

Chief FOIA Officer's Report
Corporation for National and Community Service

March 1, 2010

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) submits this report in response to the request in the United States Department of Justice Office of Information Policy email of September 30, 2009. The report has been prepared by Frank Trinity, Chief FOIA Officer, CNCS.

I. Steps Taken to Apply the Presumption of Openness.

1. As CNCS's Chief FOIA Officer, I am responsible for supervising a FOIA Public Liaison and a FOIA Disclosure Officer who read, review, and respond to all FOIA requests. I have read and understand the President's FOIA memorandum and Attorney General's FOIA guidelines and ensure my staff carries them out as they respond to FOIA requests. Each of my staff has attended FOIA trainings and since the President's directive was issued, CNCS has infrequently withheld all or any portion of a requested responsive document.
2. CNCS provides all records possible without withholding any text. Fourteen responses had an exemption supported redaction in FY 2009. That number is up from the five in the previous year. CNCS has experienced an increase in the number of records requested that require redaction. Many of the redacted documents involved confidential White House communications.

II. Steps Taken to Ensure that CNCS has an Effective System for Responding to Requests.

CNCS responds to requests in a routine manner. First, the request is forwarded to the FOIA Disclosure Officer, who reviews the request and assures that it is logged into CNCS's computer tracking system. Then the Disclosure Officer determines whether CNCS has any responsive documents and if so what they are. There are representatives who work in each of our agency's program areas who assist in locating requested documents and all have been advised of the Presidential Directive and Justice Department Memorandum. Our FOIA Disclosure officer has recently begun sending acknowledgment notices to the requestors alerting them to receipt of their request and their request number.

III. Steps Taken to Increase Proactive Disclosures

I am working closely with our agency's Open Government manager to identify documents appropriate for proactive disclosure.

IV. Steps Taken to Greater Utilize Technology.

1.) Does your agency currently receive requests electronically?

Yes. During FY 2009, of the 71 requests CNCS received, approximately 10 were received electronically.

2.) If not, what are the current impediments to your agency establishing a mechanism to receive requests electronically?

n/a

3.) Does your agency track requests electronically?

Yes

4.) If not, what are the current impediments to your agency utilizing a system to track requests electronically?

n/a

5.) Does your agency use technology to process requests?

Yes. We communicate with our agency's departments via email. Then we provide the documents via email, if possible, to the requestor.

6.) If not, what are the current impediments to your agency utilizing technology to process requests?

n/a

7.) Does your agency utilize technology to prepare your agency Annual FOIA Report?

No.

8.) If not, what are the current impediments to your agency utilizing technology in preparing your Annual FOIA Report?

None identified at this time, given the relatively small number of requests.

V. Steps Taken to Reduce Backlogs and Improve timeliness of Responding to Requests

1. If you have a backlog, report here whether your backlog is decreasing. That reduction should be measured both in terms of the number of backlogged requests and administrative appeals that remain pending at the end of the fiscal year, and in terms of the age of those requests and appeals.

CNCS ended FY 2009 with a backlog of two perfected requests and no backlogged appeals. We had no backlog in 2008. We typically respond, on average, in less than 11 days.

2. If there has not been a reduction in the backlog describe why that has occurred and what steps your agency is taking to bring about a reduction.

Within the past year, our agency has received nearly twice as many requests as in previous years. Also, our FOIA Disclosure officer departed in September and was not replaced until December.

3. Describe the steps your agency is taking to improve timeliness in responding to requests and to administrative appeals.

Our new disclosure officer is attending training and will be alert to cost-effective technological solutions in the future.