



OFFICE of GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

May 7, 2015 -- Sent via email

Re: Case No. 201500202
NG: CM: CL

Dear [REDACTED]

This responds to your December 9, 2014 request for assistance from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), which we received the same day via email. Your request for assistance pertains to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, No. [REDACTED], which you originally submitted to the Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA). EOUSA referred your request to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) for processing.

Congress created OGIS to complement existing FOIA practice and procedure; we strive to work in conjunction with the existing 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 has no investigatory or enforcement power, nor can we compel an agency to release documents. OGIS serves as the Federal FOIA Ombudsman and our jurisdiction is limited to assisting with the FOIA process.

We carefully reviewed your submission of information, and we understand that you are concerned about DEA's delay in responding to your FOIA request. OGIS Facilitator Christa Lemelin reached out DEA FOIA Public Liaison Phyllis Scott Drewery to learn more about the status of your request.


As you may know, not all records are releasable under the FOIA. Congress established certain categories of information that agencies are not required to be released in response to a FOIA request because release would harm government or private interests. These categories are called "exemptions." Ms. Drewery said that the records you requested contain exempt and non-exempt information that required DEA to do a line-by-line review of the 15,000 responsive pages to ensure that the DEA released all the information it could while protecting government and individual interests. In your case, Ms. Drewery explained that many of the responsive records include personal information relating to [REDACTED]. Ms. Drewery said that DEA made numerous interim releases to you, and I understand that as of [REDACTED], DEA finished processing your request and made its final response to you.

If you disagree with DEA's response to your request, you may wish to appeal according to the directions in the agency's correspondence. 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 and reconsider every part of a request, from the adequacy of the search that was conducted to any decision the

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May 7, 2015

Page 2 of 2

agency made to withhold records.

I hope you find this information useful. Thank you for contacting OGIS; we will now consider this matter closed.

Sincerely,

Nikki Gramian, Acting Director
Office of Government Information Services

cc: Phyllis Scott Drewery, DEA FOIA Public Liaison, via email