

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

# **Freedom of Information Act Annual Report**

## **Fiscal Year 2022**



# U.S. Office of Personnel Management Freedom of Information Act Annual Report FY 2022

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## **I. Basic Information Regarding Report**

1. For questions concerning this report please contact:

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2. The electronic address for this report on OPM's website, at:  
<https://www.opm.gov/information-management/freedom-of-information-act/#url=Reports>.
3. A paper copy of this report may be obtained from the address listed above.

## **II. Making a FOIA Request**

1. Before submitting FOIA requests, we encourage you to review OPM's website for publicly available information that may be responsive to your interests. FOIA requests can be submitted to OPM's FOIA Requester Service Center by mail or email to the contact information below. Email submission is preferred. Additional information on how to make a FOIA request to OPM is available on OPM's FOIA website, at:  
<https://www.opm.gov/information-management/freedom-of-information-act/>.

FOIA Requester Service Center  
Office of Privacy and Information Management  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)  
Room 5H35  
1900 E Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20415-7900  
[FOIA@opm.gov](mailto:FOIA@opm.gov)

2. A FOIA request can be made for any OPM agency record. This does not mean, however, that OPM will disclose every record sought as certain FOIA exemptions may apply. For example, OPM may withhold personally identifiable “third party” information contained within personnel files under FOIA Exemption 6.
3. OPM’s FOIA Regulations and fee schedule are available at:  
<https://ecfr.io/Title-05/pt5.1.294>.

### **III. Acronyms, Definitions, and Exemptions**

1. Provide any agency-specific acronyms or terms used in this Report.
  - a. **OPM** – Office of Personnel Management
2. Include the following definitions of terms used in this Report:
  - a. **Administrative Appeal** – a request to a federal agency asking that it review at a higher administrative level a FOIA determination made by the agency at the initial request level.
  - b. **Average Number** – the number obtained by dividing the sum of a group of numbers by the quantity of numbers in the group. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the average number is 8.
  - c. **Backlog** – the number of requests or administrative appeals that are pending at an agency at the end of the fiscal year that are beyond the statutory time period for a response.
  - d. **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. The FOIA now

requires that agencies include in their Annual FOIA Report data for both the agency overall and for each principal component of the agency.

- e. **Consultation** – the procedure whereby the agency responding to a FOIA request first forwards a record to another agency for its review because that other agency has an interest in the document. Once the agency in receipt of the consultation finishes its review of the record, it responds back to the agency that forwarded it. That agency, in turn, will then respond to the FOIA requester.
- f. **Exemption 3 Statute** – a federal statute that exempts information from disclosure and which the agency relies on to withhold information under subsection (b)(3) of the FOIA.
- g. **FOIA Request** – a FOIA request is generally a request to a federal agency for access to records concerning another person (i.e., a “third-party” request), or concerning an organization, or a particular topic of interest. FOIA requests also include requests made by requesters seeking records concerning themselves (i.e., “first-party” requests) when those requesters are not subject to the Privacy Act, such as non-U.S. citizens. Moreover, because all first-party requesters should be afforded the benefit of both the access provisions of the FOIA as well as those of the Privacy Act, FOIA requests also include any first-party requests where an agency determines that it must search beyond its Privacy Act “systems of records” or where a Privacy Act exemption applies, and the agency looks to FOIA to afford the greatest possible access. All requests which require the agency to utilize the FOIA in responding to the requester are included in this Report. Additionally, a FOIA request includes records referred to the agency for processing and direct response to the requester. It does not, however, include records for which the agency has received a consultation from another agency. (Consultations are reported separately in Section XII of this Report.)
- h. **Full Grant** – an agency decision to disclose all records in full in response to a FOIA request.

