



New Quarterly FOIA Reporting Beginning January 2013

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In the upcoming weeks, the Office of Information Policy will be sending detailed guidance to agencies directing them to report on four key FOIA statistics that will be posted to [FOIA.gov](#) on a quarterly basis.

Each year agencies are required to submit to the Department of Justice an [Annual FOIA Report](#) which contains detailed statistics on the agency's FOIA activities over the past fiscal year. Among other things, the Annual FOIA Report shows how many requests the agency received during the past fiscal year, how many it processed, the disposition of those requests, and the number of requests that remain in the agency's backlog (requests that are pending beyond the statutory deadlines).

Since 2011, the Department has presented this data on [FOIA.gov](#) in a way so that both the public and agency FOIA professionals can compare trends between agencies and over time. As more and more people have come to rely on [FOIA.gov](#) to track agencies' FOIA progress, the benefits of providing certain FOIA data more frequently have become clear.

As a result, and as part of the Department of Justice's [Open Government Plan](#), OIP will be issuing guidance later this month directing all agencies to begin quarterly reporting of four key FOIA statistics. Beginning with January 2013, agencies will report, for each quarter:

- **the number of requests received,**
- **the number of requests processed,**
- **the number of requests in their backlog, and**
- **the status of the agency's ten overall oldest pending FOIA requests from the previous fiscal year.**

Agencies that are decentralized in their FOIA processing will need to provide the data for the first three statistics for each of their individual components as well as for their agency overall. In keeping with the Department's longstanding focus on reducing the age of the oldest pending requests, for the fourth statistic agencies will be required to report on how many of their agency's ten overall oldest pending FOIA requests from the previous fiscal year were closed during each quarter.

To assist agencies in submitting the data OIP will be providing a uniform template for all agencies to use and, for the first time, collecting this data through the use of an Applied Programming Interface (or API).

With the quarterly reporting of these key FOIA statistics, the public will be able to more regularly track government FOIA administration throughout the year. Emerging trends and patterns for the entire government, both in terms of the numbers of incoming requests received and the numbers of requests agencies processed and closed, will be available systematically during the course of the year, thereby shining further light on FOIA across the government.

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