



Peace Corps

Annual Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Report

Fiscal Year 2021

To the Attorney General

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**PEACE CORPS
ANNUAL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2021**

I. BASIC INFORMATION REGARDING THIS REPORT

1. Direct questions about the Annual FOIA Report to:

Virginia Burke, FOIA Officer
1275 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20526
(202) 692-1887

2. This report can be downloaded from the Peace Corps' FOIA website at:
<https://www.peacecorps.gov/about/open-government/foia/>
3. Requests for this report may be directed to the FOIA Officer, noted above.

II. MAKING A FOIA REQUEST

1. Direct FOIA Requests to:

Virginia Burke
FOIA/Privacy Act Office
Peace Corps
1275 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20526
Phone: (202) 692-1887
Email: foia@peacecorps.gov

Lynn Fox, Office of the Inspector General
Peace Corps
1275 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20526
Phone: (202) 692-2915
Email: oig@peacecorps.gov

2. The Peace Corps celebrates its 61th year of fulfilling its mission to promote world peace and friendship. This is accomplished through its Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs), the supporting overseas staff who manage operations in over 60 countries, the supporting Headquarters in Washington D.C., and the U.S. Regional Recruiting Offices. We maintain program agency records that support Peace Corps operations both locally and at our worldwide sites. Records also include Post and mission-related studies, statistics, and reports; PCV and Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV) surveys; and historical records. All records are thoroughly reviewed to provide the most transparent release of government activity. However, certain information still requires protection with the applicable FOIA exemptions, as listed in Section III. The Peace Corps applied FOIA exemptions cited in section V.B.3. Certain circumstances may impact the processing of a FOIA request. Some records are maintained overseas or at offsite locations, which may take time to retrieve in response to a FOIA request. Additionally, some staff members hold multiple responsibilities in support of our PCVs, or are not near from the immediate record source. We also maintain PCV and RPCV records that are protected under 5 U.S.C. 552a, the Privacy Act of 1974, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191. Some requests for information cannot be granted if records have met their legal disposition as temporary records. These are then destroyed pursuant to the Peace Corps records schedule approved by the National Archives and Records Administration.
3. The Peace Corps FOIA regulations are codified in Title 22 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 303 (22 CFR 303).
<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2018-title22-vol2/xml/CFR-2018-title22-vol2-part303.xml>

III. ACRONYMS, DEFINITIONS, AND EXEMPTIONS

1. The following terms and FOIA exemptions used in this Report:
 - a. **Administrative Appeal** – a request to a federal agency asking that it review at a higher administrative level a FOIA determination made by the agency at the initial request level.
 - b. **Average Number** – the number obtained by dividing the sum of a group of numbers by the quantity of numbers in the group. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the average number is 8.
 - c. **Backlog** – the number of requests or administrative appeals that are pending at an agency at the end of the fiscal year that are beyond the statutory time period for a response.
 - d. **Component** – for agencies that process requests on a decentralized basis, a "component" is an entity, also sometimes referred to as an Office, Division, Bureau, Center, or Directorate, within the agency that processes FOIA requests. The FOIA

now requires that agencies include in their Annual FOIA Report data for both the agency overall and for each principal component of the agency.

- e. **Consultation** – the procedure whereby the agency responding to a FOIA request first forwards a record to another agency or component within the same agency for its review because that other agency has an interest in the document. Once the agency in receipt of the consultation finishes its review of the record, it responds back to the agency or component within the same agency that forwarded it. That agency, in turn, will then respond to the FOIA requester.
- f. **Exemption 3 Statute** – a federal statute that exempts information from disclosure and which the agency relies on to withhold information under subsection (b)(3) of the FOIA.
- g. **FOIA Request** – a FOIA request is generally a request to a federal agency for access to records concerning another person (i.e., a "third-party" request), or concerning an organization, or a particular topic of interest. FOIA requests also include requests made by requesters seeking records concerning themselves (i.e., "first-party" requests) when those requesters are not subject to the Privacy Act, such as non-U.S. citizens. Moreover, because all first-party requesters should be afforded the benefit of both the access provisions of the FOIA as well as those of the Privacy Act, FOIA requests also include any first-party requests where an agency determines that it must search beyond its Privacy Act "systems of records" or where a Privacy Act exemption applies, and the agency looks to FOIA to afford the greatest possible access. All requests which require the agency to utilize the FOIA in responding to the requester are included in this Report. Additionally, a FOIA request includes records referred to the agency for processing and direct response to the requester. It does not, however, include records for which the agency has received a consultation from another agency. (Consultations are reported separately in Section XII of this Report.).
- h. **Full Grant** – an agency decision to disclose all records in full in response to a FOIA request.
- i. **Full Denial** – an agency decision not to release any records in response to a FOIA request because the records are exempt in their entireties under one or more of the FOIA exemptions, or because of a procedural reason, such as when no records could be located.
- j. **Median Number** – the middle, not average, number. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the median number is 7.
- k. **Multi-Track Processing** – a system in which simple requests requiring relatively minimal review are placed in one processing track and more voluminous and complex requests are placed in one or more other tracks. Requests granted

expedited processing are placed in yet another track. Requests in each track are processed on a first in/first out basis.

- i. **Expedited Processing** – an agency will process a FOIA request on an expedited basis when a requester satisfies the requirements for expedited processing as set forth in the statute and in agency regulations.
 - ii. **Simple Request** – a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in its fastest (non-expedited) track based on the low volume and/or simplicity of the records requested.
 - iii. **Complex Request** – a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in a slower track based on the high volume and/or complexity of the records requested.
- l. **Partial Grant/Partial Denial** – in response to a FOIA request, an agency decision to disclose portions of the records and to withhold other portions that are exempt under the FOIA, or to otherwise deny a portion of the request for a procedural reason.
 - m. **Pending Request or Pending Administrative Appeal** – a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has not taken final action in all respects.
 - n. **Perfected Request** – a request for records which reasonably describes such records and is made in accordance with published rules stating the time, place, fees (if any) and procedures to be followed.
 - o. **Processed Request or Processed Administrative Appeal** – a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has taken final action in all respects.
 - p. **Range in Number of Days** – the lowest and highest number of days to process requests or administrative appeals.
 - q. **Time Limits** – the time period in the statute for an agency to respond to a FOIA request (ordinarily twenty working days from receipt of a perfected FOIA request).

2. The nine FOIA Exemptions are:

- a. **Exemption 1:** classified national defense and foreign relations information
- b. **Exemption 2:** information that is related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency
- c. **Exemption 3:** information that is prohibited from disclosure by another federal law

- d. **Exemption 4:** trade secrets and other confidential business information
- e. **Exemption 5:** inter-agency or intra-agency communications that are protected by legal privileges
- f. **Exemption 6:** information involving matters of personal privacy
- g. **Exemption 7:** records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, to the extent that the production of those records (A) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings, (B) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, (C) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, (E) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual
- h. **Exemption 8:** information relating to the supervision of financial institutions
- i. **Exemption 9:** geological information on wells

3. Agency Component Abbreviations

Component Abbreviation	Component Name
FOIA Office	Main Office
OIG	Office of the Inspector General

IV. Exemption 3 Statutes

Statute	Type of Information Withheld	Case Citation	Agency / Component	Number of Times Relied upon by Agency / Component	Total Number of Times Relied upon by Agency Overall
N/A	N/A	N/A	FOIA Office	0	0
			OIG	0	

V. FOIA REQUESTS

V.A. FOIA Requests – Received, Processed and Pending FOIA Requests

Agency / Component	Number of Requests Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Received in Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Processed in Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Pending as of End of Fiscal Year
FOIA Office	74	103	122	55
OIG	13	9	10	12
AGENCY OVERALL	87	112	132	67

V.B. Disposition of FOIA Requests

V.B.(1). Disposition of FOIA Requests – All Processed Requests

Agency / Component	Number of Full Grants	Number of Partial Grants / Partial Denials	Number of Full Denials Based on Exemptions	Number of Full Denials Based on Reasons Other than Exemptions									TOTAL
				No Records	All Records Referred to Another Component or Agency	Request Withdrawn	Fee-Related Reason	Records not Reasonably Described	Improper FOIA Request for Other Reason	Not Agency Record	Duplicate Request	Other *Explain in Chart Below	
FOIA Office	45	39	3	12	8	8	0	4	1	2	0	0	122
OIG	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
AGENCY OVERALL	45	49	3	12	8	8	0	4	1	2	0	0	132

V.B.(2). Disposition of FOIA Requests –

"Other" Reasons for "Full Denials Based On Reasons Other Than Exemptions"

Agency / Component	Description of "Other" Reasons for Denials from Chart B(1)	Number of Times "Other" Reason Was Relied Upon	TOTAL
FOIA Office	N/A.	0	0
OIG	N/A.	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL			0

V.B.(3). Disposition of FOIA Requests – Number of Times Exemptions Applied

Agency / Component	Ex. 1	Ex. 2	Ex. 3	Ex. 4	Ex. 5	Ex. 6	Ex. 7(A)	Ex. 7(B)	Ex. 7(C)	Ex. 7(D)	Ex. 7(E)	Ex. 7(F)	Ex. 8	Ex. 9
FOIA Office	0	11	0	1	23	34	2	0	5	1	2	0	0	0
OIG	0	0	0	0	3	10	0	0	10	0	1	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	11	0	1	26	44	2	0	15	1	3	0	0	0

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OF INITIAL DETERMINATIONS OF FOIA ADREQUESTS

VI.A. Received, Processed, and Pending Administrative Appeals

Agency / Component	Number of Appeals Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Received in Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Processed in Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Pending as of End of Fiscal Year
FOIA Office	0	2	2	0
OIG	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	2	2	0

VI.B. Disposition of Administrative Appeals – All Processed Appeals

Agency / Component	Number Affirmed on Appeal	Number Partially Affirmed & Partially Reversed/Remanded on Appeal	Number Completely Reversed/Remanded on Appeal	Number of Appeals Closed for Other Reasons	TOTAL
FOIA Office	0	0	0	2	2
OIG	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	0	2	2

VI.C.(1). Reasons for Denial On Appeal – Number of Times Exemptions Applied

Agency / Component	Ex. 1	Ex. 2	Ex. 3	Ex. 4	Ex. 5	Ex. 6	Ex. 7(A)	Ex. 7(B)	Ex. 7(C)	Ex. 7(D)	Ex. 7(E)	Ex. 7(F)	Ex. 8	Ex. 9
FOIA Office	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

VI.C.(2). Reasons for Denial On Appeal – Reasons Other Than Exemptions

Agency / Component	No Records	Records Referred at Initial Request Level	Request Withdrawn	Fee-Related Reason	Records not Reasonably Described	Improper Request for Other Reasons	Not Agency Record	Duplicate Request or Appeal	Request in Litigation	Appeal Based Solely on Denial of Request for Expedited Processing	Other *Explain in chart below
FOIA Office	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

VI.C.(3). Reasons for Denial On Appeal – "Other" Reasons

Agency / Component	Description of "Other" Reasons for Denial on Appeal from Chart C(2)	Number of Times "Other" Reason Was Relied Upon	TOTAL
FOIA Office	N/A.	0	0
OIG	N/A.	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL			0

VI.C.(4). Response Time for Administrative Appeals

Agency / Component	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
FOIA Office	64.50	64.50	<1	128
OIG	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AGENCY OVERALL	64.50	64.50	<1	128

VI.C.(5). Ten Oldest Pending Administrative Appeals

Agency / Component		10th Oldest Appeal	9th	8th	7th	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	Oldest Appeal
FOIA Office	Date of Appeal	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number of Days Pending	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	Date of Appeal	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number of Days Pending	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

VII. FOIA REQUESTS

VII.A. FOIA Requests – Response Time for All Processed Perfected Requests

Agency / Component	SIMPLE				COMPLEX				EXPEDITED PROCESSING			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
FOIA Office	23	107.1	1	1023	164	284.2	54	744	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
OIG	30	106.6	1	318	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AGENCY OVERALL	23	107	1	1023	164	284.2	54	744	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

VII.B. Processed Requests – Response Time for Perfected Requests In Which Information Was Granted

Agency / Component	SIMPLE				COMPLEX				EXPEDITED PROCESSING			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
FOIA Office	107	136	1	1030	128	284.2	54	744	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
OIG	30	106.6	1	318	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AGENCY OVERALL	29	107.1	1	1030	128	283.8	0	744	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

VII.C. Processed Simple Requests – Response Time In Day Increments

Agency / Component	<1-20 Days	21-40 Days	41-60 Days	61-80 Days	81-100 Days	101-120 Days	121-140 Days	141-160 Days	161-180 Days	181-200 Days	201-300 Days	301-400 Days	401+ Days	TOTAL
FOIA Office	53	8	5	4	5	8	1	4	5	0	4	7	8	112
OIG	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	10
AGENCY OVERALL	57	10	5	4	5	8	1	4	6	0	6	8	8	122

VII.C. Processed Complex Requests – Response Time In Day Increments

Agency / Component	<1-20 Days	21-40 Days	41-60 Days	61-80 Days	81-100 Days	101-120 Days	121-140 Days	141-160 Days	161-180 Days	181-200 Days	201-300 Days	301-400 Days	401+ Days	TOTAL
FOIA Office	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	5
OIG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	5

VII.C. Processed Requests Granted Expedited Processing – Response Time In Day Increments

Agency / Component	<1-20 Days	21-40 Days	41-60 Days	61-80 Days	81-100 Days	101-120 Days	121-140 Days	141-160 Days	161-180 Days	181-200 Days	201-300 Days	301-400 Days	401+ Days	TOTAL
FOIA Office	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OIG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

VII.D. Pending Requests – All Pending Perfected Requests

Agency / Component	SIMPLE			COMPLEX			EXPEDITED PROCESSING		
	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days
FOIA Office	40	397	387.1	15	397	387.2	0	0	0
OIG	12	438	561	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	52	397	375.8	15	397	387.2	0	0	0

VII.E. Pending Requests – Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Requests

Agency / Component		10th Oldest Request	9th	8th	7th	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	Oldest Request
FOIA Office	Date of Receipt	2019-07-05	2019-04-01	2019-02-21	2018-10-18	2018-10-18	2018-02-20	2018-02-14	2016-12-07	2016-12-05	2016-11-21
	Number of Days Pending	559	625	652	735	735	902	905	1200	1202	1211
OIG	Date of Receipt	2021-06-01	2021-04-08	2020-08-13	2020-08-20	2020-07-03	2019-06-07	2018-01-30	2017-03-10	2017-02-09	2017-02-01
	Number of Days Pending	85	122	280	282	308	568	912	1132	1152	1158
AGENCY OVERALL	Date of Receipt	2018-10-18	2018-02-20	2018-02-14	2018-01-30	2017-03-10	2017-02-09	2017-02-01	2016-12-07	2016-12-05	2016-11-12
	Number of Days Pending	735	902	905	912	1132	1152	1158	1200	1202	1211

VIII. REQUESTS FOR EXPEDITED PROCESSING AND FOR FEE WAIVERS

VIII.A. Requests for Expedited Processing

Agency / Component	Number Granted	Number Denied	Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	Average Number of Days to Adjudicate	Number Adjudicated Within Ten Calendar Days
FOIA Office	0	7	1	1	7
OIG	0	0	N/A	N/A	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	7	1	1	7

