



NATIONAL ARCHIVES *and* RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
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July 10, 2018—sent via email

Ms. Jill Eggleston
Associate Center Director, National Records Center
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
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Dear Ms. Eggleston:

We again thank you for you and your staff's participation in the compliance assessment of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS) Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) program by the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS).

As noted in our transmittal letter and in our report, we are following up with USCIS 120 days after the assessment report was published. The goal of following up with you is to understand what actions the agency took to address our recommendations for improving the office's administration of FOIA, and close out as many recommendations as possible.

Please review the attached form that lists OGIS recommendations to the USCIS. Please respond within 60 business days from the date of this letter. We will post your response on the OGIS website once we receive it. We are, of course, available to discuss the follow-up questions and we welcome your comments.

We hope this assessment process will assist USCIS in implementing its FOIA responsibilities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kirsten Mitchell at 202-741-5775 or at kirsten.mitchell@nara.gov.

Sincerely,

ALINA M. SEMO
Director

Enclosure



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Follow-up to Compliance Assessment of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) program at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)

Date: July 10, 2018

Date Report Issued: February 9, 2018

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which established the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), 5 U.S.C. § 552(h), mandates that the office review agencies' FOIA policies, procedures and compliance. We assessed the FOIA program at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and issued a report on February 9, 2018. As part of our assessment program, we follow up with agencies 120 days later to understand what actions the agency took to address our recommendations for improving the administration of FOIA.

Finding 1: USCIS has an efficient FOIA process in place but is not able to respond within the 20-

Recommendation: Continue to work with the component's leadership to ensure that the FOIA program has sufficient staffing to respond to requests and reduce its backlog.

Agency Response:

Finding 2: USCIS's current FOIA tracking and processing system is outdated and a replacement

Recommendation: Continue to explore how technology can be used to improve efficiency. Weigh the costs and benefits of producing machine-readable digitized versions of A-Files that would enable FOIA processors to use computer-assisted review tools.

Agency Response:

Recommendation: explore technologies to mark records as processed and enable the FOIA processor to easily access the previously processed version of that record.

Agency Response:

Finding 3: USCIS communicates with requesters about possible delays in responding to a request, and encourages requesters to narrow the scope of a request to qualify for a faster

Recommendation: Add appropriate contact information to USCIS online request tracking page to make it easier for requesters to narrow the scope of their request and potentially qualify for a faster processing track.

Agency Response: