

2026 Chief FOIA Officer Report for The Federal Labor Relations Authority

The Federal Labor Relations Authority (“FLRA” or “agency”) Chief Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”) Officer Report describes activities that show how the agency has implemented the guiding principle underlying the FOIA aimed at the presumption of openness. Consistent with executive-branch guidance, the FLRA is committed to accountability and transparency. As part of the aim of achieving openness, the Office of Information and Privacy (“OIP”), Department of Justice (“DOJ”) issued guidelines for the 2026 Chief FOIA Officer Reports, requiring agencies to report on their FOIA activities. This report addresses the questions raised in the most recent guidance.

Section I: FOIA Leadership and Applying the Presumption of Openness

The guiding principle underlying the DOJ’s 2022 [FOIA Guidelines](#) is the presumption of openness. The Guidelines also highlight the importance of agency leadership in ensuring effective FOIA administration. Please answer the following questions about FOIA leadership at your agency and describe the steps your agency has taken to ensure that the presumption of openness is being applied to all decisions involving the FOIA.

A. Leadership Support for FOIA

1. The FOIA requires each agency to designate a Chief FOIA Officer who is a senior official at the Assistant Secretary or equivalent level. See 5 U.S.C. § 552(j)(1) (2018). Is your agency’s Chief FOIA Officer at or above this level?

FLRA Response: Yes.

2. Please provide the name and title of your agency’s Chief FOIA Officer.

FLRA Response: The FLRA’s Chief FOIA Officer is Thomas Tso, its Solicitor.

3. What steps has your agency taken to incorporate FOIA into its core mission? For example, has your agency incorporated FOIA milestones into its strategic plan?

FLRA Response: The Chief FOIA Officer’s staff regularly communicate with FLRA Presidential and administrative leadership about FOIA-related issues.

B. Presumption of Openness

4. DOJ’s 2022 FOIA Guidelines provides that “agencies should confirm in response letters to FOIA requesters that they have considered the foreseeable harm standard when reviewing records and applying FOIA exemptions.” Does your agency provide such confirmation in its response letters?

FLRA Response: Yes.

5. In some circumstances, agencies may respond to a requester that it can neither confirm nor deny the existence of requested records if acknowledging the existence of records would harm an interest protected by a FOIA exemption. This is commonly referred to as a Glomar response. If your agency tracks Glomar responses, please provide:

- the number of times your agency issued a full or partial Glomar response during Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 (please separate full and partial Glomar responses if possible);
- the number of times a Glomar response was issued by exemption during FY 2025 (e.g., Exemption 7(C) – 20 times, Exemption 1 – 5 times).

FLRA Response: N/A.

6. Optional -- If there are any other initiatives undertaken by your agency to ensure that the presumption of openness is being applied, please describe them here.

FLRA Response: The agency periodically reviews its FOIA website to determine if there are additional materials beyond those sought in FOIA requests that are appropriate for posting. Agency FOIA officers also periodically communicate with the agency's Information Resources Management Division (*i.e.* its information technology division) and other key agency personnel to determine if it is appropriate to post additional materials on the agency's FOIA website.

Section II: Ensuring Fair and Effective FOIA Administration

DOJ's 2022 [FOIA Guidelines](#) provide that “[e]nsuring fair and effective FOIA administration requires . . . proper training, and a full understanding of FOIA obligations by the entire agency workforce.” The Guidelines reinforce longstanding guidance to “work with FOIA requesters in a spirit of cooperation.” DOJ also “urge[s] agency Chief FOIA Officers to undertake comprehensive review of all aspects of their agency’s FOIA administration” as part of ensuring fair and effective FOIA administration.

A. FOIA Training

1. The FOIA directs agency Chief FOIA Officers to ensure that FOIA training is offered to agency personnel. See 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(j)(2)(F). Please describe the efforts your agency has undertaken to ensure proper FOIA training is made available and used by agency personnel.

