

Bureau of Land Management  
Arizona State Office  
**FOIA Processing Checklist**

**STEP 1:** Receiving a FOIA request.

- A. Date stamp request letter on day received and give it to the State FOIA Officer.
- B. Field FOIA Coordinator:
  - 1. Fax a copy of the request letter to the State FOIA Officer at 602-417-9376, or send a scanned copy via e-mail to [AZ\\_FOIA@blm.gov](mailto:AZ_FOIA@blm.gov) on the day received or no later than the following business day.
  - 2. Mail the original request letter to the State FOIA Officer (AZ-954.56).

**STEP 2:** Notification of request.

- A. The State FOIA Officer will scan the request and send it via e-mail to:
  - 1. Field FOIA Coordinators (when applicable).
  - 2. Responsible Deputy State Director (DSD) or District Manager (DM).

**NOTE: Field FOIA Coordinators are responsible for notifying their Field Manager.**

**STEP 3:** Scoping the request.

- A. The State FOIA Officer will send (through the Field FOIA Coordinator) a FOIA Task Worksheet, Form AZ-1278-11, to the office(s) where potential responsive records reside.
- B. Subject Matter Expert or higher official, with the State FOIA Officer, determines the sensitivity and complexity of the request.
- C. Subject Matter Expert and/or Field FOIA Coordinator, with the State FOIA Officer, determines if additional clarification is required for any of the following:
  - 1. Description of desired records;
  - 2. Scope of request (i.e., what are the date parameters, is request limited to specific offices or locations, are there quantifying factors, etc.);
  - 3. Fee waiver justification (i.e., is adequate information provided to make a fee waiver determination).
- D. Subject Matter Expert, with the State FOIA Officer, identifies other locations/agencies that may have responsive records.

**NOTE: Do not search for/copy any records until clarification (Item C above) is obtained.**

**STEP 4:** Estimating fees.

- A. Tasked office(s) prepare a "Fee Estimate Table," Appendix 1 in the FOIA Task Worksheet, Form AZ-1278-11.
  - 1. If multiple items are requested, prepare a separate fee estimate for each item.
  - 2. Do **NOT** include an estimate for expected time to make copies; only include estimated time expected to locate responsive records.
- B. Fax the Fee Estimate Table to the State FOIA Officer at 602-417-9376, or e-mail a scanned copy to [AZ\\_FOIA@blm.gov](mailto:AZ_FOIA@blm.gov).
- C. Once fee (and clarification) issues are resolved, and when notified by the State FOIA Officer, proceed to Step 5.

**STEP 5:** Searching for responsive records.

- A. Search all sources within your location/office likely to contain responsive records.

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- B. If no records can be found, complete a “No Records Search Documentation,” Appendix 3 in the FOIA Task Worksheet, Form AZ-1278-11.
  - 1. Fax the completed Appendix 3 to State FOIA Officer at 602-417-9376, or e-mail a scanned copy to [AZ\\_FOIA@blm.gov](mailto:AZ_FOIA@blm.gov).
- C. If responsive records are located, proceed to Step 6.

**STEP 6:** Preparing responsive records (when redactions/withholdings are recommended).  
(Note: Procedures for full release or “no records” responses are in the FOIA Task Worksheet.)

- A. Make one (1) copy of all responsive records.
  - 1. Group records by corresponding Item number in the request.
  - 2. Identify each group with a cover sheet, labeled as follows:
    - a. FOIA Number \_\_\_\_\_
    - b. Item Number \_\_\_\_\_
    - c. Office providing the copies: \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Review copies for possible denial/withholdings/redactions.
  - 1. “Flag” recommended text to be redacted with a large Post-it Note:
    - a. Clearly indicate what portions of the flagged page should be withheld.
  - 2. State the reason for denial/protection of flagged information on the Post-it Note:
    - a. If you know that certain information or documents are prohibited from release by another law, please provide the Statute citation.
    - b. If you believe the information is sensitive and could cause harm to either BLM or an individual/customer’s interests, please provide an explanation.

**NOTE: Provide a “recommendation” only; do not make any redactions to any documents. Even if you believe an entire document should be denied, you still must provide a copy of it to the State FOIA Officer. Redactions and denials can only be made by the State FOIA Officer in consultation with the Field Solicitor’s Office.**

**STEP 7:** Completing the process (when redactions or withholdings are recommended).

- A. Fill out an “Actual FOIA Fees Incurred Table,” Appendix 2 in the FOIA Task Worksheet, Form AZ-1278-11.
- B. If request is sensitive, obtain required review/concurrence from the responsible District Manager/Deputy State Director.
  - 1. Complete a FOIA Review/Concurrence, Form AZ-1278-12.
- C. Send package to the State FOIA Officer (AZ-954.56); package must include:
  - 1. Copies of **all** responsive records, flagged with recommendations, organized and labeled as indicated in Step 6 above.
  - 2. Original copy of FOIA Task Worksheet and Appendices, Form AZ-1278-11.
  - 3. Core paragraph, or explanation of enclosures, for inclusion in the response letter.

**STEP 8:** State FOIA Officer reviews responsive records and makes redactions where applicable, prepares response letter, consults with the Office of the Solicitor, and obtains responsible Manager’s concurrence (when required).