

We prepared our annual Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) report pursuant to the requirements of the FOIA, 5 U.S.C.A. § 552(e) (West 1996 & Supp. 2000), and guidance issued by the Office of Information and Privacy of the U.S. Department of Justice. See FOIA Update Summer 1997. Our FOIA annual report covers the 2000 fiscal year from October 1, 1999 to September 30, 2000.

1. **Basic Information**

1. If you have questions about this report, contact:

FOIA Officer
Federal Housing Finance Board
1777 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
E-mail address: FOIA@fhfb.gov
Phone number: 202/408-2511
Fax number: 202/408-2895

2. You can find our FOIA annual report on the World Wide Web at:
www.fhfb.gov/foia/foia.htm.
3. To obtain a copy of our FOIA annual report in paper form, send a request by [e-mail](#), fax or regular mail to the address listed above.

2. **How to Make a FOIA Request**

To make a FOIA request for Finance Board records, you should submit a written request that includes a clear and specific description of the records or information you want, along with your name, address, telephone number, and electronic mail address, if any. We may assess a fee to process your request in accordance with our FOIA regulation, which is codified at 12 C.F.R. part 910 (you can view a copy of the rule at section XI of this report). You can submit your FOIA request by U.S. Postal mail to the FOIA Officer, Federal Housing Finance Board, 1777 F Street NW, Washington, DC 20006. You also may submit your request by fax at 202/408-2895, or electronically at FOIA@fhfb.gov. If you need further assistance you may send an e-mail to FOIA@fhfb.gov or call 202/408-2511.

1. Response-time ranges.

It is our policy to respond promptly to all FOIA requests. We make every effort to respond within the 20 working days time limit provided by the FOIA. We responded to 114 of the 135 FOIA requests we processed during the 2000 fiscal year within 20 working days. Of the 21 FOIA requests that took more than 20 working days to process, only 4 occurred after transfer of the FOIA program to the Office of General Counsel in April 2000.

2. Why did we not grant some requests?

- The requested records or information were exempt from disclosure to the public under one or more FOIA exemptions.
- We did not have any records responsive to the request.
- The requests were sent in error to the Finance Board and we referred them to the appropriate agency for response.
- The requester did not pay fees previously assessed to respond to another FOIA request.
- The request was procedurally deficient, e.g., it did not reasonably describe the requested records.

3. **Definitions of Terms and Acronyms Used in the Annual Report**

Finance Board: The independent executive agency established as the Federal Housing Finance Board.

FY: Fiscal Year.

FOIA/PA request: Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act request. A FOIA request generally is a request for access to records concerning a third party, an organization or a particular topic of interest. A Privacy Act request is a request for records concerning oneself; such requests also are treated as FOIA requests. (All requests for access to records, regardless of which law is cited by the requester, are included in this report.)

Initial request: A request to a federal agency for access to records under the FOIA.

Appeal: A request to a federal agency asking that it review at a higher administrative level a full denial or partial denial of access to records under the FOIA, or any other FOIA determination such as a matter pertaining to fees.

Processed request or appeal: A request or appeal for which an agency has taken a final action in all respects.

Multi-track processing: A system in which simple requests requiring relatively minimal review are placed in one processing track and more voluminous or complex requests are placed in one or more other tracks. Requests in each track are processed on a first-in/first out basis. A requester who has an urgent need for records may request expedited processing (see below).

Expedited processing: An agency will process a FOIA request on an expedited basis when a requester has shown an exceptional need or urgency for the records that warrants prioritization of the request over other earlier requests.

Simple request: A FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in its fastest (non-expedited) track based on the volume or simplicity of the requested records.

Complex request: A FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in a slower track based on the volume or complexity of requested records.

Grant: An agency decision to disclose all records in full in response to a FOIA request.

Partial grant: An agency decision to disclose a record in part in response to a FOIA request, deleting information determined to be exempt under one or more of the FOIA's exemptions; or a decision to disclose some records in their entirety, but to withhold others in whole or in part.

Denial: An agency decision not to release any part of a record or records in response to a FOIA request because all of the information in the requested records is determined by the agency to be exempt under one or more of the FOIA's exemptions, or for some procedural reason (such as because no record is located in response to a FOIA request).

