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## How do I make a FOIA Request?

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Before making a request, first look to see if the information you are interested in is already publicly available. You can find a lot of useful information on a range of topics on each agency’s website. You can also search for information agencies have already posted online [here on FOIA.gov](#).

If the information you want is not publicly available, you can submit a FOIA request to the agency's FOIA Office. The request simply must be in writing and reasonably describe the records you seek. Most federal agencies now accept FOIA requests electronically, including by web form, e-mail or fax. See [the list of federal agencies](#) for details about how to make a request to each agency and any specific requirements for seeking certain records.

## Is there a special form I have to use to make a FOIA request?

There is no specific form that must be used to make a request.

## What can I ask for under the FOIA?

A FOIA request can be made for any agency record. You can also specify the format in which you wish to receive the records (for example, printed or electronic form). The FOIA does not require agencies to create new records or to conduct research, analyze data, or answer questions when responding to requests.

## How long will it take before I get a response?

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Agencies typically process requests in the order of receipt. The time it takes to respond to a request will vary depending on the complexity of the request and any backlog of requests already pending at the agency. A simple request can be processed faster by the agency than one that is complex. Simple requests are typically more targeted and seek fewer pages of records. Complex requests typically seek a high volume of material or require additional steps to process such as the need to search for records in multiple locations. The agency's FOIA Requester Service Center is available to assist you with any questions about the status of your request or any steps you can take to receive a quicker response.



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