FLRA Response: The office of the Chief FOIA Officer, which responds to the vast majority of FOIA requests received by the agency, has three FOIA professionals. The agency's Office of Inspector General has one FOIA professional who independently responds to Inspector General FOIA requests. Both offices rely on the Department of Justice's Guide to the

Freedom of Information Act and research specific FOIA issues throughout the year. For FY25, three FOIA professionals took FOIA training in December 2024; one took FOIA training in the summer of 2025.

One FOIA professional who replaced a member of the office of the Chief FOIA Officer in FY25 did not receive training in FY25, but will do so in FY26.

2. Did your FOIA professionals, or other personnel at your agency with FOIA responsibilities, attend substantive FOIA training during the reporting period, such as training provided by the Department of Justice?

FLRA Response: Please see response to question number 1 above.

3. If yes, please provide a brief description of the type of training attended or conducted and the topics covered.

FLRA Response: In FY25, three FOIA professionals took the OIP's Training for FOIA Professionals. That training provided training on all aspects of FOIA and its implementation including information on records subject to FOIA, searching for responsive records, FOIA exemptions, FOIA response times, responses to requesters, fees that may be charged for requests, and the appeal process available to requester. One FOIA professional took OIP's Introduction to the Freedom of Information Act course.

4. Please provide an estimate of the percentage of your FOIA professionals and staff with FOIA responsibilities who attended substantive FOIA training during this reporting period.

FLRA Response: 80%.

5. OIP has [directed agencies](#) to "take steps to ensure that all of their FOIA professionals attend substantive FOIA training at least once throughout the year." If your response to the previous question is that less than 80% of your FOIA professionals attended training, please explain your agency's plan to ensure that all FOIA professionals receive or attend substantive FOIA training during the next reporting year.

FLRA Response: N/A.

6. Describe any efforts your agency has undertaken to inform non-FOIA professionals of their obligations under the FOIA. In particular, please describe how often and in what formats your agency provides FOIA training or briefings to non-FOIA staff, and if senior leaders at your agency received a briefing on your agency's FOIA resources, obligations and expectations during the FOIA process.

FLRA Response: All FLRA employees receive annual records management training. The office of the Chief FOIA Officer periodically discusses FOIA issues with FLRA leadership throughout the year. The office of the Chief FOIA Officer also provides periodic training to all agency professionals; the last one was conducted in December of 2023.

B. Outreach

7. As part of the standard request process, do your FOIA professionals proactively contact requesters concerning complex or voluminous requests in an effort to clarify or narrow the scope of the request so requesters can receive responses more quickly? Please describe any such outreach or dialogue and, if applicable, any specific examples.

FLRA Response: Yes. The FOIA professionals have proactively reached out to requesters to clarify particularly voluminous requests in an effort to narrow the scope of the requests so requesters can receive responses more quickly. Most times, those communications have been successful. For example, FOIA professionals have communicated with requesters to explain that search terms resulted in voluminous records and successfully narrowed such search terms.

8. Outside of the standard request process or routine FOIA Liaison or FOIA Requester Service Center interactions, did your FOIA professionals engage in any outreach or dialogue with the requester community or open government groups regarding your administration of the FOIA? For example, did you proactively contact frequent requesters, host FOIA-related conference calls with open government groups, or provide FOIA training to members of the public? Please describe any such outreach or dialogue and, if applicable, any specific examples of how this dialogue has led to improvements in your agency's FOIA administration.

FLRA Response: No.

9. The FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 requires additional notification to requesters about the services provided by the agency's FOIA Public Liaison. Please provide an estimate of the number of times requesters sought assistance from your agency's FOIA Public Liaison during Fiscal Year 2025 (please provide a total number or an estimate of the number for the agency overall).

FLRA Response: Approximately 10.

C. Other Initiatives

10. Has your agency evaluated the allocation of agency personnel resources needed to respond to current and anticipated FOIA demands? If so, please describe what changes your agency has or will implement.

