

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Mon, 7 Apr 2025 21:01:27 +0000
To: Johnson, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR)
Subject: ACF/CDC/FDA/NIH contracts - Opexus/AINS

Good evening, Jennifer:

Christine Jones recommended I reach out to you with an acquisition question that extends across multiple OpDivs. My apologies if this question is misdirected and you ultimately need to steer me towards other parties.

In short, the CDC, NIH, ACF, and FDA-CDRH FOIA offices were significantly impacted by last week's personnel changes associated with the ongoing reorganization. Each of those entities had existing contracts with a vendor called Opexus for a product used for FOIA processing, tracking, and reporting called FOIA Xpress (and ASPA does as well).

That product used to be owned by a vendor called AINS, which was purchased by Opexus, so it's possible the initial award was issued to AINS for any or all existing contracts for the product. We do not have visibility into the status of performance on any of the non-ASPA, vehicles nor to the pending financial commitments remaining on any of them.

The question is how I can obtain a global view of the contracts to flesh out where each stand. I will be very appreciative for any information you can provide and am happy to provide additional background or answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
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From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Fri, 9 May 2025 15:31:34 +0000
To: Aleshire, Noah (CDC/OD/OPPE)
Subject: CDC FOIA attorney fees payt logistics

Hi, Noah:

Here's where we stand on one of the challenging issues we discussed. I met with ASFR yesterday to discuss the path forward on the budget front for FY25 and in future years. The FOIA enterprise is one of several services that will get redefined in terms of shared services and the like.

I posed the question of whether the Department would pay attorney fee tabs and ASFR would work out the particulars with the respective OpDiv(s) involved, but they said no for now. For the immediate future, ASFR gave guidance that for attorney fees awarded or settled in FOIA cases that must be paid immediately in FY25 must continue to be paid by the OpDiv that normally would have paid those bills.

The reason this is an immediate practical problem is that we're likely to have a series of cases where we settle fees arise in close succession. There's one on the docket (ICAN; 24-cv-00203) that just came to my attention where plaintiff apparently demanded \$15,605 to settle the case prior to the reorganization and has gotten impatient with the agency in the intervening timeframe.

In this matter, CDC originally released 685 pages of records, and after suit, re-released responsive material totaling 727 pages, including 42 additional pages released in full. It's likely the plaintiff prevailed at least in part, but we don't have a full picture of why we changed position during litigation. The odds we'd get out of this one without paying any fees are so low they're not worth quantifying.

(b)(5)

Bottom line, I have authority to approve settlements in FOIA matters for the Department, but here, it would involve committing CDC funds, so want to ensure alignment. There's risk plaintiff will immediately file a motion demanding the full amount, so time is of the essence for us here.

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Thanks and please let me know your thoughts.

Regards,
Bill

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From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Wed, 7 May 2025 16:59:41 +0000
To: Smolin, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR); Stacy, Jennifer (OS/ASFR/DOSB)
Cc: Johnson, Danielle (OS/ASPA); Henneman, Jeffrey (OS/ASPA); Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA); Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA)
Subject: FOIA attorney fees/budget question

Hi, all:

Been awhile – hope you're hanging in there in these busy times!

Here's an interesting and practical question that we're facing at the moment. The former ACF and CDC FOIA office workloads are now part of the OS-FOIA program in their entirety. Given that fact, there exists no practical difference between GDM and SSF in certain respects, although we recognize the anti-deficiency act problems synthesizing the workload into a single, unified pile may raise.

We have ACF and CDC lawsuits where plaintiffs have made fee demands. *Whether* we're going to be stuck with a bill isn't the question for either case – we will, and the only issue remaining is whether it's court-ordered or not. However, in these matters, hypothetically, had there been appeals at issue (a service for which we never charged ACF for inexplicable reasons, yet charged CDC), we might have been faced in the past with a situation where OS plus a given OpDiv had to figure out how to split the bill.

Here, we own the lawsuits and the bill even though OS was not involved in those matters prior to now. (b)(5)

I ask this because we're going to be settling the amounts two cases I mention posthaste, and the settlements usually contain language requiring the bill to be paid within X days (or a court can mandate it), so this is an immediate concern.

FYSA, OS owned 59 outstanding lawsuits on 4/1; we inherited 17 from ACF and 29 from CDC. This is work we need to deal with concurrent with the existing workload – not sequentially - and doesn't account for ~70 lawsuits pending at FDA, another ~70 at NIH, and an unidentified volume from other OpDivs we'll inherit soon from other parties as the reorganization gets implemented.

My concern is we're almost certainly going to be cutting checks at a rapid pace in a high volume of cases in quick succession, so we will need to plan for this. Thanks again and I wanted to get this conversation rolling.

Regards,
Bill

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Subject: Strengthening the HHS FOIA Enterprise

<< File: HHS Exemption 5 Memo.20240903.pdf >> << File: HHS Exemption 6 Memo.20240903.pdf >> << File: HHS FOIA Delegation of Authority to ASPA_Tab A.20240903.pdf >> << File: HHS FOIA DoA_Tab B ASPA to DACFO.20240903.pdf >> << File: HHS Significant FOIA Activity Reporting Memo.20240903.pdf >>

Dear FOIA Colleagues:

As part of HHS's commitment to effective administration of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA or the Act), with increased collaboration and coordination between the Office of the Secretary (OS)/ASPA FOIA Program and the talented professionals performing our FOIA work daily, I am pleased to announce several measures designed to improve the quality and consistency of FOIA products across the Department.

It's simply good government to maximize efforts to ensure FOIA offices across HHS administer the Act as evenly, effectively, and efficiently as possible while maintaining the highest standard

of customer service. We know at times this feels easier said than done but we look forward to partnering with you on this important work.

The Secretary has issued a new Delegation of Authority to operate the HHS FOIA program, including its OpDiv and StaffDiv FOIA programs, in an effort to add structure to enterprise-wise program governance and needed clarity on Departmental disclosure policies. Enclosed is Tab A, the Delegation, along with Tab B, re-delegating authority from the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs/Agency Chief FOIA Officer to the Deputy Agency Chief FOIA Officer. To this end, in the weeks and months ahead, I will be working with you to enhance the Department's FOIA program by:

- '3b Increasing collaboration and coordination across HHS FOIA and the agency FOIA offices;
- '3b Better leveraging available tools and resources – including technology – to strengthen and streamline processes;
- '3b Educating stakeholders inside and outside of the Department and its agencies on our responsibilities under the Act; and
- Ensuring visibility and transparency into the FOIA process itself.

While the Department has previously issued guidance on discrete matters that impact our day-to-day business, following requests for clarity, enclosed are Department-wide policies governing topics of vital importance. Attached you will find guidance on:

- '3b Reporting significant FOIA activities;
- '3b FOIA Exemption (b)(5); and
- FOIA Exemption (b)(6).

Additionally, if you haven't had a chance to review it yet, this office previously issued guidance on the application of the foreseeable harm standard, which is posted [here](#) for ease of reference.

An invitation will follow for a virtual event slated for 10:00a.m. E.S.T. this Thursday, September 5, 2024, to discuss implementation details and answer your questions directly. I'll send Tab C – OpDiv-specific Delegation artifacts – to each of the FOIA officers immediately following this message under separate cover.

I look forward to partnering with the dedicated FOIA professionals across the Department and engaging with your OpDiv FOIA Officers to enhance service delivery and identify additional ways to support your work and ensure transparency for the people we serve. Thank you, again, for all that you do.

Regards,
Bill

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From: [Holzerland, William \(HHS/ASPA\)](#)
To: [Kotler, Sarah \(FDA/OC\)](#); [May, Brian \(HRSA\)](#); [Daley, Garfield \(ACL\)](#); [Mitchell, Carl \(IHS/HQ\)](#); [Smith, Celeste \(ACF\)](#); [Garcia-Malene, Gorka \(NIH/OD\) \[E\]](#); [Tripline, Joseph \(CMS/OSORA\)](#); [Lampasone, Kara \(SAMHSA/NMHSUPL/EXEC SEC\)](#); [ARPA-H FOIA](#); [Souther, James \(IHS/HQ\)](#); [Smith, Candrea \(SAMHSA/NMHSUPL/EXEC SEC\)](#); [Manheim, Marianne \(NIH/NHLBI\) \[E\]](#); [ACF FOIA \(ACF\)](#); [ACL FOIA \(ACL\)](#); [foiarequests@cdc.gov](#); [HRSA FOIA](#); [SAMHSA FOIA](#); [Klocinski, Jennifer \(ACL\)](#); [Davis, Candace \(FDA/CDRH\)](#); [Philips, Howard \(FDA/CDER\)](#); [Schlaifer, Meredith \(FDA/OC\)](#); [Bordine, Roger \(NIH/OD\) \[E\]](#); [Gaynor, Desiree \(CMS/OSORA\)](#)
Cc: [Perkins, Arianne \(OS/ASPA\)](#); [Sikandar, Nusheen \(OS/ASPA\)](#); [Lancey, Brandon \(OS/ASPA\)](#); [Formoso, Paula \(HHS/ASPA\)](#); [Carter, Kerey \(CDC/OCOO/OCIO/CSPO\)](#); [Gomes, Dominic \(OS/OCIO/OIS\)](#); [Rollins, Dwayne \(OS/OCIO/Ops\)](#); [Keck, Samantha \(HHS/OGC\)](#); [Ford, Kenya S. \(CDC/OGC\)](#)
Subject: Ongoing HHS FOIA operations
Date: Monday, April 7, 2025 11:59:00 AM

All:

I know we're all adjusting to sweeping personnel changes that occurred last week and that we face a challenging road ahead as the Department reorganizes.

This is a particularly difficult moment as we navigate the immediate path forward without so many respected colleagues and friends and we will be sensitive to that. I am here for you and am available to talk as we chart the path forward on business and other needs to the extent it will be helpful to lend an ear.

