



NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES



OFFICE *of* GOVERNMENT  
INFORMATION SERVICES

# **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Advisory Committee: Responsibilities, By-Laws & Procedures**

Kirsten B. Mitchell, Designated Federal Officer

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# Welcome

- Authority
  - FOIA
  - Federal Advisory Committee Act
- Duties
  - *Study* FOIA landscape
  - *Solicit* public comments
  - *Recommend* improvements

# Committee Structure

- Archivist of the United States (AOTUS) appointed 19 members of the Committee all with significant FOIA knowledge & expertise
  - Eight government members
  - Eleven non-government members
- Chairperson = OGIS Director Alina M. Semo

# Committee Administration

- Miranda Andreacchio = Committee Management Officer
- Kirsten Mitchell = Designated Federal Officer

All committee communications **must** include the DFO at the following address for record-keeping purposes:

[foia-advisory-committee@nara.gov](mailto:foia-advisory-committee@nara.gov)

# Responsibilities of Chairperson

- Lead the committee
- Determine a quorum
- Open & preside over meetings
- Certify meeting minutes

## Responsibilities of DFO

- Schedule & attend all committee/subcommittee meetings
- Prepare & approve meeting agendas
- Maintain records of Committee activities
- Chair any meeting when so directed by AOTUS

# Responsibilities of Committee Members

- Attend meetings of the Committee & Subcommittee(s)
- Submit items for the Committee & Subcommittee agendas
- Deliberate & advise AOTUS on FOIA-related matters
- *Federal members only: submit financial disclosure forms annually for an ethics review*

# Subcommittees

- Each Subcommittee will have two chairs from the Committee membership
  - one government member
  - one non-government representative member
- Subcommittees shall report their work & findings to the Committee for deliberation

# Responsibilities of Subcommittee Co-chairs

- Work with DFO to schedule Subcommittee meetings
- Set Subcommittee meeting agendas
- Open & preside over meetings
- Copy the DFO on all Subcommittee correspondence

[foia-advisory-committee@nara.gov](mailto:foia-advisory-committee@nara.gov)

## By-Laws

- Committee meets up to four times per year, as called by the DFO
- Meetings held when a quorum is present (2/3 of members, or 13 members)
- Open Meetings
- Federal Register Notice

## By-Laws

- Minutes: DFO prepares minutes
- Public Comment: The public may comment at open meetings & submit written statements to the committee at any time
- Meeting material: Posted on the Committee's website: <https://www.archives.gov/ogis/foia-advisory-committee>

# Deliberations & Voting

- Any Committee member, including the Chairperson, may move that the Committee vote
- No second after a proper motion shall be required to bring any issue to vote
- Only the Chairperson and members may vote on an issue

# Voting Procedures

- Two types of votes the FOIA Advisory Committee can take (Article 5b):
  - Voice Vote
  - Show of Hands
- Three types of decisions (Article 5c):
  - Unanimous Decision: every member (except those absent)
  - General Consensus: at least two-thirds of total votes cast
  - General Majority: majority of the total votes cast



# Contacts

Chairperson Alina M. Semo

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Designated Federal Officer Kirsten B. Mitchell

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Committee Email

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