FLRA Response: Yes. The Chief FOIA Officer has discussed resources needed with agency leadership. Most recently, the agency allocated resources for the FLRA to successfully transition from its previous FOIA provider to FOIAExpress. No other changes are anticipated at this time.

11. How does your agency use data or processing metrics to ensure efficient management of your FOIA workload? For example, case management reports, staff processing statistics, etc. In addition, please specifically highlight any data analysis methods or technologies used.

FLRA Response: The FLRA currently receives between 100 and 200 requests a year. The office of the Chief FOIA Officer responds to over 90% of the agency's FOIA requests and regularly reviews agency-wide FOIA responses and is able to make assessments based on the requests that it receives and processes. The Chief FOIA Officer also coordinates with the Office of the Inspector General, which responds to the remaining 10% of the agency's FOIA requests. The office of the Chief FOIA Officer creates internal case management reports to measure management of its workload.

12. Optional -- If there are any other initiatives undertaken by your agency to ensure fair and effective FOIA administration, please describe them here.

FLRA Response: None at this time.

Section III: Proactive Disclosures

DOJ's 2022 [FOIA Guidelines](#) emphasize that "proactive disclosure of information is . . . fundamental to the faithful application of the FOIA." The Guidelines direct agencies to post "records online quickly and systematically in advance of any public request" and reiterate that agencies should post records "in the most useful, searchable, and open formats possible."

1. Please describe what steps your agency takes to identify, track, and post (a)(2) proactive disclosures.

FLRA Response: When the office of the Chief FOIA Officer observes that a record has been requested and released three or more times, it ensures that the records are proactively disclosed.

2. Does your agency post logs of its FOIA requests?

- If so, what information is contained in the logs?
- Are they posted in CSV format? If not, what format are they posted in?
- Please provide a link to the page where any FOIA logs are posted. If applicable, please provide component links.

FLRA Response: No, the agency does not post logs of its FOIA requests.

3. Provide examples of any material (with links) that your agency has proactively disclosed during the past reporting year, including records that have been requested and released three or more times in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(2)(D).

FLRA Response: The agency routinely updates its website with the most recent Authority and FSIP decisions and Office of the Solicitor briefs. This is a link to the agency's electronic reading room:

<http://www.fra.gov/elibrary>

The FLRA also added a page to its website that contains requests to the FLRA for policy statements, as well as the FLRA's decisions concerning those requests. A link to the page is available in the electronic reading room page and here:

<https://www.fra.gov/resources-training/resources/policy-statements>

The FLRA issues quarterly digests of FLRA Authority decisions, which are available at this link:

<https://www.fra.gov/decisions/quarterly-digest-authority-decisions>.

4. Please provide a link (or component links, if applicable) where your agency routinely posts its frequently requested records.

FLRA Response: Please see response to question number 3 above.

5. Beyond posting new material, is your agency taking steps to make the posted information more useful to the public, especially to the community of individuals who regularly access your agency's website? If yes, please provide examples of such improvements, such as steps taken to post information in open and machine-readable formats. If your agency is not taking steps to make posted information more useful, please explain why.

FLRA Response: The FLRA holds periodic trainings for the public and issues press releases to disseminate significant information regarding the agency. Additionally, the FLRA posts training videos on its Youtube website for the public at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/federallaborrelationsauthority>.

Through those communication channels the agency has obtained feedback about, among other things, the website content and presentation. The agency makes changes based on such feedback when appropriate.

As the FLRA's core mission is the adjudication of federal-sector, labor-management disputes, the FLRA-issued decisions and training must be human readable and understandable. The agency continues to place its most recent decisions, training announcements, and news on the home page of the website.

As far as machine-readable and machine-actionable formats, the agency posts its annual FOIA reports in XML format on the agency's website at the following link:

[https://www.flra.gov/elibrary#flra-foia-annual-reports.](https://www.flra.gov/elibrary#flra-foia-annual-reports)

6. Does your proactive disclosure process or system involve any collaboration with agency staff outside the FOIA office, such as IT or data personnel? If so, describe this interaction.