I've been asked to stitch the team together as we move forward with executing our FOIA mission and ensuring transparency. While I do not have a comprehensive list of the personnel changes across OpDivs and StaffDivs - whether we're talking those that impacted FOIA personnel, or those that impacted reporting chains - I want to get the conversation started surrounding how we move forward.

I apologize if I omitted parties necessary to the discussion, but please add them to the chain where necessary. I've included several colleagues from OGC and OCIO who need viz into the legal and IT aspects of the road ahead, but again, don't have a comprehensive list of necessary parties. Please make connections where necessary and we'll sort out questions as quickly as we can.

There are going to be numerous discrete issues to navigate – including those impacting day-to-day customer service, data access, ongoing litigation, and others. We're going to triage and address the most emergent items first. With respect to existing backlogs, the immediate focus must remain on logging incoming work, continuing to process on a first-in/first-out basis, starting with your 10 oldest cases, and capturing the status of ongoing litigation productions.

We're working on consistent messaging to be posted on HHS.gov and mirrored on FOIA websites enterprise-wide to acknowledge that we're adjusting business operations and to capture ongoing issues for orderly resolution. To the extent you receive press inquiries, requests for comment, and the like, please refer media outlets here:

[https://hhscewp.my.site.com/ASPApublic/s/request-for-comment.](https://hhscewp.my.site.com/ASPApublic/s/request-for-comment)

I'd like to talk to senior FOIA personnel that remain tomorrow to begin gathering the facts on what's happening in each existing FOIA office. I'll send a meeting invite, but please feel free to add to it as necessary; to manage expectations, I expect there will be more questions than answers at this point.

Please hang in there – we are in this together.

Regards,

Bill

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From: [Holzerland, William \(HHS/ASPA\)](#)
To: [Taylor, Natasha \(OS/ASPA\)](#)
Cc: [Perkins, Arianne \(OS/ASPA\)](#); [Williams, Alesia \(OS/ASPA\)](#); [Lancey, Brandon \(OS/ASPA\)](#)
Subject: RE: Reorg and RIF inquiries/requests
Date: Friday, April 4, 2025 10:06:00 AM

Morning!

I'm not following as to why any of these FOIA requests would be unusual. We'll process them as we normally would, on a first-in, first-out basis. I did see one in there from a HRSA employee, so we need to refer that to HRSA immediately, as that FOIA office is apparently still intact and operating.

I think the logistical piece related to processing FOIA requests across OpDivs – to the extent we must do so – would be the unusual part. We do not yet have access to existing CDC/NIH/FDA requests, so the most immediate problem is that we have to manage peoples' expectations with respect to the level of service we can provide.

This is going to take time to sort out, unfortunately, and we received zero advance notice of what occurred earlier this week. Apparently, some of the individuals terminated in the FOIA enterprise in the OpDivs were recalled to work, and I have no visibility into what that means in the long term as of yet.

To the extent individuals have questions about RIFs, we must simply refer them back to the language in the RIF notices for points of contact along with HHS OHR. I understand that some of the POCs were themselves RIFed, and allegedly, one of the listed POCs is apparently deceased, which is horrible. However, we cannot comment on the RIFs and it is not our place to get involved in the logistics, unfortunately, so we cannot be of assistance with that.

I'm working with the press folks in ASPA to ensure we have clear messaging posted to existing OpDiv FOIA websites about upcoming service delays as the reorg unfolds, as that is an unfortunate inevitability.

Regards,

Bill

William H. Holzerland

Deputy Chief FOIA Officer

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

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From: Taylor, Natasha (OS/ASPA) <Natasha.Taylor@hhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 4:34 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Cc: Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA) <Arianne.Perkins@hhs.gov>; Williams, Alesia (OS/ASPA) <Alesia.Williams@hhs.gov>; Taylor, Natasha (OS/ASPA) <Natasha.Taylor@hhs.gov>; Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA) <Brandon.Lancey@hhs.gov>
Subject: Reorg and RIF inquiries/requests

Hi Bill -

We received a couple of unusual requests that we are unsure where to task. They are as follows:

- Requests from employees affected by the RIF requesting their RIF notices.
- Written plans, proposals, strategy documents, or internal reports related to centralizing CDC, FDA, and HHS FOIA processing.
- HHS Reorg Plans.
- Requests for CDC and NIH employees' emails.

Additional questions:

- Where should we direct requesters who've already submitted requests to CDC, ACF, FDA, or NIH and want to check the status?
- Where are requesters to submit new requests for records pertaining to those OPDivs?
- Where should we direct employees who has questions about the RIF via the FOIA line?

I know things are rapidly developing and shifting, so, any guidance you can provide to assist with triaging these requests would be extremely helpful!

Thanks,

Natasha

Natasha Taylor

Government Information Specialist

FOI/Privacy Acts Division

Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)

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From: [Holzerland, William \(HHS/ASPA\)](#)
To: [SAMHSA FOIA](#); [Perkins, Arianne \(OS/ASPA\)](#); [Sikandar, Nusheen \(OS/ASPA\)](#)
Subject: RE: Ongoing HHS FOIA operations
Date: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 12:23:00 PM
Attachments: [HHS Significant FOIA Activity Reporting Memo.20240903.pdf](#)

Thanks, Michelle. + [@Perkins, Arianne \(OS/ASPA\)](#) and [@Sikandar, Nusheen \(OS/ASPA\)](#) for viz.

As I mentioned yesterday, ASPA will be glad to support the SAMHSA team through this time of transition to a more centralized FOIA program.

The ongoing work should continue, consistent with the statutory deadlines. We want you to continue processing requests on a first-in, first-out basis. With respect to complex and significant FOIA requests (as defined in the attached policy), or those that require WH consults, we're going to serve as your central resource for questions.

As for discrete scenarios where your team was awaiting the results of an ongoing record search from an individual or office that was impacted by last week's personnel changes, please capture those issues in a list. The goal will be to centrally manage searches for now-defunct email addresses or desktops through OCIO, but I suspect it will take some time to iron out the logistics of how all of that will work, exactly.

Can you please let me know what PHS officers are currently working on SAMHSA FOIA matters so that we can stay in touch? We look forward to partnering as we chart the path forward to a more efficient FOIA program.

Hang in there.

Regards,

Bill

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September 3, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR: Departmental FOIA Personnel

FROM:

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Agency Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)

William H.
Holzerland -S

Digitally signed by William H.
Holzerland -S
Date: 2024.09.03 08:47:44 -04'00'

SUBJECT: Departmental Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Reporting Requirements for Significant Requests

I. Purpose

This policy outlines the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS or the Department) procedures for weekly reporting on significant Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and on volume of FOIA activity generally.

This revised reporting process ensures the OS FOIA Office can facilitate compliance with the FOIA, better promote transparency, and ensure coordination and consistency across all HHS FOIA offices.

This memorandum does not alter HHS FOIA Officer responsibilities as outlined in the Department's implementing regulations found at 45 C.F.R. Part 5. The public's right to request records from the federal government is paramount, and we are committed to following the law and regulations to ensure maximum disclosure, consistent with the Act.

II. Scope

This policy applies throughout HHS and its Operating Divisions (OpDivs) or Staff Divisions (StaffDivs), on behalf of, or in coordination with the Department.

III. References

- A. Title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.), § 552, "Public Information; Agency Rules, Opinions, Orders, Records, and Proceedings" [The Freedom of Information Act, as amended]
- B. 45 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) Subtitle A, Subchapter A, Part 5, Freedom of Information Act Regulations, October 28, 2016.
- C. HHS Delegation of Authority, "Delegation to the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs," September 3, 2024.



HHS Delegation of Authority, “Delegation to the Deputy Agency Chief FOIA Officer,”
September 3, 2024.

IV. Definitions

- A. Chief FOIA Officer: HHS Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA) serves concurrently as the Chief FOIA Officer, as delegated by the HHS Secretary.
- B. Deputy Agency Chief FOIA Officer (DACFO): Individual reporting to the Chief FOIA Officer who serves as the HHS principal point of contact and agency representative on FOIA-related matters.
- C. The ASPA FOIA Division provides FOIA services to and on behalf of the Office of the Secretary (OS), and hereinafter, is referred to as the OS FOIA Program.
- D. FOIA Officer: Designated HHS official appointed by OpDiv Staff Div Head to receive FOIA requests and delegated authority by the DACFO and Departmental regulations to provide assistance in administrative matters pertaining to FOIA request processing and issue determinations on FOIA requests.
- 1. The FOIA Officer compiles themselves or designates a responsible official to collect, review, consolidate, and submit required reports to the DACFO, ensures that all reporting requirements are followed accurately, and that required reports are submitted in a timely manner.
- E. Incoming FOIA requests and any associated releases and/or appeals are defined as “significant” when at least one of the following criteria is met.

The FOIA:

- 1. Request relates to a significant HHS priority;
- 2. Requester or requested records are likely to garner media attention or are receiving media attention;
- 3. Request is for records associated with meetings with prominent elected, business, and/or community leaders;
- 4. Request is for congressional correspondence;
- 5. Request is from a member of Congress;
- 6. Request is from a member of the media;
- 7. Request is from a member of an advocacy group, watchdog organization, etc.; or
- 8. Request is for records associated with a senior official of the OpDiv or StaffDiv.



V. Content and Procedures

A. Chief FOIA Officer's Weekly FOIA Report:

1. OpDiv or StaffDiv FOIA Officers report significant FOIA requests retrospectively, covering incoming FOIA requests, appeals, and litigation for the preceding workweek to the DACFO by close of business on the first business day of the succeeding workweek. This requirement includes reporting that there were no significant FOIA requests during the prior week, if applicable.
2. OpDiv or StaffDiv FOIA Officers report significant FOIA requests prospectively, covering planned FOIA request, appeal, or litigation releases scheduled to occur during the workweek in which the report is submitted to the DACFO by close of business on the first business day of each workweek. Nothing in this requirement prohibits a FOIA Officer from reporting known, planned releases scheduled to occur in future workweeks beyond that in which the report is submitted, where possible.
3. Reports pertaining to significant FOIA activity are submitted via email to HHS_Significant_FOIA_Requests@hhs.gov by FOIA Officers or their staff by the deadlines noted above.
4. OpDiv or StaffDiv FOIA Officer reports shall adhere to the submission requirements outlined in Appendix A.
5. The DACFO or designee compiles and distributes information pertaining to significant FOIA activity in the Chief FOIA Officer's Weekly FOIA Report.
6. The OS FOIA Program transmits the Chief FOIA Officer's Weekly FOIA Report to the HHS FOIA Officers, ASPA media affairs personnel, the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Office of General Counsel, and the Office of the Secretary to ensure visibility on significant incoming FOIA requests and releases, proper communication, and coordination.

B. Significant FOIA Release 1-Day Notification Process:

1. HHS has a FOIA release notification process for FOIA responses related to requests qualifying as "significant" for purposes of the Chief FOIA Officer's Weekly Report.
2. Products submitted to the Department pursuant to this policy shall adhere to FOIA and all Departmental policies pertaining to implementation of the Act and shall be reviewed by the OS FOIA Program for compliance with same.
3. The FOIA release notification process applies to all requests qualifying as significant under the criteria in Section IV. F., whether the incoming request arrived during the current workweek or any prior workweek, including prospective significant releases pertaining to otherwise-qualifying requests when submission predated this policy.
4. For significant FOIA releases, the FOIA Officers shall notify the OS FOIA Program of records being released as far in advance as practicable and through the weekly



reporting process.

5. For significant FOIA releases other than planned FOIA releases reported in advance via the weekly reporting process, the FOIA Officer shall at minimum, notify the OS FOIA Program via HHS_Significant_FOIA_Requests@hhs.gov, one (1) business day before the response is issued and records are released.
6. FOIA Officers shall adhere to the 1-Day Notification Process and ensure that OpDiv/StaffDiv FOIA staff submit all significant FOIA releases, appeals, FOIA litigation, and additions to the FOIA Library, prior to issuance of such records, to HHS_Significant_FOIA_Requests@hhs.gov.
7. Significant FOIA release notifications are used only for qualifying requests where records are being released or denied as a matter of first impression. “No records” or other procedural determinations, re-releases of records previously disclosed via authorized means, or requests closed for other reasons, are not reported through this process.
8. As a request may not qualify as significant under Section IV. E. upon submission, but may become significant during processing (e.g. because of new media attention, or developments in current events), nothing in this policy prohibits FOIA officers from coordinating with the OS FOIA Program, OpDiv or StaffDiv public affairs, legislative affairs, and legal personnel proactively when warranted, regardless of the content or context of the planned response. Please exercise prudent judgment and submit items that reflect the spirit and intent of this reporting requirement. If in doubt, please err on the side of inclusion.
9. The significant FOIA release 1-Day notification process is to notify HHS leadership of an impending FOIA release, regardless of the context in which the release will be issued.
10. FOIA professionals are responsible for making determinations on whether records are to be released or withheld under FOIA’s exemptions and should consult with the Office of the General Counsel and subject matter experts, as appropriate, during their decision-making process prior to an impending release and making a final determination on disclosure of agency records.
11. With respect to matters in litigation, FOIA professionals should coordinate with appropriate HHS personnel and the assigned U.S. Department of Justice Attorney to ensure consistency within the Department with respect to the disclosure of agency records.

VII. Questions

If you have any questions about the applicability of this memorandum or need assistance, please contact your Operating Division FOIA Officer via the contact information found at <https://www.hhs.gov/foia/contacts/index.html> and/or contact me via William.Holzerland@hhs.gov.



Appendix A: Significant Request 1-Day Notification Process and Chief FOIA Officer's Weekly FOIA Report

I. Criteria

- A. Pertains to Significant FOIA releases, appeal releases, FOIA litigation releases, and significant additions to the FOIA library, when the request qualifies as significant under Section IV. E.
- B. Items listed above in Section I.A. are not exclusive--exercise prudent judgment and submit items that reflect the spirit and intent of this reporting requirement. If in doubt, please err on the side of inclusion.
- C. Submissions that do not meet the above criteria will not be included in the final Chief FOIA Officer's Weekly FOIA Report.
- D. Do not report Privacy Act requests, even to the extent IV. E. criteria might otherwise be met.

II. Process

- A. Submit items by e-mail to HHS_Significant_FOIA_Requests@hhs.gov within the text of the e-mail, with a copy of the entire incoming request attached to the email.
- B. Identify the requester's name, city, and state (spell out name of state).
- C. Identify the requester by affiliation (individual, organization, company, membership, etc.).
- D. Identify your OpDiv or StaffDiv as the receiving FOIA Office.
- E. For referrals of misdirected requests within HHS, the initial OpDiv or Staff Div receiving the request will report the item.
- F. For referrals of otherwise-qualifying yet misdirected requests submitted to HHS pertaining to other agencies and immediately referred to those agencies, the OpDiv or Staff Div receiving the request shall not report the item.
- G. The first time an acronym is used it should follow its full title and be in parentheses.
- H. Provide a summary of the requested records not to exceed two sentences.
- I. Italicize large publications and news organizations. Use quotes for smaller units within publications. Do not abbreviate media names.
- J. Any reference to an elected official need to include party and state affiliation, if applicable: Senator John Smith (R-NY), Representative Jane Smith (D-IN).
- K. If the FOIA request has been assigned to subordinate FOIA Offices within your OpDiv or StaffDiv, identify the Subcomponent(s) to which it has been assigned.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20201

- L. If submitting FOIA items related to prospective FOIA releases, please indicate the scope of the submission (volume of released pages or size of file), consisting of what categories of records (e-mails, data, incident reports, etc.), identifying subject matter experts consulted in the review process within your OpDiv or StaffDiv, as well as any exemptions used.
- M. Anticipated or estimated release date.
- N. Additions to the FOIA Library – For Significant Release 1-Day Notification Process and Chief FOIA Officer’s Weekly FOIA Report:
 - 1. When submitting items for efficiency and transparency, please ensure the items posted to the OpDiv or StaffDiv library include the name of the item, URL or weblink to the page where the records will be posted and quantify the volume of pages or electronically stored information.
 - a. Format:
 - i. On [MONTH, DAY, YEAR] [FULL OPDIV OR STAFFDIV NAME (ABBR.)] [description of action taken, to include posting records to the electronic library, include page count and URL].

O. FOIA Requests and/or Appeals – For Chief FOIA Officer’s Weekly FOIA Report

- 1. Media Requesters – Representatives of the News Media
 - a. Format:

On [MONTH, DAY, YEAR], [REQUESTER NAME], a reporter/representative/editor/etc. with the [News Organization] in [CITY, FULL STATE NAME], requested from the [OPDIV OR STAFFDIV NAME (ABBR.)] [description of the records sought]. (Case Number)
- 2. Individuals – All Requesters Not Affiliated with a News or Other Organization
 - a. Format:

On [MONTH, DAY, YEAR], [REQUESTER NAME], an individual in [CITY, FULL STATE NAME], requested from the [OPDIV OR STAFFDIV NAME (ABBR.)] [description of the records sought]. (Case Number COMPONENT ABBR Number)



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20201

3. Organizations – Requesters Using Company Letterhead and/or stating Their Association with an Organization
 - a. Format:

On [MONTH, DAY, YEAR], [REQUESTER NAME], a [ENTER JOB TITLE, IF UNKNOWN USE ‘representative’] with [Organization name] in [CITY, FULL STATE NAME], requested from the [OPDIV OR STAFFDIV NAME (ABBR.)] [description of the records sought]. (Case Number)
- P. FOIA Releases – For Significant FOIA Request 1-Day Notification Process and Chief FOIA Officer’s Weekly FOIA Report
 1. Format:
 - a. On [MONTH, DAY, YEAR], the [OPDIV OR STAFFDIV NAME (ABBR.)] will release to [REQUESTER NAME], [REQUESTER AFFILIATION, USING APPROPRIATE STYLE], in [CITY, FULL STATE NAME], [PAGE COUNT] of records consisting of [description of type of records] pertaining to [description of the records sought]. Portions of the release were withheld pursuant to FOIA Exemption(s) [LIST EXEMPTIONS USED]. (Case Number OPDIV/STAFFDIV Request Number)
 - b. On [MONTH, DAY, YEAR], the [OPDIV OR STAFFDIV NAME (ABBR.)] will release to [REQUESTER NAME], [REQUESTER AFFILIATION, USING APPROPRIATE STYLE], in [CITY, FULL STATE NAME], [PAGE COUNT] of records consisting of [description of type of records] pertaining to [description of the records sought]. These records were released in full. (Case Number OPDIV/STAFFDIV Request Number)
 - c. On [MONTH, DAY, YEAR], the [OPDIV OR STAFFDIV NAME (ABBR.)] will issue to [REQUESTER NAME], [REQUESTER AFFILIATION, USING APPROPRIATE STYLE] in [CITY, FULL STATE NAME], a full denial in response to his/her request pertaining to [description of the records sought]. These records were withheld pursuant to FOIA Exemption(s). [LIST EXEMPTIONS USED]. (Case Number OPDIV/STAFFDIV Request Number)
- Q. FOIA Appeals – For Chief FOIA Officer’s Weekly FOIA Report



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Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20201

1. Format:

On [MONTH, DAY, YEAR], [REQUESTER NAME], [REQUESTER AFFILIATION, USING APPROPRIATE STYLE], in [CITY, FULL STATE NAME] appealed the [OPDIV/STAFFDIV NAME (ABBR.)] response to his or her request for [description of the records sought]. The requester is contesting [provide reason or if redactions, provide page count, and exemptions cited]. (Case Number OPDIV/STAFFDIV Request Number)

R. FOIA Appeals Releases – For Significant FOIA Request 1-Day Notification process and Chief FOIA Officer’s Weekly FOIA Report

1. Format:

On [MONTH, DAY, YEAR], the [OPDIV/STAFFDIV NAME (ABBR.)] will release to [REQUESTER NAME], [REQUESTER AFFILIATION, USING APPROPRIATE STYLE] in [CITY, FULL STATE NAME], [PAGE COUNT] of records consisting of [description of type of records] pertaining to [description of the records sought]. Portions of the release were withheld pursuant to FOIA Exemption(s) [LIST EXEMPTIONS USED]. (Case Number OPDIV/STAFFDIV Request Number)

S. FOIA Litigation releases - For Significant FOIA Request 1-Day Notification process and Chief FOIA Officer’s Weekly FOIA Report

1. Format:

In the matter of [FULL CASE NAME AND CITATION], [BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COMPLAINT], [OPDIV/STAFFDIV PLANNED ACTION].

