

Page 1 - Question 1 - Yes or No

Have you already filed a Freedom of Information Act request? (click on "yes" or "no" and then click on "Next")

- Yes [\[Skip to 2\]](#)
- No [\[Skip to 8\]](#)

Page 2 - Question 2 - Yes or No

Did you request records about yourself?

- Yes [\[Skip to 7\]](#)
- No [\[Skip to 3\]](#)

Page 3 - Question 3 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

What is the main reason you are contacting OGIS? (if you need information about more than one of the following, you can tell us about it later)

- I have not received some or all of the documents I have requested [\[Skip to 4\]](#)
 - I have a problem with one of the following: a fee or fee waiver request or a request for expedited processing [\[Skip to 46\]](#)
 - Do you have a problem or issue not listed above? Please explain
-

[\[Skip Unconditionally to 46\]](#)

Page 4 - Question 4 - Choice - One Answer (Bullets)

[Mandatory]

What is the status of your request? (click on one of the following and then click on Next)

- I have not yet filed a FOIA request [\[Skip to 19\]](#)
 - I filed a request but have heard nothing from the agency [\[Skip to 15\]](#)
 - I filed a request, was notified by the agency that it had been received but the decision has been delayed [\[Skip to 25\]](#)
 - I filed a request and received a decision from the agency [\[Skip to 34\]](#)
 - I received a decision from the agency and am appealing it [\[Skip to 9\]](#)
 - I have done everything. I have filed a request, received a decision from the agency, appealed the agency decision and the appeal was partly or completely denied [\[Skip to 46\]](#)
 - Do you have a problem or issue not listed above? Please explain
-

[\[Skip Unconditionally to 46\]](#)

Page 5 - Heading

This would be beginning of wizard on fee waiver issues

[Unconditional Skip to End](#)

This would be beginning of wizard on issues involving expedited processing

Unconditional Skip to End

Thank you for bringing your concerns to the attention of OGIS. As you may be aware, the OGIS mission is to review of agency compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and mediation of FOIA disputes. Unfortunately, requests for your own records, which is considered a first-party request, or a Privacy Act request, fall outside the scope of our office's mission and we are generally unable to assist you with this matter. While you believe that your request is a FOIA request, the agency to which you submitted your request will process your request under both the Privacy Act and FOIA in order to give you the fullest extent of access to the information you requested. If you believe that OGIS might be able to offer you additional helpful information, you are free to contact us at ogis@nara.gov or 1(877)684-6448.

Unconditional Skip to End

If your goal is to file a FOIA request to obtain records from a Federal agency, you can find user-friendly, step-by-step guides at: <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/foia/tips.html> and <http://www.rcfp.org/fogg/index.php> . You can find a list of agencies' FOIA contacts at: <http://www.justice.gov/oip/foiacontacts.htm>. Feel free to contact OGIS again if you have a problem after you have filed a FOIA request.

Unconditional Skip to End

A requester or agency may contact OGIS for assistance at any time, but the goal is for OGIS to allow, whenever practical, the requester to exhaust his or her remedies within the agency, including the appeal process. When requesters have disputes with FOIA specialists or are unsuccessful in making contact with the appropriate agency staff, their next call should be to the agency's FOIA Public Liaison, whose role is to assist with resolving disputes. You can find a list of agencies' FOIA public liaisons at: <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm>. If you think OGIS can be of assistance, feel free to contact us at ogis@nara.gov or 1(877) 684-6448 or click on Next.

[Skip Unconditionally to 46]

If you feel that you need our help, please fill out the form at ____ (This would provide link to Case tracking intake form (NA Form 10004))

Unconditional Skip to End

FOIA requires that an agency respond to a FOIA request within 20 business days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays. This time period does not begin until the request is actually received by the agency's office that handles FOIA requests. If you have not received your response within the time frame, please **first** contact the agency's FOIA Public Liaison, whose role is to assist with resolving disputes. A list of agency Public Liaisons is available at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm> If you still need OGIS assistance please feel free to contact us at ogis@nara.gov or 1(877) 684-6448 or click on Next.

[Skip Unconditionally to 46]

Have you contacted the agency FOIA Public Liaison? A list of these points of contact is accessible at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm>

- Yes [Skip to 18]
- No [Skip to 19]

Please wait until the time deadline passes. If you hear nothing at that time, you should contact the FOIA Public Liaison. A list of FOIA Public Liaisons is available at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm>

Unconditional Skip to End

Please contact OGIS at ogis@nara.gov or 1(877)684-6448.

Unconditional Skip to End

Before we can help you further, you should either file a request with the agency you believe has the records or contact that agency's FOIA Public Liaison. Every agency has a FOIA Public Liaison whose role is to assist with filing a request or assist with the status of your request to that agency. A list of such persons is available at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm>

Unconditional Skip to End

Has the agency notified you that it needs more time?