FLRA Response: Yes, the Chief FOIA Officer's staff communicates with FLRA leadership, the FLRA's Office of Legislative Affairs & Public Affairs, and its information technology division about proactive disclosures.

7. Optional -- Please describe the best practices used to improve proactive disclosures and any challenges your agency faces in this area.

FLRA Response: The Chief FOIA Officer and FOIA staff review the agency's FOIA web pages and work with key agency personnel to determine if there are additional materials beyond those covered by FOIA requests that are appropriate for posting.

Moreover, the agency maintains a variety of RSS newsfeeds that provide interested subscribers with timely notices of records as they are posted to the agency's website. The agency also periodically issues press releases to disseminate significant information regarding its decisions and records, and informs the public of where that information can be found on the agency's website.

Section IV: Steps Taken to Make Better Use of Technology

A key component of FOIA administration is using technology to make information available to the public and to gain efficiency in FOIA processing. DOJ's 2022 [FOIA Guidelines](#) emphasize the importance of making FOIA websites easily navigable and complying with the [FOIA.gov](#) interoperability requirements. Please answer the following questions to describe how your agency is using technology to improve its FOIA administration and the public's access to information.

1. Has your agency reviewed its FOIA-related technological capabilities to identify resources needed to respond to current and anticipated FOIA demands?

FLRA Response: In FY2024, the FLRA transitioned to FOIAxpress, a vendor that is used by many other federal agencies and has FOIA-related technological capabilities that are compliant with DOJ standards. The FLRA continues to ensure that its FOIA-related technological capabilities comply with DOJ standards.

2. Please briefly describe any new types of technology your agency uses to support your FOIA program.

FLRA Response: None, but please see response to question number 1 above.

3. Does your agency currently use any technology to automate request intake, customer service, or record processing? For example, does your agency use artificial intelligence or other tools to conduct searches or make redactions? If so, please describe and, if possible, estimate how much time and financial resources are saved since implementing the technology.

FLRA Response: The FLRA's information technology office conducts searches for FOIA documents on FLRA computer systems. The FLRA does not use artificial intelligence for any part of its FOIA processes.

4. OIP issued [guidance](#) in 2017 encouraging agencies to regularly review their FOIA websites to ensure that they contain essential resources and are informative and user-friendly. Has your agency reviewed its FOIA website(s) during the reporting period to ensure it addresses the elements noted in the guidance?

FLRA Response: Yes.

5. Did all four of your agency's [quarterly reports](#) for Fiscal Year 2025 appear on FOIA.gov?

FLRA Response: Yes.

6. If your agency did not successfully post all quarterly reports on FOIA.gov, please explain why and provide your agency's plan for ensuring that such reporting is successful in Fiscal Year 2026.

FLRA Response: Yes.

7. The FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 requires all agencies to post the raw statistical data used to compile their Annual FOIA Reports. Please provide the link to this posting for your agency's Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report and, if available, for your agency's Fiscal Year 2025 Annual FOIA Report.

FLRA Response: <https://www.flra.gov/elibrary>

8. In February 2019, DOJ and OMB issued joint [Guidance](#) establishing interoperability standards to receive requests from the National FOIA Portal on FOIA.gov. Are all components of your agency in compliance with the guidance?

FLRA Response: Yes.

9. Optional -- Please describe your agency best practices in better utilizing technology and any challenges your agency faces in this area.

FLRA Response: The FLRA continues to collaborate with its FOIAexpress vendor and information technology division about ways to improve its FOIA technology systems.

Section V: Steps Taken to Remove Barriers to Access, Improve Timeliness in Responding to Requests, and Reduce Backlogs

DOJ's 2022 [FOIA Guidelines](#) instruct agencies "to remove barriers to requesting and accessing government records and to reduce FOIA processing backlogs." Please answer the following questions to describe how your agency is removing barriers to access, improving timeliness in responding to requests, and reducing FOIA backlogs.