T. FOIA Activity Volume - For Chief FOIA Officer’s Weekly FOIA Report

1. Format:

- a. Requests Received:
- b. Requests Closed:
- c. Appeals Received (if applicable):
- d. Appeals Closed (if applicable):
- e. Consults Received:
- f. Consults Closed:
- g. Litigation Releases:

From: SAMHSA FOIA <FOIA@samhsa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 5:27 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Ongoing HHS FOIA operations

Hello Bill,

SAMHSA FOIA presided within the policy lab, which was eliminated, to include our immediate supervisor. The remaining staff are both PHS officers with six months or less in FOIA. This type of guidance will be appreciated so that we can continue functioning within our roles. Is it okay to continue with these requests or should our function be paused until further guidance? Additionally, for complex cases and high visibility cases given our situation, are we able to utilize you as the point of contact? This point of contact would include letters to requestors where necessary, and questions. We will also need guidance on what to do when the records offices (FOIA liaisons) have also been eliminated as currently we have no definitive leadership. Thank you in advance.

~ Michelle ~

USPHS Commissioned Corps | Government Information Specialist | Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services
Administration (SAMHSA) | National Mental Health & Substance Use Policy Lab | Phone: (b)(6)

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Wed, 2 Apr 2025 19:53:14 +0000
To: Bice, William
Cc: Pavlik-Keenan, Catrina; Bice, William
Subject: Re: Question on Offices/Reorg

Hi, Bill:

To the extent the question is how many FOIA offices HHS will have after the reorg is completed, the answer is TBD,

The language describing the organization that existed as of yesterday on HHS.gov was imprecise. For example, FDA is an Operating Division (OpDiv), but there existed numerous offices that responded to FOIAAs independent from the Commissioner, and several degrees removed from the Department.

Bottom is there is much in flux at the moment, but we will be a far more streamlined enterprise than what existed previously.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)
From: Bice, William <william.bice@hq.dhs.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 2, 2025 3:03:21 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Cc: Pavlik-Keenan, Catrina <catrina.pavlik-keenan@hq.dhs.gov>; Bice, William <william.bice@hq.dhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Question on Offices/Reorg

According to CFO report you have 12 (see below). Kindly confirm.

The HHS FOIA enterprise consists of 12 FOIA Requester Service Centers (RSCs)/FOIA Offices – all of which receive and respond to FOIA requests.

Thank you.

William (Bill) H. Bice, Jr.
Senior Advisor
DHS/Office of Privacy
(202)794-6241 (TEAMS)
(b)(6)

From: Bice, William <william.bice@hq.dhs.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 2, 2025 2:50 PM

To: william.holzerland@hhs.gov
Cc: Pavlik-Keenan, Catrina <catrina.pavlik-keenan@hq.dhs.gov>; Bice, William <william.bice@hq.dhs.gov>
Subject: Question on Offices/Reorg

Good afternoon, Bill.

Catrina asked me to reach out directly to inquire regards to the number of offices that you are now managing following recent reorganization at HHS.

Thank you.

William (Bill) H. Bice, Jr.
Senior Advisor
DHS/Office of Privacy
(202)794-6241 (TEAMS)

(b)(6)

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Tue, 8 Apr 2025 13:53:04 +0000
To: Johnson, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR); Carrion, Sonya (HHS/ASFR)
Subject: Re: ACF/CDC/FDA/NIH contracts - Opexus/AINS

Thanks, Jennifer. Much appreciated!

Sonya, I look forward to connecting as soon as time permits.

Have a great morning, all.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](#) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](#)

From: Johnson, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR) <Jennifer.Johnson@hhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 9:37 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>; Carrion, Sonya (HHS/ASFR) <Sonya.Carrion@hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: ACF/CDC/FDA/NIH contracts - Opexus/AINS

Hello William – sure happy to help. I'd like to connect you with [@Carrion, Sonya \(HHS/ASFR\)](#) – our Exec Director for systems and data, who should be able to help point you in the right direction. We are happy to get a report of contract actions as reported publicly and/or connect you with the Heads of Contracting for the impacted OpDivs. I think once you all connect, she should be able advise on next steps.

I hope this helps, let me know if I can be of further assistance!

Jennifer

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 5:01 PM
To: Johnson, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR) <Jennifer.Johnson@hhs.gov>
Subject: ACF/CDC/FDA/NIH contracts - Opexus/AINS

Good evening, Jennifer:

Christine Jones recommended I reach out to you with an acquisition question that extends across multiple OpDivs. My apologies if this question is misdirected and you ultimately need to steer me towards other parties.

In short, the CDC, NIH, ACF, and FDA-CDRH FOIA offices were significantly impacted by last week's personnel changes associated with the ongoing reorganization. Each of those entities had existing contracts with a vendor called Opexus for a product used for FOIA processing, tracking, and reporting called FOIA Xpress (and ASPA does as well).

That product used to be owned by a vendor called AINS, which was purchased by Opexus, so it's possible the initial award was issued to AINS for any or all existing contracts for the product. We do not have visibility into the status of performance on any of the non-ASPA, vehicles nor to the pending financial commitments remaining on any of them.

The question is how I can obtain a global view of the contracts to flesh out where each stand. I will be very appreciative for any information you can provide and am happy to provide additional background or answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Wed, 9 Apr 2025 16:37:08 +0000
To: Carrion, Sonya (HHS/ASFR); Johnson, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR)
Subject: RE: ACF/CDC/FDA/NIH contracts - Opexus/AINS

I'm very grateful, Sonya. I know we've all got a lot going on right now, and getting a handle on the numerous, parallel contracts for this service quickly will be enormously helpful as we consolidate the function and build efficiency.

I'm at your service if there are questions or you need background on these issues.

Have a great afternoon.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Carrion, Sonya (HHS/ASFR) <Sonya.Carrion@hhs.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 6:46 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>; Johnson, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR) <Jennifer.Johnson@hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: ACF/CDC/FDA/NIH contracts - Opexus/AINS

Good evening Bill,

Apologies for the late response, we have assigned this out to our data team to search FPDS contract records and will be in touch.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Warm regards,

Sonya Carrion
Executive Director Strategic Programs and Business Systems
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Assistant Secretary for Financial Resources | Office of Acquisitions
Phone: (b)(6)
Email: Sonya.Carrion@hhs.gov



Find out what's HHSAP'ening with all things HHS acquisition news, training, events, policy & more on the HHS Acquisition Portal

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 9:53 AM
To: Johnson, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR) <Jennifer.Johnson@hhs.gov>; Carrion, Sonya (HHS/ASFR) <Sonya.Carrion@hhs.gov>
Subject: Re: ACF/CDC/FDA/NIH contracts - Opexus/AINS

Thanks, Jennifer. Much appreciated!

Sonya, I look forward to connecting as soon as time permits.

Have a great morning, all.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)

From: Johnson, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR) <Jennifer.Johnson@hhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 9:37 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>; Carrion, Sonya (HHS/ASFR) <Sonya.Carrion@hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: ACF/CDC/FDA/NIH contracts - Opexus/AINS

Hello William – sure happy to help. I'd like to connect you with [@Carrion, Sonya \(HHS/ASFR\)](#) – our Exec Director for systems and data, who should be able to help point you in the right direction. We are happy to get a report of contract actions as reported publicly and/or connect you with the Heads of Contracting for the impacted OpDivs. I think once you all connect, she should be able advise on next steps.

I hope this helps, let me know if I can be of further assistance!

Jennifer

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 5:01 PM
To: Johnson, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR) <Jennifer.Johnson@hhs.gov>
Subject: ACF/CDC/FDA/NIH contracts - Opexus/AINS

Good evening, Jennifer:

Christine Jones recommended I reach out to you with an acquisition question that extends across multiple OpDivs. My apologies if this question is misdirected and you ultimately need to steer me towards other parties.

In short, the CDC, NIH, ACF, and FDA-CDRH FOIA offices were significantly impacted by last week's personnel changes associated with the ongoing reorganization. Each of those entities had existing contracts with a vendor called Opexus for a product used for FOIA processing, tracking, and reporting called FOIA Xpress (and ASPA does as well).

That product used to be owned by a vendor called AINS, which was purchased by Opexus, so it's possible the initial award was issued to AINS for any or all existing contracts for the product. We do not have visibility into the status of performance on any of the non-ASPA, vehicles nor to the pending financial commitments remaining on any of them.

The question is how I can obtain a global view of the contracts to flesh out where each stand. I will be very appreciative for any information you can provide and am happy to provide additional background or answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Wed, 9 Apr 2025 19:49:58 +0000
To: Alina Semo
Subject: Re: OGIS requesting updated contacts

Hi, Alina:

I'd actually prefer a far simpler solution: refer the requester to FOIA@samhsa.gov, and there are still staff responding to emails sent to/from that address. In the event a requester needs additional assistance, they're always welcome to use my office's contact info listed on HHS.gov.

With respect to commenting on personnel changes, I'd prefer that not be done, other than to the extent OGIS sees fit to comment on its own accord. The only ASPA statements on the reorganization cleared for public release have been those issued to credentialed media outlets through our comms team.

