



OFFICE *of* GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION SERVICES

Webinar: FOIA Requests for CDC COVID-19 Records

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
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May 12, 2020
Alina M. Semo, Director

Introduction to CDC and ATSDR

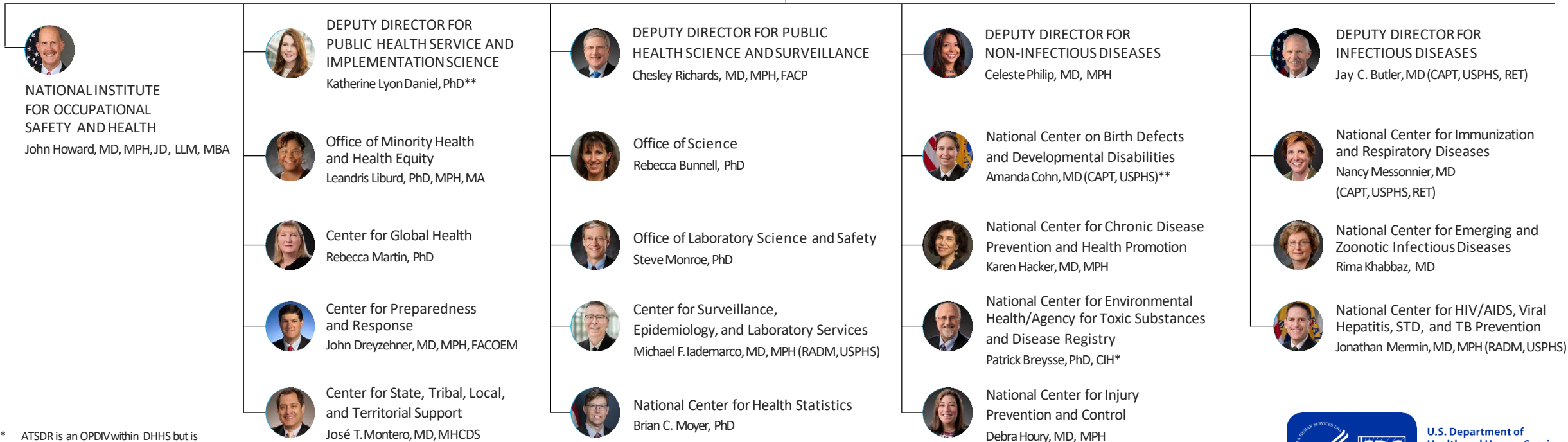
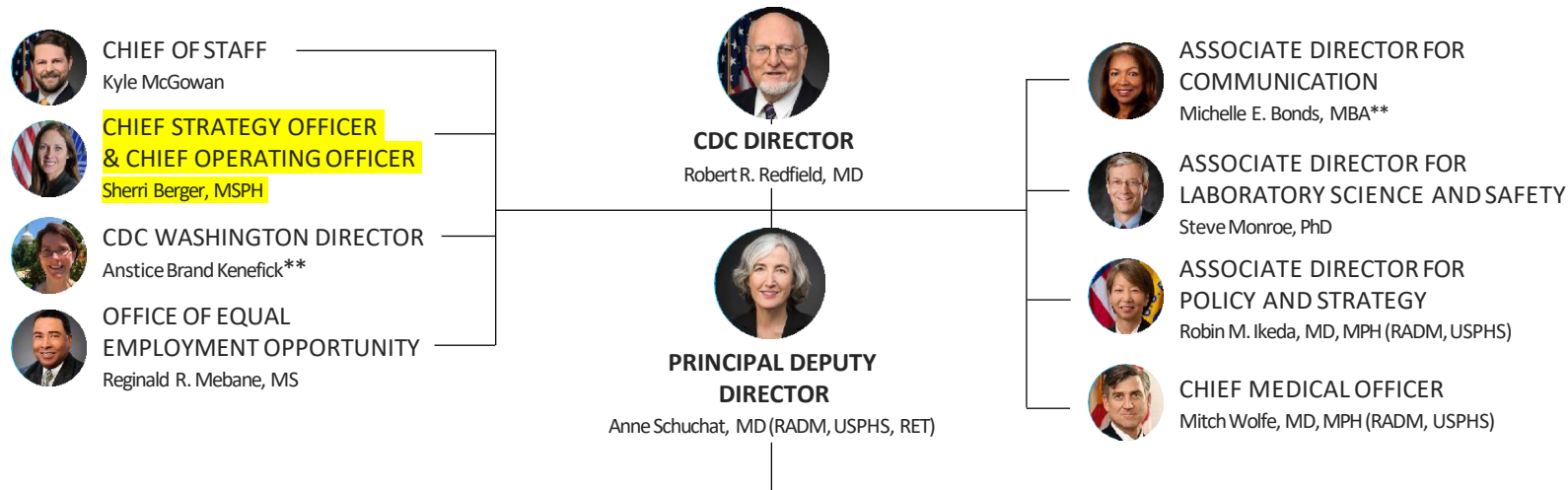
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) are both agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS):
 - ✓ **CDC Mission:** CDC works 24/7 to protect America from health, safety and security threats, both foreign and in the U.S. Whether diseases start at home or abroad, are chronic or acute, curable or preventable, human error or deliberate attack, CDC fights disease and supports communities and citizens to do the same.

