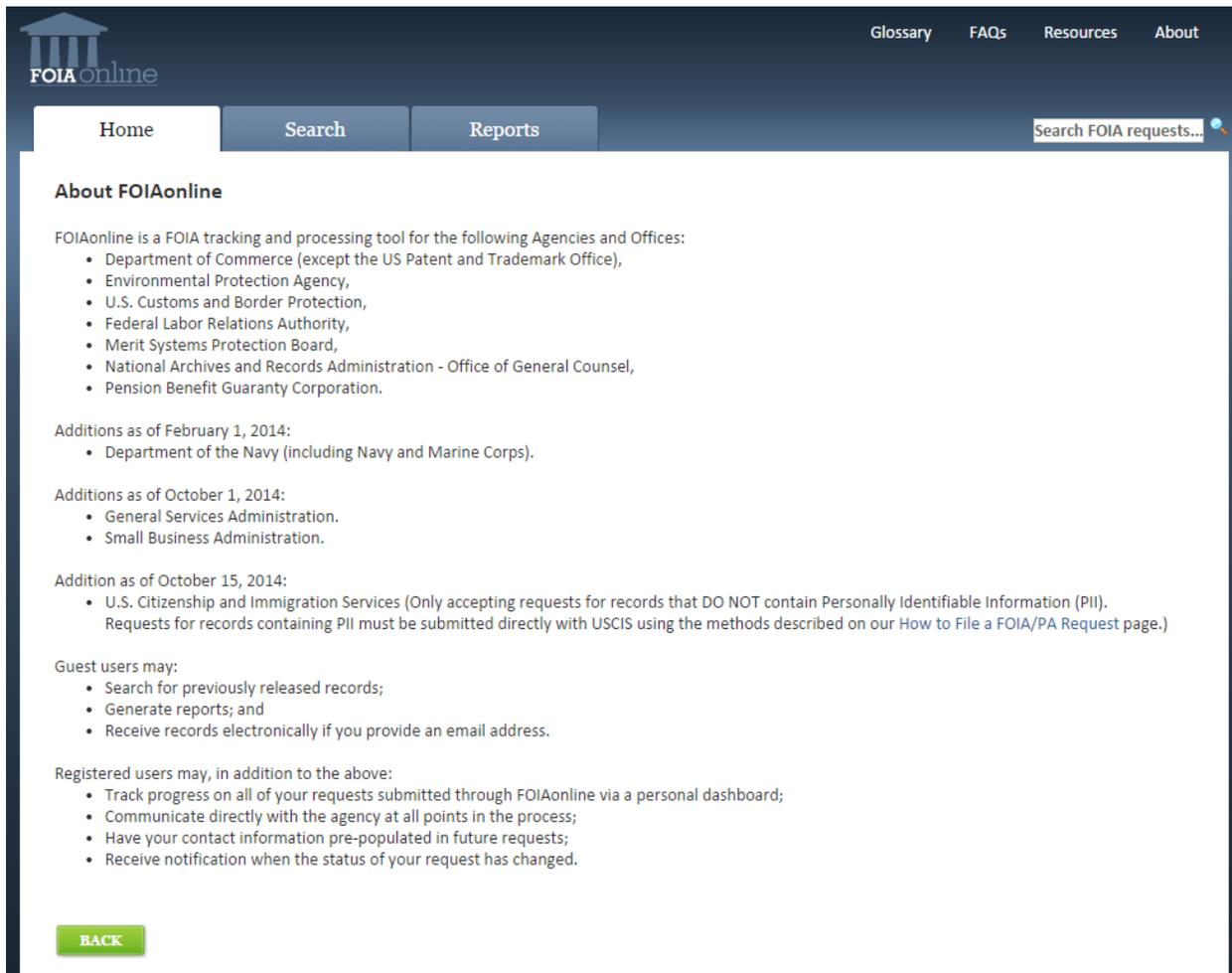
- Videos
  - Search FOIA Requests
  - Make a FOIA Request
  - Create an Account
- User Guides
  - Public User Guide

**BACK**

### 3.1.4 About

The About page offers the user more information concerning the benefits of FOIAonline, the new agencies that have joined, and the capabilities of guest users and registered users, as shown in Exhibit 3-8 About Page.

