



OFFICE *of* GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES  
*and* RECORDS  
ADMINISTRATION

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[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Re: Case No. 201501258  
NG: CM: AS

Dear [REDACTED]:

This responds to your September 25, 2015, request for assistance from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), pertaining to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Thank you for contacting OGIS.

Congress created OGIS as the Federal FOIA Ombudsman to complement existing FOIA practice and procedure; we strive to work in conjunction with the agency's request and appeal process. The goal is for OGIS to allow, whenever practical, the requester to exhaust his or her remedies within the agency, including the appeal process. OGIS serves as the Federal FOIA Ombudsman and our jurisdiction is limited to assisting with the FOIA process.

We have reviewed your submission and we understand that you made two requests to the FBI for records about yourself, Case Nos. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to which the FBI responded on May 27, 2014, and August 24, 2015, respectively.

We contacted the Department of Justice Office of Information Policy (OIP) to inquire about any appeals that were filed for these requests. OIP Attorney [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] administratively closed on that basis.

It also appears from your submission that you did not appeal the FBI's response to No. [REDACTED]. The appeal is an important part of the FOIA administrative process because it preserves your administrative rights and gives an agency's attorneys a chance to carefully review every part of a request, from the search that was conducted to any decision the agency made to withhold records. Because OGIS strives to work in cooperation with the administrative process, we cannot provide substantive assistance with requests that have not been administratively appealed.

If you still wish to have this request considered on appeal, you may do so by submitting a new request to FBI for the same records you sought in your previous requests. While the FBI may close this new request as a duplicate, you will still be allowed to appeal the FBI's determination and may file a new appeal within the 60 day deadline. According to Mr. Hurd, requesters may employ this process for any requests for which the appeal deadline is missed. Mr. Hurd further explained that it would be helpful to OIP's attorneys if you could explain that OGIS provided you this direction based on a conversation between an OGIS facilitator and Mr. Hurd, and enclose a copy of this letter with your appeal letter.

I hope this information about your request is useful to you. Thank you for bringing this matter to OGIS; at this time there is no further action for us to take and we will consider this matter closed.

Sincerely,

/S/

JAMES V.M.L HOLZER  
Director

cc: DOJ FOIA Office, via email