A. Remove Barriers to Access

1. Has your agency established alternative means of access for any categories of first-party requested records, outside of the typical FOIA or Privacy Act process?

FLRA Response: Yes.

2. If yes, please provide examples. If no, please indicate why not. Please also indicate if you do not know.

FLRA Response: For parties involved in cases before the FLRA, the FLRA regularly provides case documents, including appeals, dismissals, copies of charges, and withdrawals without re- quiring a FOIA request.

3. Please describe any other steps your agency has taken to remove barriers to accessing government information.

FLRA Response: None other than those steps described above.

B. Timeliness

4. For Fiscal Year 2025, what was the average number of days your agency reported for adjudicating requests for expedited processing? Please see Section VIII.A. of your agency's Fiscal Year 2025 Annual FOIA Report.

FLRA Response: 84.5 days.

5. If your agency's average number of days to adjudicate requests for expedited processing was more than ten calendar days, according to Section VIII.A. of your agency's Fiscal Year 2025 Annual FOIA Report, please describe the steps your agency will take to ensure that requests for expedited processing are adjudicated within ten calendar days or less.

FLRA Response: In FY26, FOIA staff are prioritizing prompt responses to requests for expedited processing, including in cases where such requests will be denied.

6. Does your agency utilize a separate track for simple requests?

FLRA Response: Yes.

7. If your agency uses a separate track for simple requests, according to Annual FOIA Report section VII.A, was the agency overall average number of days to process simple requests twenty working days or fewer in Fiscal Year 2025?

FLRA Response: No.

8. If not, did the simple track average processing time decrease compared to the previous Fiscal Year?

FLRA Response: Yes.

9. Please provide the percentage of requests processed by your agency in Fiscal Year 2025 that were placed in your simple track. Please use the following calculation based on the data from your Annual FOIA Report: (processed simple requests from Section VII.C.1) divided by (requests processed from Section V.A.) x 100.

FLRA Response: 98%.

10. If your agency does not track simple requests separately, was the average number of days to process all non-expedited requests twenty working days or fewer?

FLRA Response: N/A.

C. Backlogs

Backlogged Requests

11. If your agency had a backlog of requests at the close of Fiscal Year 2025, according to Annual FOIA Report Section XII.D.2, did that backlog decrease as compared with the backlog reported at the end of Fiscal Year 2024?

FLRA Response: No.

12. If not, according to Annual FOIA Report Section XII.D.1, did your agency process more requests during Fiscal Year 2025 than it did during Fiscal Year 2024?

FLRA Response: No.

13. If your agency's request backlog increased during Fiscal Year 2025, please explain why and describe the causes that contributed to your agency not being able to reduce its backlog. When doing so, please also indicate if any of the following were contributing factors:

- An increase in the number of incoming requests
- A loss of staff
- An increase in the complexity of the requests received (if possible, please provide examples or briefly describe the types of complex requests contributing to your backlog increase)
- Litigation
- Any other reasons – please briefly describe or provide examples when possible

FLRA Response: There were administrative errors with respect to the tracking the outstanding requests. FOIA staff have improved FLRA tracking mechanisms in FY26.

14. If you had a request backlog, please report the percentage of requests that make up the backlog out of the total number of requests received by your agency in Fiscal Year 2025. Please use the following calculation based on data from your Annual FOIA Report: (backlogged requests from Section XII.A) divided by (requests received from Section V.A) x 100. This number can be greater than 100%. If your agency has no request backlog, please answer with "N/A."

FLRA Response: 1.2%.

Backlogged Appeals

15. If your agency had a backlog of appeals at the close of Fiscal Year 2025, according to Section XII.E.2 of the Annual FOIA Report, did that backlog decrease as compared with the backlog reported at the end of Fiscal Year 2024?

FLRA Response: N/A.