**Exhibit 3-8 About Page**



The screenshot shows the FOIAonline website interface. At the top left is the FOIAonline logo. To the right are navigation links: Glossary, FAQs, Resources, and About. Below these are three main menu buttons: Home, Search, and Reports. A search bar on the right contains the text 'Search FOIA requests...'. The main content area is titled 'About FOIAonline' and contains the following text and lists:

**About FOIAonline**

FOIAonline is a FOIA tracking and processing tool for the following Agencies and Offices:

- Department of Commerce (except the US Patent and Trademark Office),
- Environmental Protection Agency,
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection,
- Federal Labor Relations Authority,
- Merit Systems Protection Board,
- National Archives and Records Administration - Office of General Counsel,
- Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

Additions as of February 1, 2014:

- Department of the Navy (including Navy and Marine Corps).

Additions as of October 1, 2014:

- General Services Administration.
- Small Business Administration.

Addition as of October 15, 2014:

- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (Only accepting requests for records that DO NOT contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII). Requests for records containing PII must be submitted directly with USCIS using the methods described on our [How to File a FOIA/PA Request](#) page.)

Guest users may:

- Search for previously released records;
- Generate reports; and
- Receive records electronically if you provide an email address.

Registered users may, in addition to the above:

- Track progress on all of your requests submitted through FOIAonline via a personal dashboard;
- Communicate directly with the agency at all points in the process;
- Have your contact information pre-populated in future requests;
- Receive notification when the status of your request has changed.

At the bottom left of the content area is a green button labeled 'BACK'.

## 4 Reports

Reports are generated in real-time, providing a level of visibility that previously did not exist. Public users are able to run reports through selections in three different areas: Select Report, Select Agency, and Select Time Period.

Select Report provides nine report options which display metrics from the Annual Report through the use of graphs and charts. Those nine reports are:

1. Requests (Disposition, Expedited Processing)
2. Exemptions (Exemption 3 Statutes)
3. Appeals (Disposition, Disposition Exemptions, Disposition Other Than Exemptions, Disposition “Other” Reasons, Response Time, Ten Oldest Pending)
4. Processing Time (Requests Granted, Simple Requests, Complex Requests, Expedited Requests, Pending Requests, Ten Oldest Requests)
5. Fee Waiver
6. Administration (FOIA Personnel, FOIA Costs)
7. Backlog
8. Consultations (Ten Oldest)
9. Comparisons (Requests Backlogged, Administrative Appeals, Appeals Backlogged)

### 4.1 Report Criteria

---

Public users are able to run reports through selections in three different areas: Report Type, Agency, and Time Period, as shown in Exhibit 4-1 Report Criteria. Multiple agencies can be selected from the Agency multi select box by pressing the CTRL button on the keyboard and selecting the desired agencies. An agency can be deselected in the same manner. The Time Period provides From and To date entry fields so the report information can be specified down to the month. Clicking either entry field opens a date picker for the selection of the appropriate time period.

1. Select a Report Type from the drop down menu.
2. Select an Agency to run the report on.
3. Press the Create Report button to generate the selected report.

### Exhibit 4-1 Report Criteria

#### Reports

[Information you can search varies by agency.](#)

\* indicates a required field.

#### Report Criteria

<b>1</b>	* Report Type :	Requests
<b>2</b>	* Agency :	U.S. Customs and Border Protection U.S. Department of Commerce General Services Administration Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation U.S. Small Business Administration
<b>3</b>	* Time Period :	<input type="text"/> to <input type="text"/>

**CREATE REPORT**

## 4.2 Description of Public Reports

---

The Public has access to a variety of reports that display corresponding criteria, including: Requests, Exemptions, Appeals, Processing Time, Fee Waiver, Administration, Backlog, Consultations, and Comparisons reports.

