

How to Make a FOIA Request

- 1.) Clearly state that you are making this request under the Freedom of Information Act.

Ex. “Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, I request copies of all records, regardless of format, medium, or physical characteristics, and including electronic records and information.”

- 2.) Be very specific in identifying the records you are requesting. You must give a reasonable description of the records sought, including the time frame, types of records, and the subject matter.

Ex. “Specifically, I am looking for records relating to (Program X, Country X, or Organization X). I would like to receive all final narrative reports, grant agreements, and budgets related to this during the period of 2004-present.”

*Remember to be as specific as possible and to limit the scope of your request as much as possible, as our ability to respond expeditiously depends considerably on the size and scope of the request. Rather than asking for *all* records pertaining to a program, ask for the specific type of records (grant agreements, budgets, etc.) you need that relate to the program of interest.

- 3.) Explain which fee category you fall into. There are three types:

- **Commercial Use:** If the request will be used to further profit interest for the person who is making the request, then the requester will be charged \$8.00 per hour for search time, \$15.00 per hour for processing and review time, and \$0.15 per page of copies made.

- **Scholarly or Scientific Researchers, and Representatives of the Media:** If you work for an educational institution or are a member of the media (including freelance journalists) you fall into this category. However, it is required that you use these materials to create a distinct work that can be used by the public. These requesters will be charged \$0.15 per page photocopied after the first 100 page. They will receive no fees for search, processing, and review time.

- **All Other Requesters:** If you do not fall into the previous two categories, then fees are waived for the first two hours of search time and the first 100 pages photocopied. Beyond that, you will be charged \$0.15 per page, \$8.00 per hour for search time, and \$15.00 per hour for processing and review time.

*You must explain why you fit into the category. It is not enough to merely state it. You may also explain why the disclosure of this information is in the public interest as a defense for a fee waiver. Also, include the maximum amount you are willing to pay.

Ex. “ As a professor conducting research as part of a project for University X, I fall into the Scholarly Researcher category and ask that all fees for search and review are waived as well as the first 100 pages photocopied. However, I could pay a small fee for copies, but please contact me first if the cost will exceed \$50.00.”

4.) Please send requests to:

Freedom of Information Act Officer
National Endowment for
Democracy 1025 F Street, NW, Suite
800 Washington, DC 20004