

Best Practices

Appoint a FOIA Czar or FOIA Office Coordinator

- This person(s) will be the point-person between the organization and the FOIA requester
- Create a separate organizational email for the FOIA Office Coordinator
- Every FOIA Request must be sent to the Coordinator, who will initiate the “perfecting” process of the request
- Do not communicate with the FOIA Requester before consulting FOIA Office Coordinator – ALWAYS CC the FOIA Coordinator email on ALL communications with the requester

Create a FOIA Office Policy

- First and foremost, this policy must prioritize ascertaining the scope of the request
- This must include a timeline for
 - Responding to the receipt of the FOIA request
 - Providing fee estimates, including search, review, and page estimates
- Contingent upon the “perfecting” of the request, it must contain a timeline for starting the search for records subject to the FOIA request
- It must provide a gameplan for when other offices or persons have the records requested

Keep your work email and personal email separate – avoid mingling correspondence as much as possible!

- Doing professional tasks via work personal email addresses can open up the contents of your personal email addresses to the subject matter of the request
- To avoid the painful and long-winded route of redacted and trying to withhold the contents of your personal email from disclosure, please do not mingle the two spheres