

Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act generally provides that any person has a right, enforceable in court, to obtain access to federal agency records, except to the extent that such records (or portions of them) are protected from disclosure by one of the nine exemptions or by one the three special law enforcement record exclusions

Enacted in 1966, the FOIA established for the first time an effective statutory right of access to government information. The principle of government openness and accountability underplaying the FOIA however, are inherent in the democratic idea: "The basic purpose of the (the) FOIA is to ensure an informed citizenry, vital to the functioning of the democratic society, needed to check against corruption and to hold governors accountable to the governed". The Supreme Court has emphasized that "official information that sheds light on the agency's performance of its statutory duties falls squarely within that statutory purpose.

Submitting a FOIA request

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