VIII.B. Requests for Fee Waiver

Agency / Component	Number Granted	Number Denied	Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	Average Number of Days to Adjudicate
FOIA Office	11	0	1	17.73
OIG	0	0	N/A	N/A
AGENCY OVERALL	11	0	1	17.73

IX. FOIA PERSONNEL AND COSTS

Agency / Component	PERSONNEL			COSTS		
	Number of "Full-Time FOIA Employees"	Number of "Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees"	Total Number of "Full-Time FOIA Staff"	Processing Costs	Litigation-Related Costs	Total Costs
FOIA Office	2	1.70	3.70	310000.00	0.00	310000.00
OIG	0	0.75	0.75	86900.00	0.00	86900.00
AGENCY OVERALL	2	2.45	4.45	396900.00	0.00	396900.00

X. FEES COLLECTED FOR PROCESSING REQUESTS

Agency / Component	Total Amount of Fees Collected	Percentage of Total Costs
FOIA Office	0.00	0.0000
OIG	0.00	0.0000
AGENCY OVERALL	0.00	0.0000

XI. NUMBER OF TIMES SUBSECTION (C) USED AND NUMBER OF SUBSECTION (A)(2) POSTINGS

XI.A. Number of Times Subsection (C) Used

Agency / Component	Number of Times Subsection Used
FOIA Office	0
OIG	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0

XI.B. Number of Subsection (A)(2) Postings

Agency / Component	Number of Records Posted by the FOIA Office	Number of Records Posted by Program Offices
FOIA Office	2	590
OIG	13	0
AGENCY OVERALL	15	590

XII. BACKLOGS, CONSULTATIONS, AND COMPARISON

XII.A. Backlogs of FOIA Requests and Administrative Appeals

Agency / Component	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Fiscal Year	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Fiscal Year
FOIA Office	52	0
OIG	12	0
AGENCY OVERALL	64	0

XII.B. Consultations on FOIA Requests – Received, Processed, and Pending Consultations

Agency / Component	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <u>Pending</u> at the Agency as of <u>Start</u> of the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations <u>Received</u> from Other Agencies During the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <u>Processed</u> by the Agency During the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <u>Pending</u> at the Agency as of <u>End</u> of the Fiscal Year
FOIA Office	0	0	0	0
OIG	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0	0	0

XII.C. Consultations on FOIA Requests – Ten Oldest Consultations Received from Other Agencies and Pending at the Agency

Agency / Component		10th Oldest Consultation	9th	8th	7th	6th	5th	4th	3rd	2nd	Oldest Consultation
FOIA Office	Date	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number of Days	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OIG	Date	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number of Days	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	Date	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Number of Days	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

XII.D.(1). Comparison of Numbers of Requests from Previous and Current Annual Report – Requests Received and Processed

Agency / Component	NUMBER OF REQUESTS RECEIVED		NUMBER OF REQUESTS PROCESSED	
	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
FOIA Office	147	103	194	122
OIG	13	9	13	10
AGENCY OVERALL	160	112	207	132

XII.D.(2). Comparison of Numbers of Requests from Previous and Current Annual Report – Backlogged Requests

Agency / Component	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year from Previous Annual Report	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
FOIA Office	67	52
OIG	13	12
AGENCY OVERALL	80	64

XII.E.(1). Comparison of Numbers of Administrative Appeals from Previous and Current Annual Report – Appeals Received and Processed

Agency / Component	NUMBER OF APPEALS RECEIVED		NUMBER OF APPEALS PROCESSED	
	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
FOIA Office	4	2	4	2
OIG	2	0	2	0
AGENCY OVERALL	6	2	6	2

XII.E.(2). Comparison of Numbers of Administrative Appeals From Previous and Current Annual Report -- Backlogged Appeals

Agency / Component	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year from Previous Annual Report	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
FOIA Office	0	0
OIG	0	0
AGENCY OVERALL	0	0