16. If not, according to section XII.E.1 of the Annual FOIA Report, did your agency process more appeals during Fiscal Year 2025 than it did during Fiscal Year 2024?

FLRA Response: N/A.

17. If your agency's appeal backlog increased during Fiscal Year 2025, please explain why and describe the causes that contributed to your agency not being able to reduce its backlog. When doing so, please also indicate if any of the following were contributing factors:

- An increase in the number of incoming appeals
- A loss of staff
- An increase in the complexity of the requests received (if possible, please provide examples or briefly describe the types of complex requests contributing to your backlog increase)
- Litigation
- Any other reasons – please briefly describe or provide examples when possible

FLRA Response: N/A.

18. If you had an appeal backlog, please report the percentage of appeals that make up the backlog out of the total number of appeals received by your agency in Fiscal Year 2025. Please use the following calculation based on data from your Annual FOIA Report: (backlogged appeals from Section XII.A) divided by (appeals received from Section VI.A) x 100. This number can be greater than 100%. If your agency did not receive any appeals in Fiscal Year 2025 and/or has no appeal backlog, please answer with "N/A."

FLRA Response: N/A.

D. Backlog Reduction Plans

19. In the 2025 guidelines for Chief FOIA Officer Reports, any agency with a backlog of over 1000 requests in Fiscal Year 2024 was asked to provide a plan for achieving backlog reduction in the year ahead. Did your agency implement a backlog reduction plan last year? If so, describe your agency's efforts in implementing this plan and note if your agency was able to achieve backlog reduction in Fiscal Year 2025?

FLRA Response: N/A.

20. If your agency had a backlog of more than 1,000 requests in Fiscal Year 2025, please explain your agency's plan to reduce this backlog during Fiscal Year 2026.

FLRA Response: N/A.

E. Reducing the Age of Requests, Appeals, and Consultations

Ten Oldest Requests

21. In Fiscal Year 2025, did your agency close the ten oldest pending perfected requests that were reported in Section VII.E. of your Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report?

FLRA Response: No ten oldest.

22. If no, please provide the number of these requests your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section VII.E of your Fiscal Year 2025 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest requests to close, please indicate that.

FLRA Response: N/A.

23. Beyond working on the ten oldest requests, please describe any steps your agency took to reduce the overall age of your pending requests.

FLRA Response: Chief FOIA Officer staff attempted to promptly respond to all FOIA requests.

Ten Oldest Appeals

24. In Fiscal Year 2025, did your agency close the ten oldest appeals that were reported pending in Section VI.C.5 of your Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report?

FLRA Response: No ten oldest.

25. If no, please provide the number of these appeals your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section VII.C.(5) of your Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest appeals to close, please indicate that.

FLRA Response: N/A.

26. Beyond working on the ten oldest appeals, please describe any steps your agency took to reduce the overall age of your pending appeals.

FLRA Response: N/A.

Ten Oldest Consultations

27. In Fiscal Year 2025, did your agency close the ten oldest consultations that were reported pending in Section XII.C. of your Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report?

FLRA Response: No ten oldest.

28. If no, please provide the number of these consultations your agency was able to close by the end of the fiscal year, as listed in Section XII.C. of your Fiscal Year 2024 Annual FOIA Report. If you had less than ten total oldest consultations to close, please indicate that.

FLRA Response: N/A.

Additional Information Regarding Ten Oldest

29. If your agency did not close its ten oldest pending requests, appeals, or consultations, please explain why and provide a plan describing how your agency intends to close those “ten oldest” requests, appeals, and consultations during Fiscal Year 2026.

FLRA Response: N/A.

F. Additional Information about FOIA Processing

30. Were any requests at your agency the subject of FOIA litigation during the reporting period? If so, please describe the impact on your agency’s overall FOIA request processing and backlog. If possible, please indicate:

- The number and nature of requests subject to litigation
- Common causes leading to litigation
- Any other information to illustrate the impact of litigation on your overall FOIA administration

FLRA Response: No.