Introduction to CDC and ATSDR

- ✓ **ATSDR Mission:** [ATSDR](#) protects communities from harmful health effects related to exposure to natural and man-made hazardous substances. ATSDR responds to environmental health emergencies; investigating emerging environmental health threats; conducting research on the health impacts of hazardous waste sites; and building capabilities of and providing actionable guidance to state and local health partners.

CDC Organizational Chart

March 13 2020



* ATSDR is an OPDIV within DHHS but is

** Acting position



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Deputy Director for Non-Infectious Diseases (DDNID)
 Celeste Philip, MD, MPH

NCEH/ATSDR Office of the Director

Patrick Breysse, PhD, CIH
 Director

Ronney Lindsey, MS
 Deputy Director

Caroline McDonald
 Senior Advisor

Christopher M. Reh, PhD
 Associate Director, ATSDR

Sherry Smallwood
 Senior Advisor, ATSDR

Sharunda Buchanan, PhD, MS
 Director of Priority Projects and Innovation

Renée Funk, DVM, MPH, MBA
 Associate Director for Emergency Management (CAPT, USPHS)

Division of Environmental Health Science and Practice
 Erik R. Svendsen, PhD
 Director
 Laurie A. Johnson, MPH
 Deputy Director

Division of Laboratory Sciences
 James L. Pirkle, MD, PhD
 Director
 Amy Mowbray, PhD
 Deputy Director

Division of Community Health Investigations
 Alan Parham, MPH
 Director (Acting)
 Cassandra Smith, MS
 Deputy Director (Acting)

Division of Toxicology and Human Health Sciences
 William Cibulas, PhD, MS
 Director (Acting)
 Angela Ragin-Wilson, PhD
 Deputy Director (Acting)

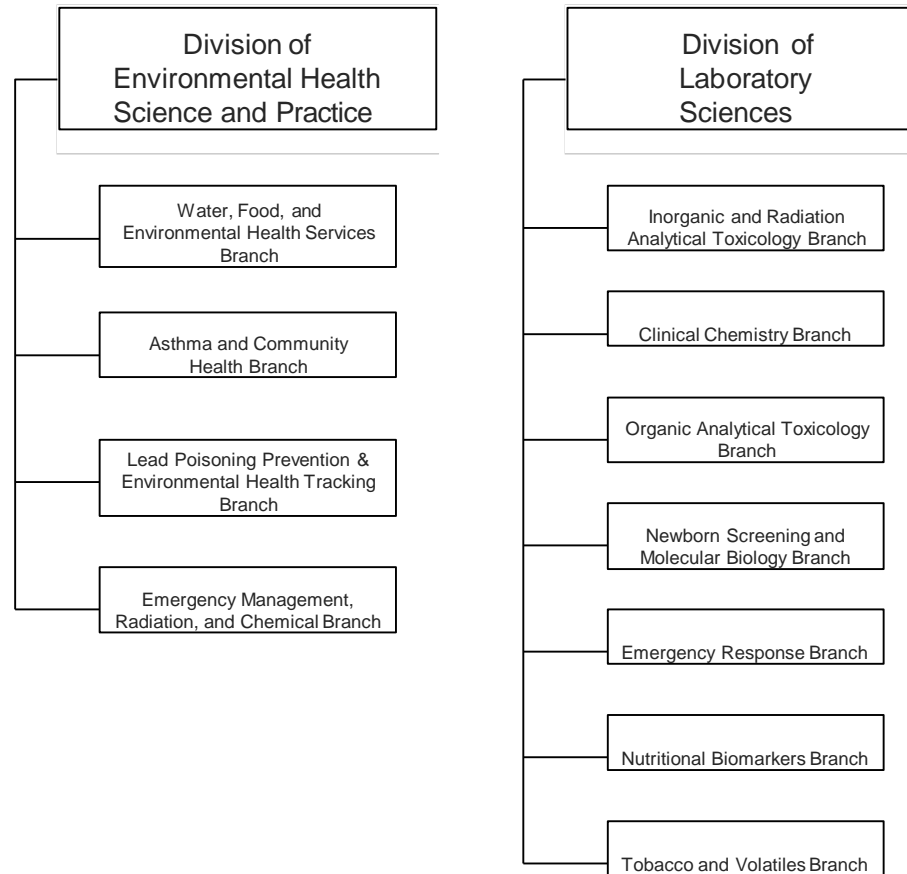
Office of Communication
 Heather Bair-Brake, DVM, MS, DACVPM
 (CDR, USPHS)
 Associate Director
 Lawrence Furphy
 Deputy Associate Director

Office of Management and Analytics
 Michele Brown
 Associate Director/Management Officer
 Mattie Gilliam
 Deputy Management Officer