- i. **Full Denial** – an agency decision not to release any records in response to a FOIA request because the records are exempt in their entirety under one or more of the FOIA exemptions, or because of a procedural reason, such as when no records could be located.
- j. **Median Number** – the middle, not average, number. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the median number is 7.
- k. **Multi-Track Processing** – a system in which simple requests requiring relatively minimal review are placed in one processing track and more voluminous and complex requests are placed in one or more other tracks. Requests granted expedited processing are placed in yet another track. Requests in each track are processed on a first in/first out basis.
  - i. **Expedited Processing** – an agency will process a FOIA request on an expedited basis when a requester satisfies the requirements for expedited processing as set forth in the statute and in agency regulations.
  - ii. **Simple Request** – a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in its fastest (non-expedited) track based on the low volume and/or simplicity of the records requested.
  - iii. **Complex Request** – a FOIA request that an agency using multitrack processing places in a slower track based on the high volume and/or complexity of the records requested.
- l. **Partial Grant/Partial Denial** – in response to a FOIA request, an agency decision to disclose portions of the records and to withhold other portions that are exempt under the FOIA, or to otherwise deny a portion of the request for a procedural reason.
- m. **Pending Request or Pending Administrative Appeal** – a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has not taken final action in all respects.
- n. **Perfect Request** – a request for records which reasonably describes such records and is made in accordance with published rules stating the time, place, fees (if any) and procedures to be followed.

- o. **Processed Request or Processed Administrative Appeal** – a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has taken final action in all respects.
  - p. **Range in Number of Days** – the lowest and highest number of days to process requests or administrative appeals.
  - q. **Time Limits** – the time period in the statute for an agency to respond to a FOIA request (ordinarily twenty working days from receipt of a perfected FOIA request).
3. Include the following concise descriptions of the nine FOIA exemptions:
- a. **Exemption 1:** classified national defense and foreign relations information
  - b. **Exemption 2:** internal agency rules and practices
  - c. **Exemption 3:** information that is prohibited from disclosure by another federal law
  - d. **Exemption 4:** trade secrets and other confidential business information
  - e. **Exemption 5:** inter-agency or intra-agency communications that are protected by legal privileges
  - f. **Exemption 6:** information involving matters of personal privacy
  - g. **Exemption 7:** records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, to the extent that the production of those records (A) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings, (B) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, (C) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, (E) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual



h. **Exemption 8:** information relating to the supervision of financial institutions

i. **Exemption 9:** geological information on wells.

4. Agency Component Abbreviations

<b>Component Abbreviation</b>	<b>Component Name</b>
OPM CO	OPM Central Office

### IV. Exemption 3 Statutes

Statute	Type of Information Withheld	Case Citation	Agency / Component	Number of Times Relied upon by Agency / Component	Total Number of Times Relied upon by Agency Overall
<b>50 U.S.C. § 3024(i)(1)</b>	Intelligence sources and methods	CIA v. Sims, 471 U.S. 159, 167 (1985).	OPM CO	1	1

### V. FOIA Requests

#### A. Received, Processed and Pending FOIA Requests

Agency / Component	Number of Requests Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Received in Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Processed in Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Pending as of End of Fiscal Year
<b>OPM CO</b>	208	456	508	156
<b>Agency Overall</b>	208	456	508	156

After reviewing its database, OPM updated the number of requests pending at the start of the Fiscal Year.

#### B. Disposition of FOIA Requests

(1) All Processed Requests

Agency / Component	Number of Full Grants	Number of Partial Grants / Partial Denials	Number of Full Denials Based on Exemptions	Number of Full Denials Based on Reasons Other than Exemptions									Total
				No Records	All Records Referred to Another Component or Agency	Request Withdrawn	Fee-Related Reason	Records not Reasonably Described	Improper FOIA Request for Other Reason	Not Agency Record	Duplicate Request	Other *Explain in Chart Below	
<b>OPM CO</b>	130	65	62	105	9	76	5	6	14	25	11	0	508
<b>Agency Overall</b>	130	65	62	105	9	76	5	6	14	25	11	0	508

(2) "Other" Reasons for "Full Denials Based on Reasons Other Than Exemptions"

Agency / Component	Description of "Other" Reasons for Denials from Chart B(1)	Number of Times "Other" Reason Was Relied Upon	Total
OPM CO	N/A	0	0
Agency Overall			0

(3) Number of Times Exemptions Applied

Agency / Component	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
OPM CO	0	3	1	8	17	117	0	0	5	1	3	0	0	0
Agency Overall	0	3	1	8	17	117	0	0	5	1	3	0	0	0

## VI. Administrative Appeals of Initial Determinations of FOIA Requests

### A. Received, Processed, and Pending Administrative Appeals

Agency / Component	Number of Appeals Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Received in Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Processed in Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Pending as of End of Fiscal Year
OPM CO	1	12	9	4
Agency Overall	1	12	9	4