I'm working with the comms crew to ensure we have cohesive messaging on points of contact and whatnot, but it's not ready to yet. The situation is best described as fluid at the moment.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)
From: Alina Semo <alina.semo@nara.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 3:36:49 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Subject: Re: OGIS requesting updated contacts

Hi Bill (b)(6) A requester has contacted OGIS regarding a pending FOIA request to SAMHSA. (The request pre-dates last week's events by several months). We would like to include the following in our letter back to the requester:
"Since receiving your submission, it is our understanding that the FOIA staff for SAMHSA has been laid off as part of a Reduction in Force. OGIS staff contacted HHS's FOIA staff, located in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, to inquire about the current status of SAMHSA's FOIA program."

Then - is it fair for us to say:

"At this time, HHS has no information about the status of requests pending in SAMHSA's FOIA queue, and the agency could not yet provide a point of contact for pending FOIAs received by SAMHSA."

Or ... do you want us to say something different to the requester?

Thanks, Alina

Alina M. Semo

Director, Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
Phone: (202) 741-5771; Cell: (b)(6)



[OGIS Website](#)

[The FOIA Ombuds Blog](#)

X (Formerly Twitter): [@FOIA_Ombuds](#)

Physical Address:

732 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite A702
Washington, DC 20401-0001

Mailing Address:

8601 Adelphi Road – OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001

On Thu, Apr 3, 2025 at 2:17 PM Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)

<William.Holzerland@hhs.gov> wrote:

Hi, Martha:

The short answer is that I don't have specifics on most of the below. I learned about recent personnel actions by reading about them.

I have no idea what SAMHSA's status is at the moment, since I don't have a comprehensive list of who remains. I had (b) (6), but hope to be back soon. One of the directors on my team is out for the next few weeks for similar reasons and the second will be retiring in the next few weeks. We're operating a skeleton crew at the moment.

On granular issues - eg what happens when an email goes to a specified email address at an identified HHS OpDiv - we are miles away from having fixes or even a solid factual landscape for such discrete issues.

i need to manage everyone's expectations as what is clear right now is there will be widespread, significant service delays across nearly every HHS OpDiv FOIA program as we reorganize.

In the meantime, we're going to be triaging and prioritizing as best we can within my office.

Regards,

Bill

William H. Holzerland

Deputy Chief FOIA Officer

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)

From: Martha Murphy <martha.murphy@nara.gov>

Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 12:37:22 PM

To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>

Cc: Alina M. Semo <alina.semo@nara.gov>; Kirsten Mitchell <kirsten.mitchell@nara.gov>; Carrie

McGuire <carrie.mcguire@nara.gov>; Sheela Portonovo <sheela.portonovo@nara.gov>
Subject: OGIS requesting updated contacts

Dear Bill,

I understand that you and Kirsten had a chance to connect earlier this week. Thanks so much for keeping us updated.

I am reaching out to ask if you can provide us with the current status of HHS's component FOIA programs. I understand that the dust has not yet settled, but we are doing our best to keep our contacts current, particularly because we anticipate receiving more requests for assistance with HHS component requests.

Of immediate concern, we were contacted by a requester who was having difficulty communicating with SAMHSA's FOIA Public Liaison/ Requester Service Center. Normally I would reach out to the component to let them know that a requester is trying to communicate with them, but I am unsure if there is an intact FOIA team at that component to reach out to.

Also, we are curious about what is happening to emails sent to the contacts provided on FOIA.gov. For example, I see that the CDC still lists the phone numbers for Bruno Viana and Roger Andoh as well as this email address: FOIARequests@cdc.gov. We are curious what happens when, for example, someone calls those numbers or sends emails to those addresses. Again, I know it is early days, we are happy to chat by phone if you prefer.

Thank you,
Martha Wagner Murphy
Deputy Director, Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration

Phone: (b)(6)

 www.archives.gov/ogis

Website: www.archives.gov/ogis

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Wed, 9 Apr 2025 19:53:29 +0000
To: Kramer, Beth (OS/ASPA)
Cc: Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA)
Subject: Re: where should CDC FOIA matters be sent, now that it's FOIA office is gone?

Please refer them to the ASPA FOIA division's main contact info listed on HHS.gov for general matters.

If there is an internal, specific question about pending FOIA litigation, the query can be directed to OGC with a copy to Brandon.

If there is a specific policy question on a pending or new FOIA request, Arianne is going to be the starting point.

I ask that we manage internal stakeholders' expectations/pardon our dust as we implement the reorganization.

Regards,

Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)

From: Kramer, Beth (OS/ASPA) <Beth.Kramer@hhs.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 3:31:36 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Cc: Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA) <Brandon.Lancey@hhs.gov>
Subject: where should CDC FOIA matters be sent, now that it's FOIA office is gone?

Bill, see **below question**. How should I answer?

BK

From: Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA) <Brandon.Lancey@hhs.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 3:22 PM
To: Kramer, Beth (OS/ASPA) <Beth.Kramer@hhs.gov>; Taylor, Natasha (OS/ASPA) <Natasha.Taylor@hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Privacy Act contact list updates - as of April 2025

Hi, Beth.

We are working with Kerey Carter to gain access to CDC FOIA data. He is the Systems Security and Privacy Officer for CDC. That's the extent of my knowledge on who to contact for CDC-related FOIA matters. You may want to forward the email to Bill.

Brandon

Brandon L. Lancey
Government Information Specialist

Freedom of Information/Privacy Acts Division
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
Office of the Secretary (OS)
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Phone: (b)(6)

From: Kramer, Beth (OS/ASPA) <Beth.Kramer@hhs.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 3:11 PM
To: Taylor, Natasha (OS/ASPA) <Natasha.Taylor@hhs.gov>; Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA) <Brandon.Lancey@hhs.gov>
Subject: FW: Privacy Act contact list updates - as of April 2025

Natasha/Brandon,
Do you know where CDC should now be forwarding FOIA matters ?

BK

From: Oshodi, Jarell (CDC/OCOO/OCIO/CSPO) <ouq2@cdc.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 2:49 PM
To: Kramer, Beth (OS/ASPA) <Beth.Kramer@hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: Privacy Act contact list updates - as of April 2025

Hi Beth,

As you may know the CDC FOIA Office was RIF'd. Is there an HHS contact in which CDC is now forwarding FOIA matters?



Jarell Oshodi Esq, CIPM, CIPP-US
Associate Privacy Officer
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
404-498-0936 (office) | (b)(6)

Report 24x7 Cybersecurity/Privacy Incidents: **866-655-2245** | nosc@cdc.gov

From: Kramer, Beth (OS/ASPA) <Beth.Kramer@hhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 7, 2025 12:06 PM
To: OS - HHS Privacy Contacts <privacycontacts@hhs.gov>
Cc: ACF Tech Data Call (ACF/OA) <ACFTech.Data.Call@acf.hhs.gov>; ACF OCIO Privacy (ACF) <OCIO.Privacy@acf.hhs.gov>; Tran, David (CMS/OT) <david.tran4@cms.hhs.gov>; HRSA Privacy Act <PrivacyAct@hrsa.gov>; INFOPRIVACY (SAMHSA) <Info.Privacy@samhsa.hhs.gov>; Jones, Ashley (ARPA-H) [CTR] <ashley.jones@arpa-h.gov>
Subject: Privacy Act contact list updates - as of April 2025

Thank you to everyone who sent me updated Privacy Act Contact information for the attached hard-copy list, Internet-posted list, and this list serv. Attached is the hard-copy list updated for April 2025, to the extent that I can tell who is still here. It will take some time to confirm everyone we've lost.

In particular, I'm sad to report that our dear colleague Maya Bernstein is now gone. That is a huge loss for our privacy community, of not just deep privacy knowledge but institutional knowledge of HHS programs. No one could answer a privacy question as thoroughly and quickly as Maya. She was especially good at spotting issues no one else spotted, and asking, first, is this even needed/why is it needed. It will be tough not having her as a resource to call on for assistance anymore.

As a precaution, in case I'm RIF'd, I have been authorizing additional OpDiv Privacy Act Contacts to have ROCIS Privacy module "submission" privileges. If you would like someone in your Op Div to have submission privileges, please let me know. I will still do all the submitting while I'm here.

Please continue sending me updates for these lists, as they occur.
Thank you.

Beth

Beth Kramer
HHS Privacy Act Officer
FOIA/Privacy Act Division (OS/ASPA)
HHH 739G 1
(b)(6) [redacted]

From: Kramer, Beth (OS/ASPA) <Beth.Kramer@hhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 12:39 PM
To: OS - HHS Privacy Contacts <privacycontacts@hhs.gov>
Cc: ACF Tech Data Call (ACF/OA) <ACFTech.Data.Call@acf.hhs.gov>; ACF OCIO Privacy (ACF) <OCIO.Privacy@acf.hhs.gov>; HRSA Privacy Act <PrivacyAct@hrsa.gov>; INFOPRIVACY (SAMHSA) <Info.Privacy@samhsa.hhs.gov>; CDC OCOO-CSPO Privacy <privacy@cdc.gov>
Subject: BY APR 4: Privacy Act contact list updates

Happy first day of Spring!

Please let me know **by Fri Apr 4** of any updates needed to these lists:

- the "OS – HHS Privacy Contacts" list serv (members are shown on the attached hard copy list);
- the attached hard copy list (which includes more than just list serv members); and
- the Internet-posted "HHS Privacy Act Contacts" list:
<https://www.hhs.gov/foia/contacts/index.html#privacy>.

Thank you!

Beth

Beth Kramer
HHS Privacy Act Officer
FOIA/Privacy Act Division (OS/ASPA)
HHH 739G.1
(b)(6) [redacted]

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Fri, 11 Apr 2025 21:41:19 +0000
To: Peralta, Kelly (ACF)
Cc: Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA); Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA)
Subject: ACF FOIA matters

Hi, Kelly:

I am hoping we can connect early next week on a few FOIA questions. As part of the Department's ongoing reorganization, we're going to be assuming existing and new FOIA work that was until recently performed by the ACF FOIA office. To that end, we'll need to quickly get up to speed, gain electronic access to pending requests/appeals/litigation, and access to ACF's FOIA tracking system, FOIA Xpress.