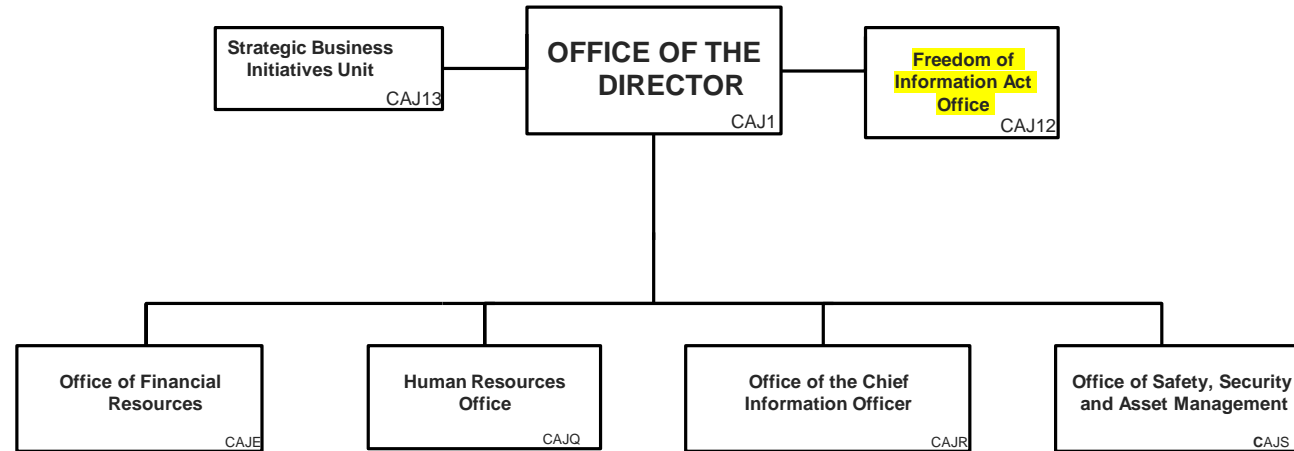
Office of Policy, Planning & Partnerships
 Pamela Protzel Berman, PhD, MPH
 Associate Director
 Donata Green, PhD, MA
 Deputy Associate Director

Office of Science
 G. David Williamson, PhD
 Associate Director
 Tim Dignam, PhD, MPH
 Deputy Associate Director

NCEH DIVISIONS



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (OCOO)



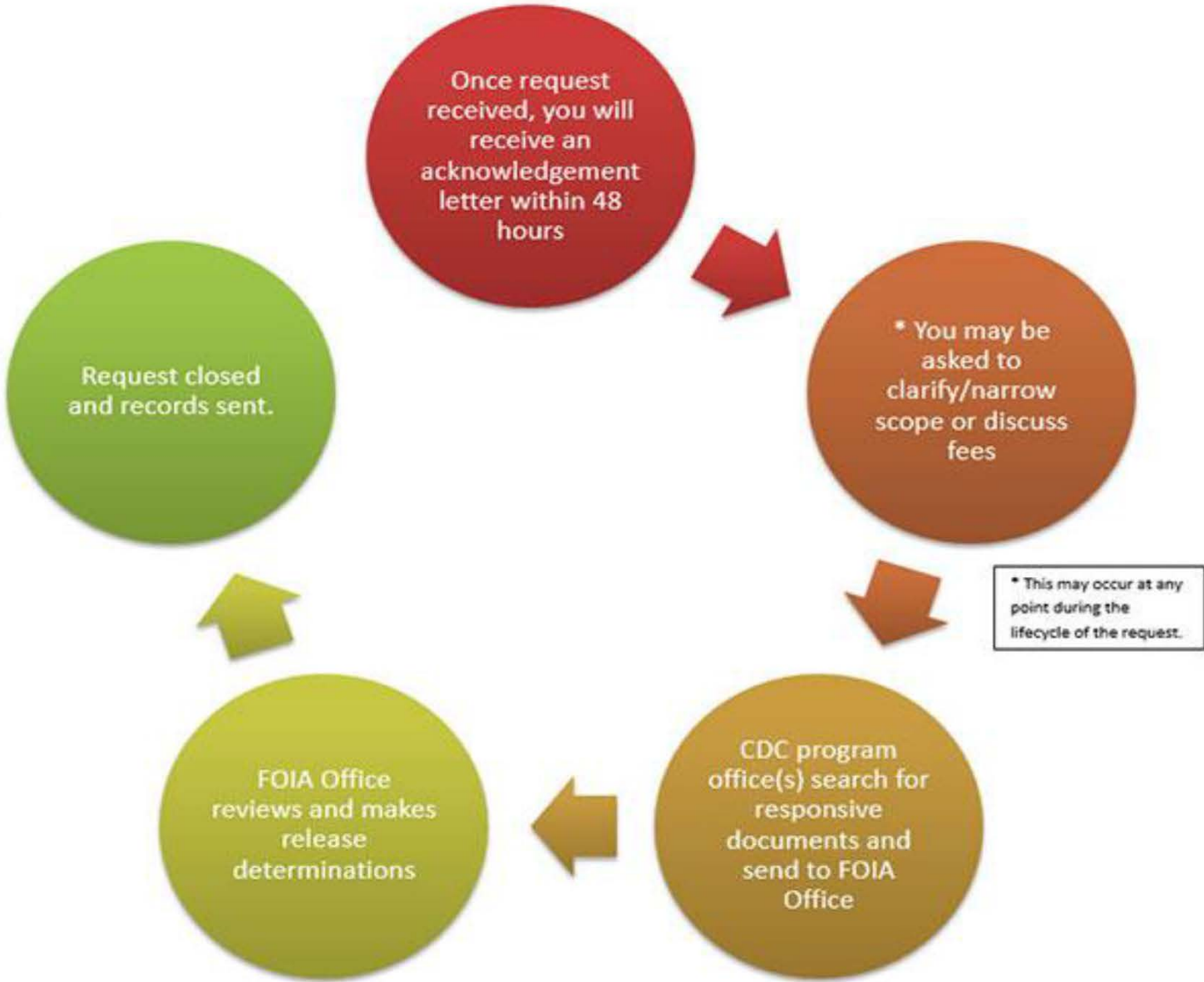
Freedom of Information Act Office is part of the OCOO