Time limits: The time period in the FOIA for an agency to respond to a FOIA request (ordinarily 20 working days from proper receipt of a "perfected" FOIA request).

"Perfected" request: A FOIA request for records that adequately describes the records sought, has been received by the agency's FOIA office, and for which there is no remaining question about the payment of applicable fees.

Exemption 3 statute: A federal statute other than the FOIA that prohibits the disclosure of a certain type of information; basis for withholding information under FOIA section (b)(3).

Median number: The middle, not average, number. For example, of 3, 7 and 14, the median number is 7.

Average number: The number obtained by dividing the sum of a group of numbers by the quantity of numbers in the group. For example, of 3, 7 and 14, the average number is 8.

4. **Exemption 3 Statutes**

None.

5. **Initial FOIA/PA Access Requests**

1. Numbers of initial requests.

1. Number of requests pending as of end of FY1999—5
2. Number of requests received during FY2000—133
3. Number of requests processed during FY2000—135
4. Number of requests pending as of end of FY2000—3

2. Disposition of initial requests.

1. Number of total grants—131
2. Number of partial grants—4
3. Number of denials—0
 1. We used FOIA exemptions 4 and 7(c) once each and exemptions 5 and 6 twice each.
 2. We did not use any other FOIA exemptions.
4. Other reasons for nondisclosure (total)—31
 1. no records—27
 2. referrals—0
 3. request withdrawn—2
 4. fee-related reason—1
 5. records not reasonably described—1
 6. not a proper FOIA request for some other reason—0
 7. not an agency record—0
 8. duplicate request—0
 9. other (specify)—0

6. **Appeals of Initial Denials of FOIA/PA Requests**

1. Numbers of appeals.
 1. Number of appeals received during FY2000—1
 2. Number of appeals processed during FY2000—1
2. Disposition of appeals.
 1. Number completely upheld—0
 2. Number partially reversed—1

3. Number completely reversed—0
 1. We used FOIA exemptions 4 and 5 once each.
 2. We did not use any other FOIA exemptions.
4. Other reasons for nondisclosure (total)—0

7. **Compliance with Time Limits/Status of Pending Requests**

1. Median and average processing time for requests processed during FY2000.
 1. We use one track to process all FOIA requests.
 1. number of requests processed—135
 2. median number of working days to process—11
 3. average number of working days to process—12.7
 2. No requests were accorded expedited processing.
2. Status of pending requests.
 1. Number of requests pending as of end of FY2000—3
 2. Median number of days that such requests were pending as of that date—7
 3. Average number of days that such requests were pending as of that date—11.67

8. **Comparisons with FY1999**

1. Number of requests received—116 (FY1999)/133 (FY2000)
2. Number of requests processed—115 (FY 1999)/135 (FY 2000)
3. Median numbers of days requests were pending at year end—16 (FY1999)/11 (FY2000)
4. In order to improve the timeliness and quality of FOIA performance, the agency transferred responsibility for the FOIA program from the Executive Secretariat to the

Office of General Counsel resulting in an approximately 30% decrease in processing time. Since transfer of the program, the average processing time has decreased from more than 16 to 11.5 days and the median processing time has decreased from 14.5 to 10 days.

9. **Costs/FOIA Staffing**

1. Staffing levels.

1. Number of full-time FOIA personnel—0
2. Number of current personnel with part-time or occasional FOIA duties—2
3. Total number of personnel (in work-years)— $\frac{1}{2}$
4. Comparison with FY1999
 1. Number of full-time FOIA personnel—0
 2. Number of personnel with part-time or occasional FOIA duties—6
 3. Total number of personnel (in work-years)—1.27

2. Total costs (including staff and all resources).

1. FOIA processing (including appeals)—\$37,000
2. Litigation-related activities (estimated)—0
3. Total costs—\$37,000
4. Comparison with FY1999—\$107,727 (FY2000 costs were 65% less than FY 1999 costs)

10. **Fees**

1. Total amount of fees collected by agency for processing requests—\$1419.37
2. Percentage of total costs—3.8%

11. **FOIA Regulation (Including Fee Schedule)**

[PART 910 — Freedom of Information Act Regulation](#)