- Yes [Skip to 22]
- No [Skip to 21]

You should contact the agency's FOIA Public Liaison and explain that the time limit has passed. A list of Public Liaisons is available at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm>

Unconditional Skip to End

If the time limit has passed and the agency has told you it will need more time, you should give them a reasonable time to respond. If, at some point, you believe that they are not responding properly, you should contact the agency's FOIA Public Liaison before contacting OGIS. A list of Public Liaisons is available at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm>.

Unconditional Skip to End

Has the time limit passed?

- Yes [Skip to 25]
- No [Skip to 26]

FOIA requires that an agency respond to a FOIA request within 20 business days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays; has that time limit passed?

- Yes [Skip to 27]
- No [Skip to 26]

Please wait until the 20 business days have passed. If you have not received your response within the time frame, please first contact the agency's FOIA Public Liaison, whose role is to assist with resolving disputes. A list of FOIA Public Liaisons is available at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm> If you still need OGIS assistance please feel free to contact us at ogis@nara.gov or 1(877) 684-6448 or click on Next

Unconditional Skip to End

An agency's FOIA Public Liaison whose role is to assist with resolving disputes. Please first contact the liaison for assistance using this list: <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm> If you still need OGIS assistance, please feel free to contact us at ogis@nara.gov or 1(877) 684-6448 or click on Next

[Skip Unconditionally to 46]

What was the reason?

- Consult
 - Backlog
 - Negotiating scope
 - Other, please specify
-

[Skip Unconditionally to 29]

Please contact the agency's FOIA Public Liaison.. A list of such persons is at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm>

Unconditional Skip to End

Have you filed an appeal?

- Yes **[Skip to 36]**
- No **[Skip to 35]**

OGIS is here to assist at any point in the process, however, whenever practical, OGIS encourages requesters to exhaust all administrative remedies before pursuing facilitation or mediation through our office. Please file your appeal with the agency and feel free to come back to OGIS if you need additional assistance.

Unconditional Skip to End

What happened with the appeal?

- I have appealed but the agency has not yet made a decision. **[Skip to 37]**
- My appeal has been decided **[Skip to 39]**

Agencies have up to 20 days to respond to an appeal. If that time has passed please first contact the agency's FOIA Public Liaison whose role it is to assist in resolving disputes. A list of agency Public Liaisons is accessible at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm> If you think OGIS can be of assistance, please feel free to contact us at ogis@nara.gov or 1(877) 684-6448 or click on Next

[Skip Unconditionally to 46]

Thanks for getting in touch with OGIS. We will get back to you within three days.

Unconditional Skip to End

How can OGIS be of assistance?

- I would like you to mediate this dispute with the agency **[Skip to 46]**
- Other, please specify

.....
[Skip Unconditionally to 46]

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This would provide link to Case tracking intake form (NA Form 10004)

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Thank you for getting in touch with OGIS. We will get back to you within three days.

Unconditional Skip to End

Page 46 - Question 14 - Open Ended - One or More Lines with Prompt

If you need our assistance, please provide us with the following information and we will get back to you as soon as possible. You should know that your request for records under the Freedom of Information Act is maintained by each agency in a system of records governed by the Privacy Act of 1974. Therefore, OGIS needs your consent so that OGIS can work with the agency to which you made your request. If you provide us with the following information, we will e-mail you the consent language that is required.

-  First name:
-  Last name:
-  Email address:
-  Telephone:

Page 46 - Question 15 - Open Ended - Comments Box

What is the best way for us to get in touch with you?

Page 46 - Question 16 - Open Ended - Comments Box

Very briefly, why do you need our help?

Thank You Page

Thank you for contacting OGIS. We hope that this has provided useful information to you. OGIS usually intervenes only after the following:

- -You have requested documents from an agency
- -The agency has made a decision on whether it will release what you are looking for
- -You have appealed the agency's decision, and
- -You have received a decision on the appeal.

This sounds more complicated than it is but if you have a problem while waiting for a decision on your request or a decision on the appeal, you should contact the FOIA Public Liaison at the agency that has the records you are requesting. A list of persons in agencies who can be of assistance can be found at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/public-liaisons.htm> If you need more information about making a FOIA request, please contact us or take a look at material on our Web site at <http://www.archives.gov/ogis>

How this Works:

As the FOIA ombudsman, OGIS provides facilitation and, where appropriate, mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and agencies. Once a case has been opened in our office, we conduct fact-finding to gather information and flesh out the issues. This process could include consulting with the requester and contacting the agency to which the original request was made. Depending on what we discover during this phase, OGIS may provide the requester with information regarding the processing of the request and/or appeal, work directly with the agency to resolve the issue, or offer mediation services if our attempts at facilitation are unsuccessful. The requester's participation, and that of the agency, is completely voluntary. You should also know that OGIS does not have authority to order parties to participate in mediation or to order an agency to release material.

Close Page

If you need further assistance, please feel free to contact the Office of Government Information Services at ogis@nara.gov or 1(877) 684-6448