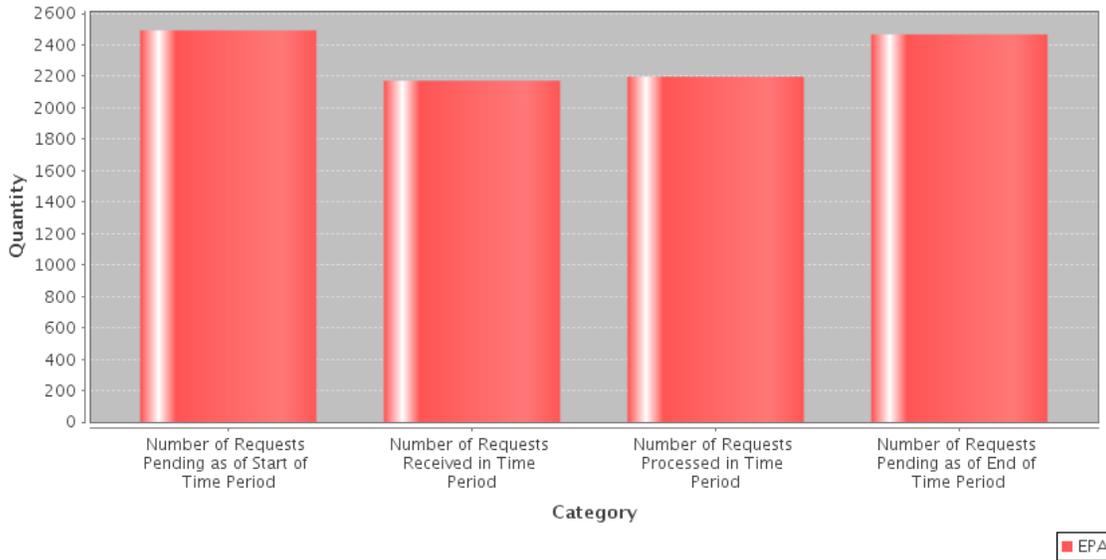
Each report, if applicable, displays both a bar graph and a table of the data, as shown in Exhibit 4-2 Public Report. Each agency selected displays in the bar graph in its own color, and each agency's data displays in a table below the bar graph. Hide and unhide agency tables by clicking the "Hide" and "Show" links next to the Agency name. Data can be exported to .csv or .xls files by clicking the corresponding link in the Export Options field on the bottom of each table.

### Exhibit 4-2 Public Report

#### Received, Processed and Pending FOIA Requests

[Information you can search varies by agency.](#)

Time Period: October 01, 2014 to February 10, 2015



#### EPA - U.S Environmental Protection Agency *(hide)*

	Number of Requests Pending as of Start of Time Period	Number of Requests Received in Time Period	Number of Requests Processed in Time Period	Number of Requests Pending as of End of Time Period
HQ	960	386	341	1005
R1	21	57	55	23
R2	386	460	393	453
R3	495	183	342	336
R4	87	166	124	129
R5	118	342	333	127
R6	92	121	130	83
R7	47	97	92	52
R8	53	57	73	37
R9	60	184	160	84
R10	171	107	151	127
EPA (direct)	3	12	4	11
TOTAL	2493	2172	2198	2467

Export options: [CSV](#) | [Excel](#)

[BACK](#)

Press the Back button to return to the Report Criteria page.

## 4.2.1 Requests

---

There are 3 types of Request reports: Requests, Disposition, and Expedited Processing.

The Requests report is titled Received, Processed, and Pending FOIA Requests and displays in columns for Number of Requests Pending as of Start of the Time Period, Number of Requests Received in the Time Period, Number of Requests Processed in the Time Period, and Number of Requests Pending as of End of the Time Period. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

### 4.2.1.1 Disposition

---

The report is titled Disposition of FOIA Requests – All Processed Requests and displays in columns for Full Grants, Partial Grants/Partial Denials, Full Denials Based on Exemptions, and Full Denials Based on Reasons Other than Exemptions. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

### 4.2.1.2 Expedited Processing

---

The report is titled Requests for Expedited Processing and displays in columns for Number Granted, Number Denied, Median Number of Days to Adjudicate, Average Number of Days to Adjudicate, and Number Adjudicated within 10 Calendar Days. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

## 4.2.2 Exemptions

---

There are 2 types of Exemptions reports: Exemptions and Exemption 3 Statutes.

The Exemptions report is titled Disposition of FOIA Requests - Number of Times Exemptions Applied and displays in columns for Ex.1, Ex. 2, Ex. 3, Ex. 4, Ex. 5, Ex. 6, Ex. 7(A), Ex. 7(B), Ex. 7(C), Ex. 7(D), Ex. 7(E), Ex. 7(F), Ex. 8, Ex. 9. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

### 4.2.2.1 Exemption 3 Statutes

---

The report is titled Exemption 3 Statutes and displays only a chart with the columns Statute, Type of Information Withheld, Case Citation, Number of Times Relied Upon per Component, and Total Number of Times Relied upon by Agency.

## 4.2.3 Appeals

---

There are 7 types of Appeals reports:

1. Appeals
2. Disposition
3. Exemptions
4. Disposition Other Than Exemptions
5. Disposition "Other" Reasons
6. Response Time
7. Ten Oldest Appeals.

The Appeals report is titled Received, Processed and Pending Administrative Appeals and displays in columns for Number of Appeals Pending as of Start of the Time Period, Number of Appeals Received in the Time Period, Number of Appeals Processed in the Time Period, and

Number of Appeals Pending as of End of the Time Period. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.3.1 Disposition

---

The bar graph is titled Disposition of Administrative Appeals -- All Processed Appeals and displays in columns for Number Affirmed on Appeal, Number Partially Affirmed & Partially Reserved/Remanded on Appeal, Number Completely Reserved/Remanded on Appeal, Number of Appeals Closed for Other Reasons, and Total. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.3.2 Exemptions

---

The bar graph is titled Appeal Determinations - Based on the Use of a FOIA Exemption and displays in columns for Ex.1, Ex. 2, Ex. 3, Ex. 4, Ex. 5, Ex. 6, Ex. 7(A), Ex. 7(B), Ex. 7(C), Ex. 7(D), Ex. 7(E), Ex. 7(F), Ex. 8, and Ex. 9. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.3.3 Disposition Other Than Exemptions

---

The bar graph is titled Appeal Determinations Based on Reasons Other Than the Use of a FOIA Exemption and displays in columns for No Records, All Records Referred, Request Withdrawn, Fee-Related Reason, Not Reasonably Described, Improper FOIA Request, Not Agency Record, Duplicate Request, Request in Litigation, Appeal Based Solely on Denial for Expedited Processing, and Other. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.3.4 Disposition "Other" Reasons

---

There is no graph for Disposition "Other" Reasons and instead a chart displays with the columns Component, Description, No. of Times Used and Total.

#### 4.2.3.5 Response Time

---

The bar graph is titled Response Time for Administrative Appeals and displays in columns for Median Number of Days, Average Number of Days, Lowest Number of Days, and Highest Number of Days. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.3.6 Ten Oldest Appeals

---

There is no graph for Ten Oldest Pending and instead a chart displays with the columns, Component 10th Oldest and Number of Days Pending, 9<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Oldest and Number of Days Pending.

#### 4.2.3.7 Processing Time

---

There are 7 types of Processing Time reports:

1. Processing Time
2. Requests Granted
3. Simple Requests
4. Complex Requests
5. Expedited Requests
6. Pending Requests

## 7. Ten Oldest Requests

The Processing Time report is titled Processed Requests - Response Time for All Processed Perfected Requests and displays in columns for Simple – Lowest Days, Simple – Highest Days, Complex – Lowest Days, Complex – Highest Days, Expedited – Lowest Days, and Expedited – Highest Days. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

### 4.2.3.8 Requests Granted

---

The report is titled Requests Granted - Response Time for Perfected Requests in Which Information Was Granted and displays in columns for Simple – Lowest Days, Simple – Highest Days, Complex – Lowest Days, Complex – Highest Days, Expedited – Lowest Days, and Expedited – Highest Days. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

### 4.2.3.9 Simple Requests

---

The report is titled Processing Simple Requests -- Response Time in Day Increments and displays in columns for 1-20 Days, 21-40 Days, 41-60 Days, 61-80 Days, 81-100 Days, 101-120 Days, 121-140 Days, 141-160 Days, 161-180 Days, 181-200 Days, 201-300 Days, 301-400 Days, 400+ Days, and Total. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

### 4.2.3.10 Complex Requests

---

The report is titled Complex Requests -- Response Time in Day Increments and displays in columns for 1-20 Days, 21-40 Days, 41-60 Days, 61-80 Days, 81-100 Days, 101-120 Days, 121-140 Days, 141-160 Days, 161-180 Days, 181-200 Days, 201-300 Days, 301-400 Days, 400+ Days, and Total. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

### 4.2.3.11 Expedited Requests

---

The report is titled Expedited Requests -- Response Time in Day Increments and displays in columns for 1-20 Days, 21-40 Days, 41-60 Days, 61-80 Days, 81-100 Days, 101-120 Days, 121-140 Days, 141-160 Days, 161-180 Days, 181-200 Days, 201-300 Days, 301-400 Days, 400+ Days, and Total. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

### 4.2.3.12 Pending Requests

---

The report is titled Pending Requests - All Pending Perfected Requests and displays in columns for Simple – Number Pending, Simple – Median No. of Days, Simple – Average No. of Days, Complex – Number Pending, Complex – Median No. of Days, Complex – Average No. of Days, Expedited – Number Pending, Expedited – Median No. of Days, Expedited – Average No. of Days,. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

### 4.2.3.13 Ten Oldest Requests

---

The report is titled Pending Requests - Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Requests and displays only a chart with the columns Component, <blank>, 10th, 9th, 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th, 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and Oldest Request.

## 4.2.4 Fee Waiver

---

The report is titled Requests for Fee Waivers and displays in columns for Number Granted, Number Denied, Median Number of Days to Adjudicate, and Average Number of Days to Adjudicate. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.5 Administration

---

There are 2 types of Administration reports: FOIA Personnel and FOIA Costs.

##### 4.2.5.1 FOIA Personnel

---

The report is titled FOIA Personnel and displays in columns for Number of 'Full-Time FOIA Employees', Number of 'Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees', and Total Number of 'Full-Time FOIA Staff'. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

##### 4.2.5.2 FOIA Costs

---

The report is titled Total Costs and Fees and displays in columns for Processing Costs, Litigation-Related Costs, Total Costs, Collected Amount, and Collected Percentage. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.6 Backlog

---

The report is titled Backlogged Requests and Appeals and displays in columns for Number of Backlogged Requests as of the End of Time Period and Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Time Period. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.7 Consultations

---

There are 2 types of Consultations reports: Consultations and Ten Oldest Consultations. The Consultations report is titled Consultations on FOIA Requests Received, Processed and Pending Consultations and displays in columns for Number of Consultations Pending as of Start of the Time Period, Number of Consultations Received in Time Period, Number of Consultations Processed in Time Period, and Number of Consultations Pending as of End of Time Period. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

##### 4.2.7.1 Ten Oldest

---

The report is titled Pending Consultations - Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Consultations and displays only a chart displays with the columns Component <blank>, 10th, 9th, 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th, 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and Oldest Request.

#### 4.2.8 Comparisons

---

Selecting Comparisons from the Report Type dropdown menu expands two new date fields, as shown in Exhibit 4-3 Comparisons Report Dates: Previous Time Period and Current Time Period.

### Exhibit 4-3 Comparisons Report Dates

Reports

**Report Criteria**

\* Report Type:  ▼

\* Agency:  ▲  
  
  
 ▼

\* Previous Time Period:  📅 to  📅

\* Current Time Period:  📅 to  📅

[CREATE REPORT](#)

There are 4 types of Comparisons reports: Requests, Requests Backlogged, Administrative Appeals, and Appeals Backlogged.

The report is titled Number of Requests Received and Processed Comparison and displays in columns for Number of Requests Received During Time Period Last Year, Number of Requests Received During Time Period From Current Year, Number of Requests Processed During Time Period Last Year, and Number of Requests Processed During Time Period From Current Year. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.8.1 Requests Backlogged

The report is titled Number of Backlogged Requests Received and Processed Comparison and displays in columns for Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Time Period from Previous Year and Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Time Period from Current Year. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.8.2 Administrative Appeals

The report is titled Number of Administrative Appeals Received and Processed Comparison and displays in columns for Number of Appeals Received During Time Period Last Year, Number of Appeals Received During Time Period From Current Year, Number of Appeals Processed During Time Period Last Year, and Number of Appeals Processed During Time Period From Current Year. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

#### 4.2.8.3 Appeals Backlogged

The report is titled Number of Backlogged Appeals Received and Processed Comparison and displays in columns for Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Time Period from Previous Year and Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Time Period from Current Year. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.