

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness
2017 Chief FOIA Officer Report
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USICH FOIA staff consists of the Director of Finance and Administration, and the Staff Assistant; FOIA duties are tangential in nature. The provisions of the FOIA take precedence over any part of the Agency's policies, processes and/or procedures that are in conflict with the FOIA.

USICH receives FOIA requests via email at usich@usich.gov, website, letter, fax or other media, with the subject line being "FOIA Request". All requests are assigned a reference number, recorded into the correspondence system, and forwarded to the Director of Finance and Administration (DFA - FOIA Officer) for review and fulfillment or denial of the request, per FOIA requirements and exceptions. Agency records in entirety or partly, include materials that are in the control and associated with Agency business such as: materials produced by USICH, materials produced by a consultant for USICH or materials distributed by presenters at a Council meeting.

FOIA requests are reviewed under the criteria established by an executive order for confidentiality and are properly classified pursuant to the executive order, internal personnel rules and practices of the Agency. Specifically, records exempted from disclosure by another federal statute require that records be withheld from the public that leaves no discretion on the issue or criteria that reference a particular type of circumstance for withholding. USICH has no classified records and normally will release information as requested.

Generally, when FOIA requests are submitted for records about a person, other than the requestor, Privacy Act conditions may be applicable. In this instance, the requestor must include either: written authorization signed by the person for which the record is being requested; proof that the individual is deceased (i.e. a death certificate or an obituary). The date that the request is received is the date recorded by the Agency FOIA staff. Each request must describe the records in sufficient detail for Agency personnel to access them with reasonable effort. Insufficient requests may be delayed if the requested records are not clearly described. Requests should include specific information about each requested record, such as date, title or name, author, recipient, and subject. If the DFA determines that the record request is not clearly described, they will advise the requestor of the additional information needed to locate the record or state why the request is insufficient. The requestor will be granted an opportunity to either provide the additional information or to modify their request.

The DFA is authorized to grant or deny any request for a record and determine appropriate fees. Upon determining which records are responsive to the request, the Agency will include only records in its possession, as of the date of the search. If no records are responsive to the request, the DFA will notify the requestor in writing.

The Agency responds to requests in the order of their receipt. The Agency has 20-business days from receipt of the request to determine whether to grant or deny it. Once the Agency determines

to grant a request, entirely or partially, the requestor will receive notification in writing and be advised of any applicable fees. The Agency discloses records promptly upon receipt of payment. Records partially disclosed will be marked or annotated to show the amount of information deleted unless doing so would harm an interest protected by an applicable exemption. The location of the deleted information is indicated on the record when technically feasible.

USICH utilizes its website, www.usich.gov, to post the bulk of its reports and other information that is routinely requested, outside of the FOIA. Information housed there is routinely updated in order to offer the most up-to-date information to the public, as possible. This past year, USICH did not receive any FOIA requests. However, USICH is committed to providing more information on our website for public access to continue the transparency and accountability for an open government.