CDC FOIA Office

- ✓ Central office responsible for responding to FOIA requests received by CDC and ATSDR
- ✓ Disseminates FOIA requests electronically to areas within CDC most likely to have responsive records
- ✓ Coordinates efforts when one or more Centers, Institutes or Offices is involved in responding to a FOIA request
- ✓ Reviews, analyzes, redacts as necessary, and releases documents to the public under the provisions of the Act
- ✓ Tracks and monitors FOIA requests and responses to ensure timely and appropriate responses

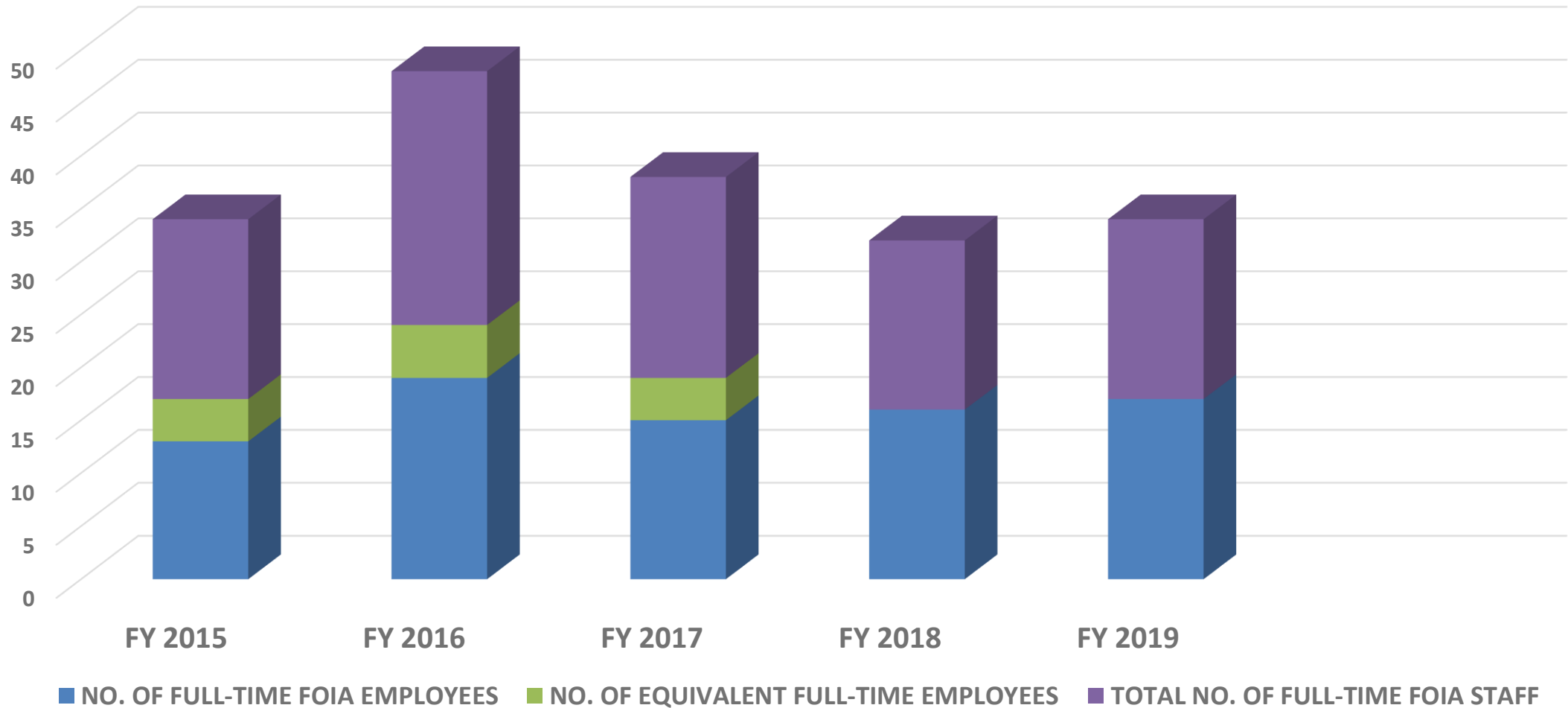
CDC FOIA Office

General Lifecycle of a CDC/ATSDR FOIA Request



CDC FOIA Office

NO. OF CDC FOIA PERSONNEL



Source: <https://www.hhs.gov/foia/reports/annual-reports/index.html>

CDC FOIA Office

FOIA Requests Received, Processed & Pending



Source: <https://www.hhs.gov/foia/reports/annual-reports/index.html>

CDC FOIA Office

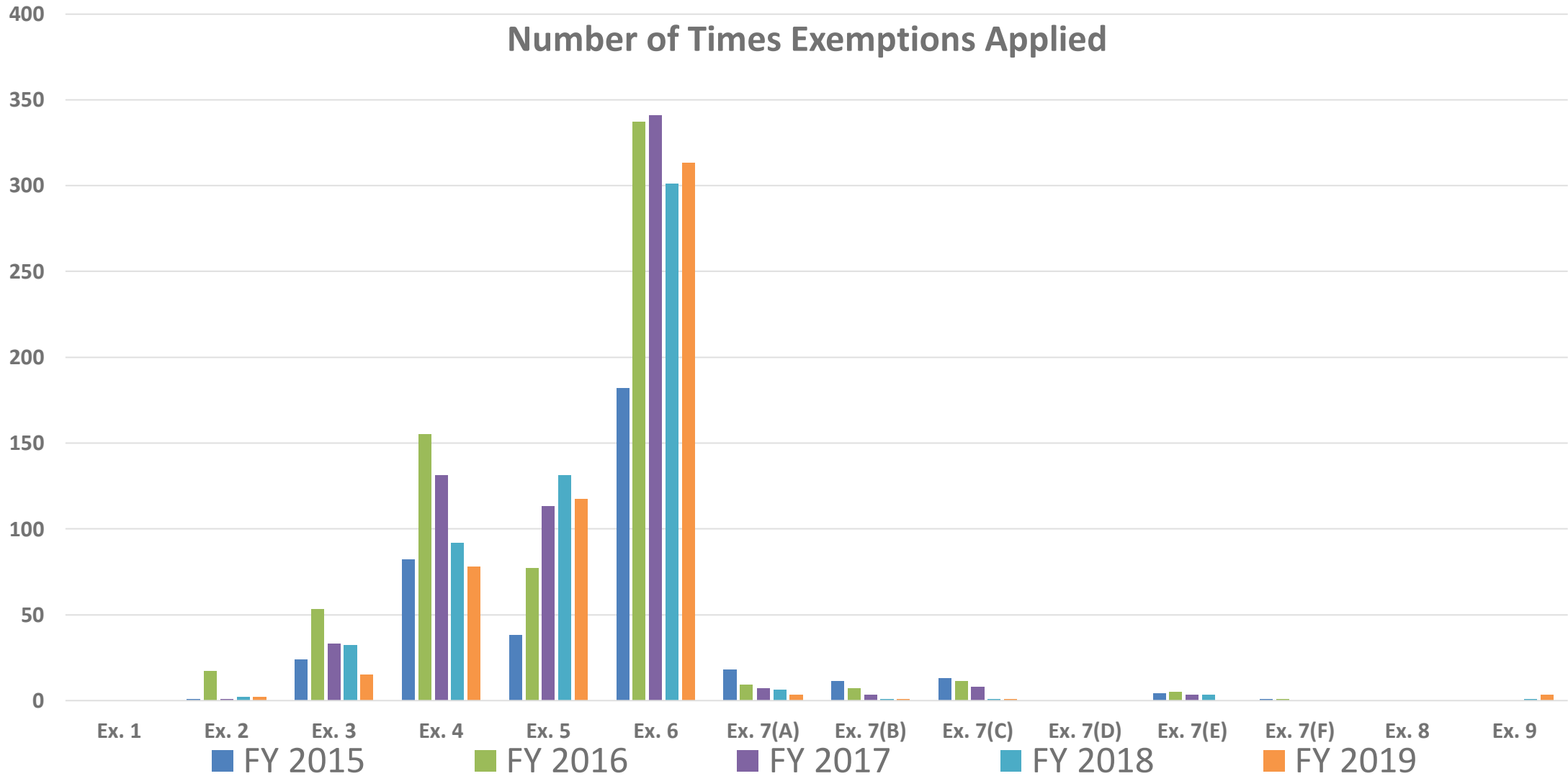
FOIA REQUESTS - RESPONSE TIME FOR ALL PROCESSED PERFECTED REQUESTS



Source: <https://www.hhs.gov/foia/reports/annual-reports/index.html>

CDC FOIA Office

Number of Times Exemptions Applied



Source: <https://www.hhs.gov/foia/reports/annual-reports/index.html>

CDC FOIA Office

EXEMPTION 3 STATUTES CITED – FY 2015 - FY 2019

STATUTE CITED	TYPE OF INFORMATION WITHHELD
5 U.S.C. app. 4 § 107(a)(2) (Ethics in Government Act of 1978)	Confidential financial disclosure report pertaining to certain government employees
6 U.S.C. § 133(a)(1)	Protection of voluntarily shared critical infrastructure information
41 U.S.C. § 2102 (amending 41 U.S.C. § 423(a)(1))* (Procurement Integrity Act)	Contractor bid or proposal information; source selection information
42 USC § 242m(d)	Identifiable information for certain research and statistical activities
42 U.S.C. § 247d-6b(d)	Information identifying the location at which materials in the stockpile under subsection (a) of this section are stored
42 USC § 262a(h)	Bioterrorism-related information

