



OFFICE *of* GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

January 27, 2016—sent via email

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Chief FOIA Officer
Agency
address

Dear Chief FOIA Officer:

I write to you in your capacity as Chief FOIA Officer with agency-wide responsibility for efficient and appropriate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).¹ I am pleased to announce the Office of Government Information Service's (OGIS) FOIA compliance self-assessment program.

In his January 21, 2009, Presidential Memorandum on FOIA, President Obama referred to the law as “the most prominent expression of a profound national commitment to ensuring an open Government” and directed the Attorney General to issue guidelines “reaffirming the commitment to accountability and transparency.” The Attorney General’s 2009 FOIA Memorandum for Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies emphasizes that open government requires “an effective system for responding to FOIA requests.”

OGIS, the FOIA Ombudsman, is mandated with reviewing agency FOIA policies, procedures and compliance to help foster an effective system.² Our FOIA compliance self-assessment is intended to complement our robust agency assessment program by giving agencies a tool to improve their compliance with this critical open government law and improve understanding of the challenges to compliance.

Beginning today, January 27, 2016, agencies can access our self-assessment survey by visiting <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3T5GBMH>. The self-assessment will be open through Friday March 11.

I request your assistance in distributing this survey to your FOIA officers and managers. Please note that multiple components and offices within an agency can respond to the self-assessment.



¹ 5 U.S.C. § 552(k)(1)

² 5 U.S.C. §§ 552(h)(2)(A) and (B).

NAME

DATE

Page 2 of 2

We will use the survey answers to identify trends government-wide as opposed to grading or ranking agencies against each other.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-741-5771 or at james.holzer@nara.gov. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

/S/

JAMES V.M.L. HOLZER

Director