**B. Disposition of Administrative Appeals—All Processed Appeals**

Agency / Component	Number Affirmed on Appeal	Number Partially Affirmed & Partially Reversed/Remanded on Appeal	Number Completely Reversed/Remanded on Appeal	Number of Appeals Closed for Other Reasons	Total
OPM CO	1	1	4	3	9
Agency Overall	1	1	4	3	9

**C. Reasons for Denial on Appeal, Response Times for Administrative Appeals, and Ten Oldest Pending Administrative Appeals**

*(1) Number of Times Exemptions Applied*

Agency / Component	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
OPM CO	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Agency Overall	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

*(2) Reasons Other than Exemptions*

Agency / Component	No Records	Records Referred at Initial Request Level	Request Withdrawn	Fee-Related Reason	Records not Reasonably Described	Improper Request for Other Reasons	Not Agency Record	Duplicate Request or Appeal	Request in Litigation	Appeal Based Solely on Denial of Request for Expedited Processing	Other *Explain in chart below
OPM CO	2	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Agency Overall	2	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2

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(3) "Other" Reasons

Agency / Component	Description of "Other" Reasons for Denial on Appeal from Chart C(2)	Number of Times "Other" Reason Was Relied Upon	Total
OPM CO	Moot	2	2
Agency Overall			2

(4) Response Time for Administrative Appeals

Agency / Component	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
OPM CO	143	160	34	260
Agency Overall	143	160	34	260

(5) Ten Oldest Pending Administrative Appeals

Agency / Component	Date or Days	10th Oldest Appeal	9th	8th	7th	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	Oldest Appeal
OPM CO	Date of Appeal	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2022-09-16	2022-09-14	2022-08-17	2022-04-11
	Number of Days Pending	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	13	32	120
Agency Overall	Date of Appeal	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2022-09-16	2022-09-14	2022-08-17	2022-04-11
	Number of Days Pending	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	13	32	120

## VII. FOIA Requests— Response Times for Processed and Pending Requests

### A. Processed Requests—All Processed Perfected Requests

Agency / Component	Simple				Complex				Expedited Processing			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
OPM CO	31	84	1	1242	332	395	1	1995	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Agency Overall	31	84	1	1242	332	395	1	1995	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

### B. Processed Requests—Response time for Perfected Requests in Which Information Was Granted

Agency / Component	Simple				Complex				Expedited Processing			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
OPM CO	45	106	3	1242	257	267	1	1416	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Agency Overall	45	106	3	1242	257	267	1	1416	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

### C. Processed Requests—Response Tim in Day Increments

#### (1) Processed Simple Requests Response Time in Day Increments

Agency / Component	<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	401+ Days	Total
OPM CO	117	64	32	27	25	14	8	3	5	7	9	5	13	329
Agency Overall	117	64	32	27	25	14	8	3	5	7	9	5	13	329

#### (2) Processed Complex Requests—Response Time in Day Increments

Agency / Component	<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	401+ Days	Total
OPM CO	18	4	9	4	3	0	5	1	3	4	19	19	65	154

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Agency / Component	<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	401+ Days	Total
Agency Overall	18	4	9	4	3	0	5	1	3	4	19	19	65	154

(3) Processed Requests Granted Expedited Processing—Response Time in Day Increments

Agency / Component	<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	401+ Days	Total
OPM CO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Agency Overall	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D. Pending Requests—All Pending Perfected Requests

Agency / Component	Simple			Complex			Expedited Processing		
	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days
OPM CO	85	71	99	67	290	339	0	N/A	N/A
Agency Overall	85	71	99	67	290	339	0	N/A	N/A

E. Pending Requests—Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Requests

Agency / Component	Date or Days	10th Oldest Request	9th	8th	7th	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	Oldest Request
OPM CO	Date of Receipt	2020-08-12	2020-08-03	2020-05-11	2019-10-10	2019-09-11	2019-07-30	2019-07-15	2019-04-05	2018-05-21	2016-06-10
	Number of Days Pending	537	544	602	747	768	798	809	878	1097	1584
Agency Overall	Date of Receipt	2020-08-12	2020-08-03	2020-05-11	2019-10-10	2019-09-11	2019-07-30	2019-07-15	2019-04-05	2018-05-21	2016-06-10

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Agency / Component	Date or Days	10th Oldest Request	9th	8th	7th	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	Oldest Request
	Number of Days Pending	537	544	602	747	768	798	809	878	1097	1584



## VIII. Requests for Expedited Processing and Requests for Fee Waivers

### A. Requests for Expedited Processing

Agency / Component	Number Granted	Number Denied	Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	Average Number of Days to Adjudicate	Number Adjudicated Within Ten Calendar Days
OPM CO	0	5	1	2	5
Agency Overall	0	5	1	2	5

OPM did not start tracking expedited processing data until on or about July 20, 2022, when OPM launched a new FOIA case management. The previous legacy case management system did not track such data.