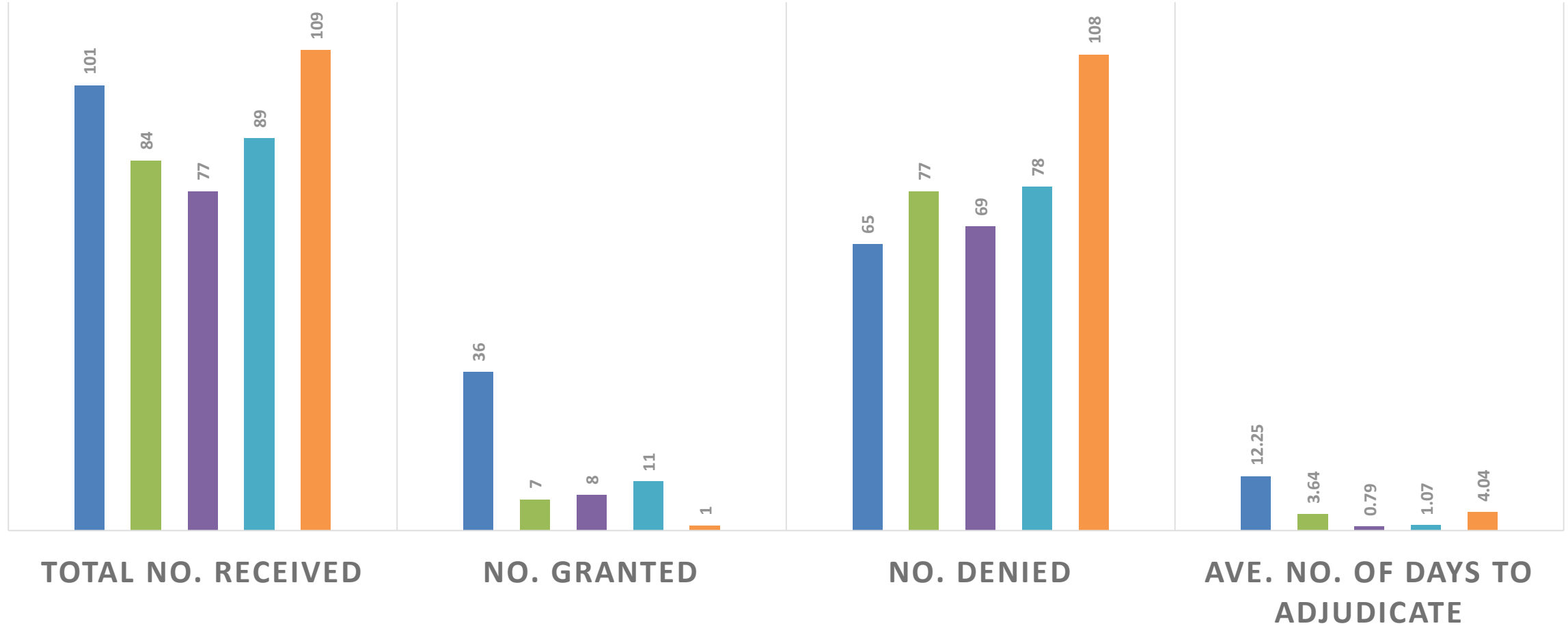
Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/od/foia/docs/cdc-foia-statistics-report.pdf>