In addition to substantive workload question marks, I imagine there will be tech and logistical hurdles we'll help identify resolutions to. With respect to FOIA XPress, there is added complexity I can fill you in on regarding the status of the Department's various contracts with the vendor that owns the product many of us use. I'm happy to give a quick download on that as well.

I hope you're well and look forward to chatting soon. Have a nice weekend!

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Mon, 14 Apr 2025 15:20:54 +0000
To: Klocinski, Jennifer (ACL)
Cc: Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA); Daley, Garfield (ACL)
Subject: RE: ACL FOIA matters

Of course, I understand. The situation is developing rapidly, but the COS is set on centralizing this function (and many others) to a high degree and we can convey her wishes to necessary parties.

Regards,
Bill

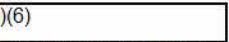
William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Klocinski, Jennifer (ACL) <Jennifer.Klocinski@acl.hhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2025 11:18 AM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Cc: Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA) <Brandon.Lancey@hhs.gov>; Daley, Garfield (ACL) <Garfield.Daley@acl.hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: ACL FOIA matters

Thank you for the heads up. I'll need to brief my leadership before we get started. Otherwise, I should be able to meet whenever my calendar is open.

Best,

Jen

Jennifer Klocinski
Deputy Chief of Staff and Executive Secretary
Administration for Community Living
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
O: 202-795-7377
C: (b)(6) 
ACL.gov | [Facebook](#) | [X](#) | [LinkedIn](#)
[Subscribe to ACL Updates](#)

ACL is an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
Please note: All emails sent to or from this address will be permanently archived.

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Mon, 14 Apr 2025 17:13:55 +0000
To: Fields, Kendra (ACF)
Subject: RE: FOIA Operations

Hi, Kendra:

I hope you're hanging in there in these very interesting times! I received an invite from Ben Goldhaber to discuss this very question tomorrow.

The short answer here is that as part of the Department's ongoing reorganization, we're going to be assuming existing and new FOIA work that was until recently performed by the ACF FOIA office. The details of how that will work are getting fleshed out, but we're going to have to get up to speed quickly on all pending FOIA requests and litigation.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Fields, Kendra (ACF) <Kendra.Fields@acf.hhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 14, 2025 12:56 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Subject: FOIA Operations

Good afternoon Bill, and I hope all is well. I just wanted to check in, to see if you were able to provide any insight on the upcoming FOIA operations for ACF?

Kind regards,

Kendra Fields
Supervisory Management Analyst
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families (ACF) | Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
202-309-5663

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Wed, 16 Apr 2025 16:41:10 +0000
To: Henneman, Jeffrey (OS/ASPA); Johnson, Danielle (OS/ASPA); Jones, Christine (OS/ASPA)
Subject: RE: For completion: SSF FY25 MYR questionnaire (ASFR) – Due Friday, April 18, 3pm

At this time, ASPA is not able to provide a reasonable estimate of the SSF FOIA work or resource needs for the remainder of FY25. FOIA staff at ACF, ACL, CDC, FDA, NIH, and SAMHSA have been recently RIF'd and the OS FOIA team will need to pick up a volume of ongoing and new work that is still being quantified. It is unknown at this time if additional personnel or funding will be dedicated to the absorption of existing HHS FOIA programs, necessitating completion of statutorily-mandated daily work and litigation, far beyond the capacity of the current OS FOIA team. Accordingly, we ask that all current ASPA employees with SSF FOIA payroll distributions be changed to ASPA GDM as work on existing SSF FOIA requests and appeals will be paused pending future reorganization plans in favor of devoting resources to monthly litigation productions. We are happy to discuss in the meeting to be scheduled.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Henneman, Jeffrey (OS/ASPA) <Jeffrey.Henneman@hhs.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 16, 2025 12:14 PM
To: Johnson, Danielle (OS/ASPA) <Danielle.Johnson@hhs.gov>; Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>; Jones, Christine (OS/ASPA) <Christine.Jones@hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: For completion: SSF FY25 MYR questionnaire (ASFR) – Due Friday, April 18, 3pm

Draft FOIA response...

At this time, ASPA is not able to provide a reasonable estimate of the SSF FOIA work or resource needs for the remainder of FY25. Many FOIA staff in other OpDivs have been recently RIF'd (add detail if you want) and the ASPA/FOIA team will need to pick up these duties. It is unknown at this time if they are to receive additional personnel or funding to perform this work, which is far beyond the capacity of the current ASPA/FOIA team, both SSF and GDM. Accordingly, we ask that all current ASPA employees with SSF FOIA payroll distributions be changed to ASPA GDM as work on SSF FOIA requests and appeals will be suspended pending future reorganization plans. We are happy to discuss in the meeting to be scheduled.

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Thu, 17 Apr 2025 14:00:25 +0000
To: Steel, Lindsay (OIP)
Cc: Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA); Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA)
Subject: National FOIA portal updates

Good morning, Lindsay:

In light of the ongoing HHS reorganization, we must request certain updates to routing from the national FOIA portal. For now, requests for Administration for Children & Families (ACF) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) will need rerouting to the Department. Please let us know what you need from us to effect that change.

I expect routing changes relative to requests submitted to the Administration for Community Living (ACL) ^{(b)(5)}

(b)(5)

Thank you and have a good morning.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Thu, 17 Apr 2025 15:58:04 +0000
To: Steel, Lindsay (OIP); DeJong, Gina (OIP)
Cc: Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA); Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA)
Subject: RE: National FOIA portal updates

Thanks, Lindsay.

Gina, my team will be glad to work with you on this. My most immediate concern is that individuals who worked with ACF and CDC and "managed" the settings discussed below are no longer with HHS, so we'll have to sort that out.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Steel, Lindsay (OIP) <Lindsay.Steel@usdoj.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2025 11:33 AM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Cc: Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA) <Arianne.Perkins@hhs.gov>; Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA) <Brandon.Lancey@hhs.gov>; DeJong, Gina (OIP) <Gina.DeJong@usdoj.gov>
Subject: RE: National FOIA portal updates

Hi Bill,

FOIA.gov Agency Managers can update the portal submission options for each component. For example, CDC is currently set to API with the below settings. You can adjust the API settings to ingest to a different system (strongly suggest you test this first on stg-admin.foia.gov to ensure it works successfully, see attached instructions), or switch the Portal Submission Format to email and update the submission email to whatever address should receive the requests.

PORTAL SUBMISSION OPTIONS *

Portal Submission Format *

API

Select the means by which the Portal should submit requests to the Agency Component.

▼ EMAIL SUBMISSIONS

Submission Email

FOIARequests@cdc.gov

▼ API SUBMISSIONS

Submission API URL

<https://foia.cdc.gov/Components/1/Requests/CreateRequest>

- Provide the fully-qualified URL, including the protocol (e.g., `https://`), to which the Portal should submit requests received for your Component.
- This must be an external URL, such as `https://example.com`.

Submission API Shared Secret

45d24661-20cb-4023-a1b8-65bf19fdd7aa

Provide a shared secret key which will be included in the headers with requests sent to your Component by the Portal as a means of verifying the request originates from the Portal.

I'm adding Gina DeJong to assist with any troubleshooting.

Thanks,
Lindsay

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 17, 2025 10:00 AM
To: Steel, Lindsay (OIP) <Lindsay.Steel@usdoj.gov>
Cc: Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA) <Arianne.Perkins@hhs.gov>; Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA) <Brandon.Lancey@hhs.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] National FOIA portal updates

Good morning, Lindsay:

In light of the ongoing HHS reorganization, we must request certain updates to routing from the national FOIA portal. For now, requests for Administration for Children & Families (ACF) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) will need rerouting to the Department. Please let us know what you need from us to effect that change.

I expect routing changes relative to requests submitted to the Administration for Community Living (ACL). (b) (5)

(b) (5)

Thank you and have a good morning.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland

Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Mon, 21 Apr 2025 19:21:06 +0000
To: Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA); Bentley, Chandra J. (CDC/OCOO/OD); Formoso, Paula (HHS/ASPA)
Cc: Bentley, Chandra J. (CDC/OCOO/OD); Carter, Kerey (CDC/OCOO/OCIO/CSPO)
Subject: RE: CDC FOIA Requests- Inquiry

As we're undergoing the reorganization, it likely also makes sense to identify the party/parties that can update <https://www.cdc.gov/foia/> to ensure it mirrors the Departmental FOIA contact info found here: <https://www.hhs.gov/foia/contacts/index.html>.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA) <Arianne.Perkins@hhs.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 21, 2025 3:10 PM
To: Bentley, Chandra J. (CDC/OCOO/OD) <cje2@cdc.gov>; OS FOIA Request (HHS/ASPA) <FOIARequest@hhs.gov>; HHS FOIA Public Liaison (OS/ASPA) <HHS_FOIA_Public_Liaison@hhs.gov>; Formoso, Paula (HHS/ASPA) <Paula.Formoso@hhs.gov>
Cc: Bentley, Chandra J. (CDC/OCOO/OD) <cje2@cdc.gov>; Carter, Kerey (CDC/OCOO/OCIO/CSPO) <kvc2@cdc.gov>; Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: CDC FOIA Requests- Inquiry

Good afternoon Chandra,

Our Deputy Chief FOIA Officer, Bill Holzerland, has been working with Kerey Carter in CDC OCIO to gain access to CDC mailboxes and FOIA tracking system. Until we have a solution, you can direct FOIA requests to our office. We have staff monitoring our mailbox (FOIARequest@hhs.gov) to ensure requests are properly routed.

Best regards,

Arianne M. Perkins
Director, Initial FOIA Requests
FOI/PA Division
Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
Office of the Secretary (OS)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
(202) 841-2789

From: Bentley, Chandra J. (CDC/OCOO/OD) <cje2@cdc.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 21, 2025 2:16 PM
To: Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA) <Arianne.Perkins@hhs.gov>; OS FOIA Request (HHS/ASPA) <FOIARequest@hhs.gov>; HHS FOIA Public Liaison (OS/ASPA) <HHS_FOIA_Public_Liaison@hhs.gov>; Formoso, Paula (HHS/ASPA) <Paula.Formoso@hhs.gov>
Cc: Bentley, Chandra J. (CDC/OCOO/OD) <cje2@cdc.gov>
Subject: CDC FOIA Requests- Inquiry

Good afternoon,

Following the recent RIF terminations, CDC no longer has staff handling FOIA requests. Can someone please confirm that we should be directing requests to FOIARequest@hhs.gov? If not, is there a specific email address that we should use? CDC's entire FOIA office was eliminated, and we need to ensure that we are responsive to any requests received and be able to provide accurate contact information to those who inquire. May we also have a named POC?

I look forward to your response.

Regards,



Chandra Joy Bentley
Senior Operations Officer, CDC

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
404-718-1467 (office) (b)(6)

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Tue, 22 Apr 2025 14:21:39 +0000
To: Alina Semo
Subject: RE: OGIS requesting updated contacts

Quick update – the [ACF FOIA page](#) was updated today to reflect the Department's contact info. I'd prefer to funnel people to the email addresses listed on the page (as opposed to the ACFO one) for general customer service inquiries.

Our customers can expect the email addresses to get updated shortly – there are too many email addresses with unclear purposes at the moment scattered across numerous components of HHS. That's not going to get remedied instantly either, but it's something I intend we rectify relatively quickly, and in any case, as soon as practicable. This will help us enhance the services we provide in the long run.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 8:52 AM
To: Alina Semo <alina.semo@nara.gov>
Subject: Re: OGIS requesting updated contacts

Hi, Alina:

Nothing has changed on appeals; for CMS and FDA appeals, since those OpDivs process their own, they must follow the instructions in disposition letters and send to the specified addresses. For all others; requesters must do the same; but the destination is ASPA for those appeals.

For ACF, we gained access to their tracking system last night. Requesters can contact my team for status using the contact info on HHS.gov/foia.

With respect to CDC, we're expecting to gain access to their tracking system within days - hopefully, this week.

We're working with web team to update all the sites to reflect updated contact info, but that's taking time. In addition to the tracking systems; we expect to gain access to those OpDivs' FOIA email addresses, and we will update those who have inquired as quickly as we can. Plan on that taking a substantial amount of time to execute because we are positively buried.

With respect to SAMHSA, that agency's main FOIA email address is still being minded; to the extent requesters may have been emailing individuals who are no longer here directly, I would expect bouncebacks.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)

From: Alina Semo <alina.semo@nara.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 8:35 AM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Subject: Re: OGIS requesting updated contacts

Hi Bill! Hope you are hanging in there. We are continuing to get inquiries related to HHS component requests. The latest include ACF, CDC and SAMSA. These requesters are asking about the status of their requests. Their emails are bouncing back. Could you please let us know if there are better email addresses we should be providing to requesters for these components? And is anyone checking the incoming emails and responding? OR ... do we ask them to redirect their emails to the email you last suggested: hhs.acfo@hhs.gov?

With regard to administrative appeals - where should we direct requesters to file their appeals from HHS component agencies?

Thanks for your guidance. - Alina

Alina M. Semo
Director, Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
Phone: (202) 741-5771; Cell: (b)(6)



[OGIS Website](#)

[The FOIA Ombuds](#) Blog

X (Formerly Twitter): [@FOIA_Ombuds](#)

Physical Address:

732 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite A702
Washington, DC 20401-0001

Mailing Address:

8601 Adelphi Road – OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001

On Wed, Apr 9, 2025 at 7:15 PM Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)

<William.Holzerland@hhs.gov> wrote:

Absolutely. Glad to connect as necessary!

Regards,

Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)

From: Alina Semo <alina.semo@nara.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 5:31:38 PM

To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>

Subject: Re: OGIS requesting updated contacts

Bill: No need to apologize - I am so sorry for everything that our FOIA colleagues are experiencing - including you! If you don't mind, I may check in with you periodically to see if there are any updates we can provide our customers. - Alina

Alina M. Semo

Director, Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
Phone: (202) 741-5771; Cell: (b)(6)



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Physical Address:

732 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite A702
Washington, DC 20401-0001

Mailing Address:

8601 Adelphi Road – OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001

On Wed, Apr 9, 2025 at 4:07 PM Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)

<William.Holzerland@hhs.gov> wrote:

Always a pleasure to be of service and my apologies for the hassle here.

My hope is folks might pardon our dust for a brief moment and then will benefit from intended improvements.

The email address below is the best one. I am grateful for the OGIS team appreciate you handling these types of inquiries.

Have a great afternoon!

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)

From: Alina Semo <alina.semo@nara.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 4:04:25 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Subject: Re: OGIS requesting updated contacts

Hi Bill: Thanks so much for the quick response, I really appreciate it. The main HHS FOIA website says: "If you have any questions or concerns regarding FOIA, please feel free to send an email to HHS.ACFO@hhs.gov." - Is that the email we should provide? Or is there a better one?

Alina M. Semo

Director, Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
Phone: (202) 741-5771; Cell: (b)(6)



[OGIS Website](#)

[The FOIA Ombuds Blog](#)

X (Formerly Twitter): [@FOIA_Ombuds](#)

Physical Address:

732 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite A702
Washington, DC 20401-0001

Mailing Address:

8601 Adelphi Road – OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001

On Wed, Apr 9, 2025 at 3:50 PM Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)

<William.Holzerland@hhs.gov> wrote:

Hi, Alina:

I'd actually prefer a far simpler solution: refer the requester to FOIA@samhsa.gov, and there are still staff responding to emails sent to/from that address. In the event a requester needs additional assistance, they're always welcome to use my office's contact info listed on HHS.gov.

With respect to commenting on personnel changes, I'd prefer that not be done, other than to the extent OGIS sees fit to comment on its own accord. The only ASPA statements on the reorganization cleared for public release have been those issued to credentialed media outlets through our comms team.

I'm working with the comms crew to ensure we have cohesive messaging on points of contact and whatnot, but it's not ready to yet. The situation is best described as fluid at the moment.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)

From: Alina Semo <alina.semo@nara.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 9, 2025 3:36:49 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Subject: Re: OGIS requesting updated contacts

Hi Bill (b)(6) A requester has contacted OGIS regarding a pending FOIA request to SAMHSA. (The request pre-dates last week's events by several months). We would like to include the following in our letter back to the requester:

"Since receiving your submission, it is our understanding that the FOIA staff for SAMHSA has been laid off as part of a Reduction in Force. OGIS staff contacted HHS's FOIA staff, located in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, to inquire about the current status of SAMHSA's FOIA program."

Then - is it fair for us to say:

"At this time, HHS has no information about the status of requests pending in SAMHSA's FOIA queue, and the agency could not yet provide a point of contact for pending FOIAs received by SAMHSA."

Or ... do you want us to say something different to the requester?

Thanks, Alina

Alina M. Semo
Director, Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
Phone: (202) 741-5771; Cell: (b)(6)



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Physical Address:

732 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite A702
Washington, DC 20401-0001

Mailing Address:

8601 Adelphi Road – OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001

On Thu, Apr 3, 2025 at 2:17 PM Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)

<William.Holzerland@hhs.gov> wrote:

Hi, Martha:

The short answer is that I don't have specifics on most of the below. I learned about recent personnel actions by reading about them.

I have no idea what SAMHSA's status is at the moment, since I don't have a comprehensive list of who remains. I(b) (6) [REDACTED], but hope to be back soon. One of the directors on my team is out for the next few weeks for similar reasons and the second will be retiring in the next few weeks. We're operating a skeleton crew at the moment.

On granular issues - eg what happens when an email goes to a specified email address at an identified HHS OpDiv - we are miles away from having fixes or even a solid factual landscape for such discrete issues.

i need to manage everyone's expectations as what is clear right now is there will be widespread, significant service delays across nearly every HHS OpDiv FOIA program as we reorganize.

In the meantime, we're going to be triaging and prioritizing as best we can within my office.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland

Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)

From: Martha Murphy <martha.murphy@nara.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 3, 2025 12:37:22 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Cc: Alina M. Semo <alina.semo@nara.gov>; Kirsten Mitchell <kirsten.mitchell@nara.gov>; Carrie McGuire <carrie.mcguire@nara.gov>; Sheela Portonovo <sheela.portonovo@nara.gov>
Subject: OGIS requesting updated contacts

Dear Bill,

I understand that you and Kirsten had a chance to connect earlier this week. Thanks so much for keeping us updated.

I am reaching out to ask if you can provide us with the current status of HHS's component FOIA programs. I understand that the dust has not yet settled, but we are doing our best to keep our contacts current, particularly because we anticipate receiving more requests for assistance with HHS component requests.

Of immediate concern, we were contacted by a requester who was having difficulty communicating with SAMHSA's FOIA Public Liaison/ Requester Service Center. Normally I would reach out to the component to let them know that a requester is trying to communicate with them, but I am unsure if there is an intact FOIA team at that component to reach out to.

Also, we are curious about what is happening to emails sent to the contacts provided on FOIA.gov. For example, I see that the CDC still lists the phone numbers for Bruno Viana and Roger Andoh as well as this email address: FOIARequests@cdc.gov. We are curious what happens when, for example, someone calls those numbers or sends emails to those addresses. Again, I know it is early days, we are happy to chat by phone if you prefer.

