



United States Department of Justice

Office of Information Policy

The Importance Of Customer Service

**President Obama
directed agencies to
“act promptly and in a
spirit of cooperation.”**

**Agency officials must
recognize that they
“are servants of the
public.”**

**Key aspect of effective
FOIA administration is
open and frequent
communication with
FOIA requesters.**

**Common concern raised
by the FOIA requester
community is the lack
of good communication
with agencies.**

**OIP has issued
guidance on the
importance of ensuring
good communication
with FOIA requesters.**

**Agencies designate
personnel to serve as
FOIA Requester Service
Centers and FOIA
Public Liaisons to assist
requesters and to
answer questions.**

As to status, the FOIA statute requires agencies to establish a telephone line or internet service to provide status information to requesters for any request that will take longer than ten days to process.

**Communication as to
the scope of the
request can often be
very beneficial**

Improving Timeliness

- **The greatest concern shared by both requesters and agencies alike is the length of time it takes to process requests.**

There are typically three key areas that impact timeliness:

- **Scope of the Request**
- **Record Searches**
- **Consultation Process**

By ensuring open and frequent communication with requesters agencies will be demonstrating the “spirit of cooperation” that the President and Attorney General called for.