CDC FOIA Office

REQUESTS FOR EXPEDITED PROCESSING

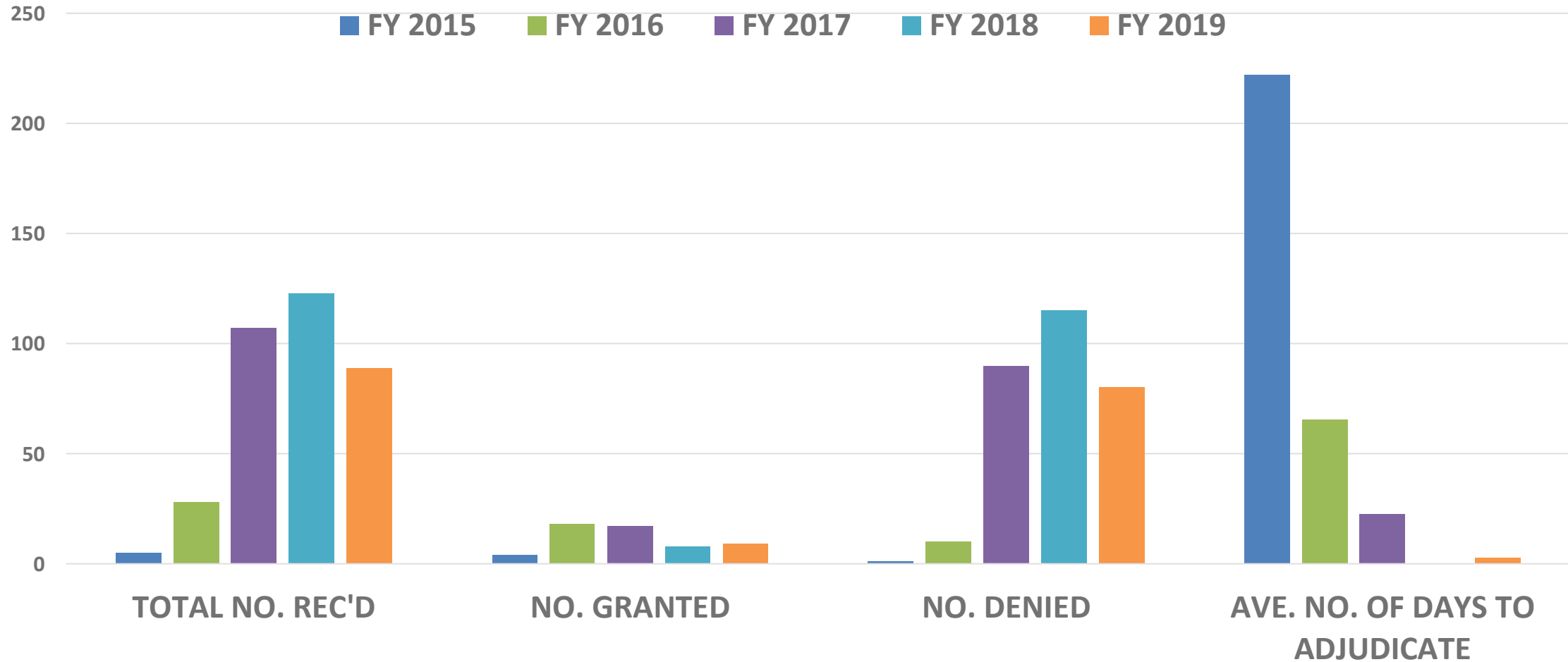
FY 2015 FY 2016 FY 2017 FY 2018 FY 2019



Source: <https://www.hhs.gov/foia/reports/annual-reports/index.html>

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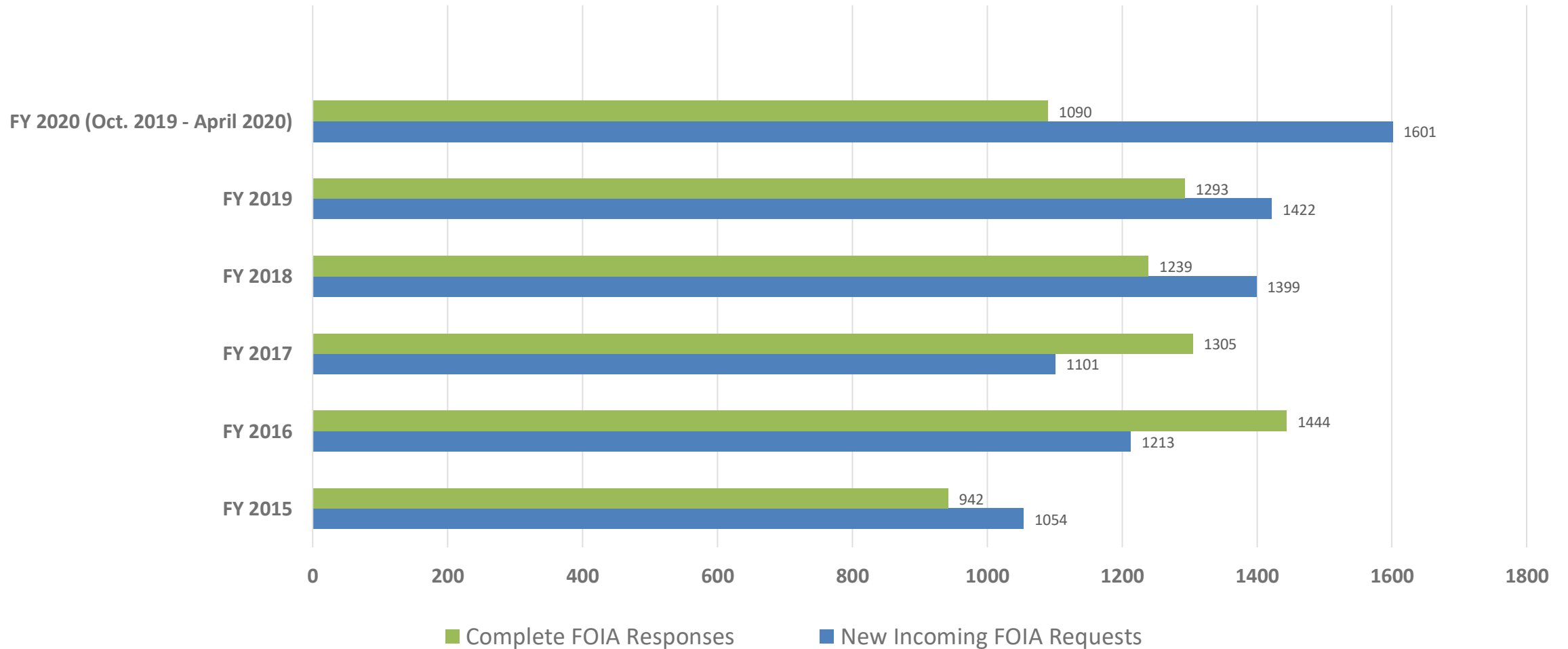
REQUESTS FOR FEE WAIVER