### B. Requests for Fee Waiver

Agency / Component	Number Granted	Number Denied	Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	Average Number of Days to Adjudicate
OPM CO	1	0	21	21
Agency Overall	1	0	21	21

**IX. FOIA Personnel and Costs**

Agency / Component	Personnel			Costs		
	Number of "Full-Time FOIA Employees"	Number of "Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees"	Total Number of "Full-Time FOIA Staff"	Processing Costs	Litigation-Related Costs	Total Costs
<b>OPM CO</b>	4	5.34	9.34	1030280.00	0.00	1030280.00
<b>Agency Overall</b>	4	5.34	9.34	1030280.00	0.00	1030280.00

**X. Fees Collected for Processing Requests**

Agency / Component	Total Amount of Fees Collected	Percentage of Total Costs
<b>OPM CO</b>	7699.00	0.7500
<b>Agency Overall</b>	7699.00	0.7500

## XI. FOIA Regulations (Including Fee Schedule)

### A. Number of Times Subsection (C) Used

Agency / Component	Number of Times Subsection Used
OPM CO	0
Agency Overall	0

### B. Number of Subsection (A)(2) Postings

Agency / Component	Number of Records Posted by the FOIA Office	Number of Records Posted by Program Offices
OPM CO	0	501
Agency Overall	0	501

## XII. Backlogs, Consultations, and Comparisons

### A. Backlogs of FOIA Requests and Administrative Appeals

Agency / Component	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Fiscal Year	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Fiscal Year
OPM CO	128	2
Agency Overall	128	2

**B. Consultations on FOIA Requests—Received, Processed, and Pending Consultations**

<b>Agency / Component</b>	<b>Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <i>Pending</i> at the Agency as of <i>Start</i> of the Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Number of Consultations <i>Received</i> from Other Agencies During the Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <i>Processed</i> by the Agency During the Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <i>Pending</i> at the Agency as of <i>End</i> of the Fiscal Year</b>
<b>OPM CO</b>	2	27	28	1
<b>Agency Overall</b>	2	27	28	1

**C. Consultations on FOIA Requests—Ten Oldest Consultations Received from Other Agencies and Pending at the Agency**

<b>Agency / Component</b>	<b>Date or Days</b>	<b>10th Oldest Consultation</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>8th</b>	<b>7th</b>	<b>6th</b>	<b>5th</b>	<b>4th</b>	<b>3rd</b>	<b>2nd</b>	<b>Oldest Consultation</b>
<b>OPM CO</b>	<b>Date</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2022-09-19
	<b>Number of Days</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
<b>Agency Overall</b>	<b>Date</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2022-09-19
	<b>Number of Days</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9

**D. Comparisons**

*(1) Comparison of Numbers of Requests from Previous and Current Annual Report—Requests Received and Processed*

<b>Agency / Component</b>	<b>Number of Requests Received</b>		<b>Number of Requests Processed</b>	
	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
<b>OPM CO</b>	640	456	842	508
<b>Agency Overall</b>	640	456	842	508

*(2) Comparison of Numbers of Requests from Previous and Current Annual Report—Backlogged Requests*

<b>Agency / Component</b>	<b>Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year from Previous Annual Report</b>	<b>Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report</b>
<b>OPM CO</b>	190	128
<b>Agency Overall</b>	190	128

*(3) Comparison of Numbers of Administrative Appeals from Previous and Current Annual Report—Appeals Received and Processed*

<b>Agency / Component</b>	<b>Number of Appeals Received</b>		<b>Number of Appeals Processed</b>	
	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
<b>OPM CO</b>	9	12	9	9
<b>Agency Overall</b>	9	12	9	9

*(4) Comparison of Numbers of Administrative Appeals from Previous and Current Annual Report—Backlogged Appeals*

<b>Agency / Component</b>	<b>Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year from Previous Annual Report</b>	<b>Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report</b>
<b>OPM CO</b>	1	2
<b>Agency Overall</b>	1	2



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