Thank you,

Martha Wagner Murphy
Deputy Director, Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration

Phone: (b)(6)



Website: www.archives.gov/ogis

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Thu, 24 Apr 2025 14:42:40 +0000
To: Haynes, Benjamin (CDC/OD/OC)
Cc: Nixon, Andrew (HHS/ASPA); Nahill, Liam (HHS/ASPA)
Subject: RE: CDC Web Access

Thanks, Liam. Ben, the ask is straightforward and I'm hoping it can be executed with alacrity.

While we expect in the long term there will be a need to revamp the FOIA pages generally as we implement the Secretary's vision for radical transparency, in the interim, it would be immensely helpful if we could update these pages now to point to the Department's FOIA office: <https://www.cdc.gov/foia/faq/index.html> and <https://www.cdc.gov/foia/about/index.html>.

We seek to ensure the contact info mirrors the Departmental FOIA contact info found here: <https://www.hhs.gov/foia/contacts/index.html>.

In short, we've been working with other parties in CDC to gain access to ongoing and new CDC FOIA requests and litigation for several weeks. (b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5) I'm happy to discuss if that's easiest.

Thanks, all, and have a good morning.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Nahill, Liam (HHS/ASPA) <Liam.Nahill@hhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 10:24 AM
To: Haynes, Benjamin (CDC/OD/OC) <fxq2@cdc.gov>
Cc: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>; Nixon, Andrew (HHS/ASPA) <Andrew.Nixon@hhs.gov>
Subject: CDC Web Access

Hi Ben!

Does your team have any handle on the CDC website to make updates to pages, specifically for FOIA? We need to redirect a page ASAP and I'm hoping to know if CDC

can help with this project - could you direct me to the right contact?

Adding William with more info on the matter.

Liam Nahill
Online Communications Director | HHS, ASPA

Liam.Nahill@hhs.gov | (b)(6)

Confidential and deliberative, pre-decisional communication

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Fri, 25 Apr 2025 20:59:18 +0000
To: Haynes, Benjamin (CDC/OD/OC)
Cc: Nixon, Andrew (HHS/ASPA); Nahill, Liam (HHS/ASPA); Witkofsky, Nina (CDC/IOD)
Subject: Re: CDC Web Access

Thanks, Ben. I know there are many things happening concurrently.

(b)(5)

If I can help, please don't hesitate to call. We appreciate the efforts on this front.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: [\(202\) 260-6635](tel:(202)260-6635) Mobile: [\(202\) 809-7774](tel:(202)809-7774)
From: Haynes, Benjamin (CDC/OD/OC) <fxq2@cdc.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2025 1:13:51 PM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Cc: Nixon, Andrew (HHS/ASPA) <Andrew.Nixon@hhs.gov>; Nahill, Liam (HHS/ASPA) <Liam.Nahill@hhs.gov>; Witkofsky, Nina (CDC/IOD) <qlq0@cdc.gov>
Subject: Re: CDC Web Access

Understand your frustration here, but our entire web team was RIF'd. We've been trying to find somebody with access. Will keep you updated.

Benjamin N. Haynes
(A) Deputy Director | Communications
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services

(b)(6)

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2025 12:47 PM
To: Haynes, Benjamin (CDC/OD/OC) <fxq2@cdc.gov>
Cc: Nixon, Andrew (HHS/ASPA) <Andrew.Nixon@hhs.gov>; Nahill, Liam (HHS/ASPA) <Liam.Nahill@hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: CDC Web Access

Hi, Ben:

I just checked the pages and see we've not yet executed these updates.

(b)(5)

When will this be completed?

Thanks again.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Haynes, Benjamin (CDC/OD/OC) <fxq2@cdc.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 11:31 AM
To: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Cc: Nixon, Andrew (HHS/ASPA) <Andrew.Nixon@hhs.gov>; Nahill, Liam (HHS/ASPA) <Liam.Nahill@hhs.gov>
Subject: Re: CDC Web Access

Got it

Benjamin N. Haynes
(A) Deputy Director | Communications
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services

(b)(6)

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 10:42 AM
To: Haynes, Benjamin (CDC/OD/OC) <fxq2@cdc.gov>
Cc: Nixon, Andrew (HHS/ASPA) <Andrew.Nixon@hhs.gov>; Nahill, Liam (HHS/ASPA) <Liam.Nahill@hhs.gov>
Subject: RE: CDC Web Access

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In short, we've been working with other parties in CDC to gain access to ongoing and new CDC FOIA requests and litigation for several weeks.

(b)(5)

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(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Thanks, all, and have a good morning.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Nahill, Liam (HHS/ASPA) <Liam.Nahill@hhs.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2025 10:24 AM
To: Haynes, Benjamin (CDC/OD/OC) <fxq2@cdc.gov>
Cc: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA) <William.Holzerland@hhs.gov>; Nixon, Andrew (HHS/ASPA) <Andrew.Nixon@hhs.gov>
Subject: CDC Web Access

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Adding William with more info on the matter.

Liam Nahill
Online Communications Director | HHS, ASPA
Liam.Nahill@hhs.gov | (b)(6)

Confidential and deliberative, pre-decisional communication

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Thu, 8 May 2025 18:38:37 +0000
To: Smolin, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR); Stacy, Jennifer (OS/ASFR/DOSB)
Cc: Johnson, Danielle (OS/ASPA); Henneman, Jeffrey (OS/ASPA); Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA); Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA)
Subject: RE: FOIA attorney fees/budget question

All:

I ended up on a call with CDC right after we spoke this afternoon and this topic came up. They're going to get us a name for someone who can certify funds for CDC, but they're tracking on outstanding settlements we're currently working to resolve.

Whatever the particulars of the vehicle through which funds are exchanged with CDC here, I strongly prefer - and suspect everyone would join me in this - that it be uniform across OpDivs – it would be nonsensical to have X arrangement with CDC, Y arrangement with NIH, etc., leaving us with truckloads of stuff to track concurrently. I'm now involved in a similar discussion with respect to NIH FOIA suits since we're inheriting them in 3 weeks.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 1:00 PM
To: Smolin, Jennifer (HHS/ASFR) <Jennifer.Smolin@hhs.gov>; Stacy, Jennifer (OS/ASFR/DOSB) <Jennifer.Stacy@hhs.gov>
Cc: Johnson, Danielle (OS/ASPA) <Danielle.Johnson@hhs.gov>; Henneman, Jeffrey (OS/ASPA) <Jeffrey.Henneman@hhs.gov>; Perkins, Arianne (OS/ASPA) <Arianne.Perkins@hhs.gov>; Lancey, Brandon (OS/ASPA) <Brandon.Lancey@hhs.gov>
Subject: FOIA attorney fees/budget question

Hi, all:

Been awhile – hope you're hanging in there in these busy times!

Here's an interesting and practical question that we're facing at the moment. The former ACF and CDC FOIA office workloads are now part of the OS-FOIA program in their entirety. Given that fact, there exists no practical difference between GDM and SSF in certain respects, although we recognize the anti-deficiency act problems synthesizing the workload into a single, unified pile may raise.

We have ACF and CDC lawsuits where plaintiffs have made fee demands. Whether we're going to be stuck with a bill isn't the question for either case – we will, and the only issue remaining is whether it's court-ordered or not. However, in these matters, hypothetically, had there been appeals at issue (a service for which we never charged ACF for inexplicable reasons, yet charged CDC), we might have been faced in the past with a situation where OS plus a given OpDiv had to figure out how to split the bill.

Here, we own the lawsuits and the bill even though OS was not involved in those matters prior to now

(b)(5)

I ask this because we're going to be settling the amounts two cases I mention posthaste, and the settlements usually contain language requiring the bill to be paid within X days (or a court can mandate it), so this is an immediate concern.

FYSA, OS owned 59 outstanding lawsuits on 4/1; we inherited 17 from ACF and 29 from CDC. This is work we need to deal with concurrent with the existing workload – not sequentially - and doesn't account for ~70 lawsuits pending at FDA, another ~70 at NIH, and an unidentified volume from other OpDivs we'll inherit soon from other parties as the reorganization gets implemented.

My concern is we're almost certainly going to be cutting checks at a rapid pace in a high volume of cases in quick succession, so we will need to plan for this. Thanks again and I wanted to get this conversation rolling.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774

From: Holzerland, William (HHS/ASPA)
Sent: Fri, 9 May 2025 15:31:34 +0000
To: Aleshire, Noah (CDC/OD/OPPE)
Subject: CDC FOIA attorney fees pay logistics

Hi, Noah:

Here's where we stand on one of the challenging issues we discussed. I met with ASFR yesterday to discuss the path forward on the budget front for FY25 and in future years. The FOIA enterprise is one of several services that will get redefined in terms of shared services and the like.

I posed the question of whether the Department would pay attorney fee tabs and ASFR would work out the particulars with the respective OpDiv(s) involved, but they said no for now. For the immediate future, ASFR gave guidance that for attorney fees awarded or settled in FOIA cases that must be paid immediately in FY25 must continue to be paid by the OpDiv that normally would have paid those bills.

The reason this is an immediate practical problem is that we're likely to have a series of cases where we settle fees arise in close succession. There's one on the docket (ICAN; 24-cv-00203) that just came to my attention where plaintiff apparently demanded \$15,605 to settle the case prior to the reorganization and has gotten impatient with the agency in the intervening timeframe.

In this matter, CDC originally released 685 pages of records, and after suit, re-released responsive material totaling 727 pages, including 42 additional pages released in full. It's likely the plaintiff prevailed at least in part, but we don't have a full picture of why we changed position during litigation. The odds we'd get out of this one without paying any fees are so low they're not worth quantifying.

(b)(5)

Bottom line, I have authority to approve settlements in FOIA matters for the Department, but here, it would involve committing CDC funds, so want to ensure alignment. There's risk plaintiff will immediately file a motion demanding the full amount, so time is of the essence for us here.

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Thanks and please let me know your thoughts.

Regards,
Bill

William H. Holzerland
Deputy Chief FOIA Officer
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Desk: (202) 260-6635 Mobile: (202) 809-7774