Source: <https://www.hhs.gov/foia/reports/annual-reports/index.html>

CDC FOIA Office

New Incoming Requests & Complete FOIA Responses















Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/od/foia/docs/cdc-foia-statistics-report.pdf>



COVID-19 RESPONSE BY THE NUMBERS

As of May 7, 2020

Accessible: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cdcreponse/by-the-numbers.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cdcreponse/by-the-numbers.html)

	4,637	CDC personnel supporting the outbreak response		97	State and local public health laboratories performing testing for COVID-19
	988	CDC deployers who have conducted 1,263 deployments to 103 cities across the United States and abroad		22.3+ million	Time people have used CDC's online self-checking tool, Clara
	254,000+	Arriving international passengers screened at US airports		209,000+	Calls and emails to CDC-INFO
	1,262	Documents providing information and guidance for government agencies, businesses, and the public		1.2+ billion	Times people viewed information on CDC websites
	7.3+ million	COVID-19 tests conducted by public and private laboratories in the United States		1.1+ billion	Social media impressions on 2,736 CDC response-related posts
	10	Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA) calls offering guidance to healthcare providers		19,000+	Inquiries to CDC from health departments and doctors, nurses or other clinical staff



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cdcreponse/by-the-numbers.html>

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Office of the Chief Operating Officer

Services. Support. Solutions.

Impact Of COVID-19 on CDC FOIA Office

- ❑ The FOIA office has received a significant number of COVID-19 related requests. To date **100% increase** in incoming requests over same period last year.
- ❑ Thousands of CDC staff have been activated to assist with the pandemic and that has impacted FOIA Office's ability to obtain records directly from programs.
- ❑ Nevertheless, the FOIA office works hard everyday to locate records and respond timely to all FOIA requests, including COVID-19 FOIA requests.

Impact Of COVID-19 on CDC FOIA Office

- ❑ The vast majority of COVID-19 FOIA requests have been approved for expedited processing by the FOIA Office:

They are prioritized ahead of non-expedited requests.

- ❑ The FOIA Office is processing COVID-19 requests for similar documents collectively:
If multiple requests have been received for the same or similar records the FOIA Office is responding to all requests at the same time.

- ❑ The FOIA Office's two primary methods for searches are:

(1) FOIA Office conducts the search independently,

(2) FOIA Office requests assistance from the COVID-19 Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in locating records.

Impact Of COVID-19 on CDC FOIA Office

CDC is proactively releasing COVID-19 related information:

- ✓ [CDC COVID-19 Data Tracker](#): tracks COVID confirmed cases and deaths by state and county, and total number of cases and deaths.
- ✓ [Map of states and territories](#) with one or more laboratories that have successfully verified and are currently using COVID-19 viral tests.

What can you do to help us help you get the records you seek?

1. **Keep the request brief.**
2. **Give us enough information upfront so we can quickly process your request.**
3. **Ask for what you want and nothing more.**
4. **Be realistic about response times.**

Tips for narrowing scope of requests:

- ✓ List name(s) and emails to be searched
- ✓ Provide a timeframe. Shorter is better
- ✓ Provide keywords. Combining keywords is very helpful.
- ✓ Limit records to a few senior leaders
- ✓ Identify the subject of request -- *e.g.*, document title
- ✓ Limit the volume of records retrieved -- fewer pages to review means = faster response time not only for your requests but for others as well.
- ✓ Contact us to assist you scope your request



During the COVID-19 response, the CDC FOIA Office cannot receive any FOIA-related correspondence by USPS, FedEx or UPS.

Starting May 1, we will no longer be accepting requests via E-mail or fax. Requesters can submit a FOIA request using one of the options below:

- [1.FOIA Public Access Link \(PAL\)](#)**
- 2.Submit a request via [FOIA.gov](#)**

To learn more about Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) visit [CDC's COVID-19 website](#).

Resources & Additional Information

- Website: <https://www.cdc.gov/od/foia/index.htm>
- CDC FOIA Officer & FOIA Public Liaison: Roger Andoh -- 770-488-6277 -- mhu9@cdc.gov
- CDC Deputy FOIA Officer: Bruno Viana -- 770-488-6399 -- cqy8@cdc.gov
- General Phone: 770-488-6399
- Email: FOIARequests@cdc.gov
- Public Access Link (PAL): [CDC FOIA Public Access Link](#)
- Information on COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS