



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

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

Litigation No: 25cv1020
HHS Case No.: 2025-100005-FOIA-CDC

September 30, 2025

Sent via email to:

Amanda Bangle
CREW
Citizens for Responsible Ethics in Washington
abangle@citizensforethics.org

Dear Ms. Bangle:

This is the final response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), dated April 1, 2025, requesting:

1. All guidance, communications, memoranda, directives, policies, or other final directives relating to CDC's plan to take down its FOIA portal website at <https://foia.cdc.gov/>.
2. All guidance, communications, memoranda, directives, policies, or other final directives relating to CDC's plan to provide an automated email response to requesters' FOIA emails.

We received your request in our office on April 1, 2025.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and HHS' Office of the Chief Information Officer located 254 responsive pages. After a careful review, we have determined that portions of those pages are exempt from disclosure pursuant to Exemptions (b)(5) and (b)(6) of the FOIA (5 U.S.C. §552), as described below. Accordingly, your request is granted in part.

FOIA exemption (b)(5) protects inter-agency or intra-agency memoranda or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency. This exemption protects documents that would be covered by any privilege an agency could assert in a civil proceeding. These privileges include, among others, the deliberative process privilege, the attorney-client privilege, and the attorney work-product privilege. In this instance, the deliberative process and attorney-client privileges apply.

We are withholding portions of the responsive records pursuant to Exemption (b)(6). Exemption (b)(6) protects "personnel and medical files and similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." The Supreme Court has held that the term "similar files" must be interpreted broadly to include any information that applies to a particular individual. *See Dep't of State v. Washington Post Co.*, 456 U.S. 595, 602 (1982).

The records at issue contain personal identifying information, including cell phone numbers of agency employees. Disclosure of this information would not shed light on the operations or activities of the government and would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. Accordingly, this information has been withheld. To further FOIA's goal of ensuring transparency with respect to agency operations, we are releasing the work-related cell phone numbers of certain officials with direct FOIA responsibilities. Specifically, the records include the cell phone numbers of the Deputy Agency Chief FOIA Officer and me (Office of the Secretary's FOIA Officer), which are being disclosed to you.

Should you have questions or concerns regarding the Department's response and\or the processing of your request, any such issues should be communicated to your legal counsel and Mason Bracken, mason.bracken@usdoj.gov, the Department of Justice Attorney representing the Department in this matter

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Arianne M. Perkins".

Arianne M. Perkins
Director, Initial FOIA Requests
FOI/Privacy Acts Division

Enclosures:
Responsive Records (254 pages)