

Department of Justice Outline of Open Government Plan 3.0

At the Department of Justice, we remain committed to bringing down barriers between the government and the public we serve. As with the Department's prior Open Government Plans, we sought input from our employees, members of the public, and stakeholders who were invited to share their ideas on how to make the Department more open and accountable.

To solicit ideas from members of the public, the Department posted messages on its Open Government webpage, its blog, and Twitter. In response to these postings, we received 13 ideas, including five from civil society groups. Some ideas submitted related to specific suggestions for the Department's future investigations and prosecutions and did not lend themselves to action. Other ideas were communicated directly to components with the request that they consider taking action. To respond to the suggestions of the civil society groups, the Department began a dialogue with these groups and conducted listening sessions to better understand specific concerns and, if appropriate, to determine alternate ways to disseminate the same information to the public.

With this Open Government Plan, the Department will lay out its ongoing and anticipated efforts to increase openness. The primary components of the plan will include:

Flagship Initiative

- Leading in the Effort to Modernize the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Both the President and the Attorney General have emphasized the important role the FOIA plays in ensuring a transparent and accountable government. As the lead agency responsible for encouraging government-wide compliance with the FOIA, the Department will engage in four key initiatives that will further improve the overall administration of the FOIA for both agencies and requesters: (1) drafting a common FOIA regulation; (2) developing a consolidated FOIA portal; (3) improving internal agency processes by conducting government-wide Best Practices workshops; and (4) developing e-Learning modules to provide additional training to federal agencies.

Other Initiatives That Will Be Reported in the Open Government 3.0 Plan

- Transparency Initiatives
 - a. *Release of Data.* The Department has made at least two new Application Programming Interface (API) data sets available to the public. The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) will release Grant Funding Opportunities Forecast & Descriptions. To assist the public in using existing data sets of criminal and juvenile justice information, OJP recently initiated development of a comprehensive online data catalog.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) has also released the U.S. firearms trace API data set, which includes firearms types, source states, time-to-crime, crime categories, and recovery cities. Along with the 2010 and 2011 data that are available in an open format, ATF will publish data from additional years.

- b. *Information Made Available to the Public.* The Department has worked to make more legal and operational documents available to the public. For example, over the next two years, the Department will digitize and publish older key versions of the U.S. Attorneys' Manuals from the years 1953, 1970, and 1988 that are not currently available online.

The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission plans to modify its policy to allow for publication of decisions with fewer redactions and will redesign its procedures for finalizing decisions, so that decisions will be released more rapidly in a form that provides enhanced search capabilities.

The Office of Justice Programs' Partnership Resource Network has expanded to provide online access to high-scoring, unfunded grant application data to create awareness of proposed projects, to cultivate relationships and partnerships between foundations and organizations, and to increase the transparency of OJP's funding decisions.

The Office on Violence against Women (OVW) has created a central repository for OVW-funded technical assistance products and trainings at www.TA2TA.org.

Enhancements to Existing Websites. The Department has or is in the process of improving the accessibility, ease of navigation, or content of its main website and the websites of many components, including those of: the Bureau of Prisons; the Drug Enforcement Administration; the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reports; FOIA.gov; the National Security Division's Office of Justice for Victims of Overseas Terrorism; and the Office on Violence against Women. Since 2012, the Department has also developed and launched mobile-friendly versions of justice.gov and stopfraud.gov. To make web content more accessible to a broader audience, the Department continues to expand the content for Spanish-speakers.

- c. *Improving FOIA Libraries.* In the last Plan, the Department reported on the reorganization of the Office of Information Policy's old FOIA "Reading Room" for documents from the Department's senior management offices into a newly structured, more user-friendly online "FOIA Library." Over the past years, the Office of Information Policy has worked with other components within the Justice Department to similarly organize their "Reading Rooms" into more user-friendly "FOIA Libraries." To ensure that documents are added to these libraries in a timely manner, we will direct components to update these libraries on a set schedule.

- Public Participation

- a. *Direct Public Outreach.* OVW has initiated regular public conferrals and special-topic conferrals when needed to answer questions, share information, and hear from the public.

Another example of how the Department has involved stakeholders and the public is the quarterly indigent defense roundtables led by Associate Attorney General Tony West, Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs Karol Mason, and the Access to Justice Initiative. These quarterly meetings enable substantial engagement of a broad group of national organizations who share the goal of ensuring that all individuals have access to justice, regardless of status or income level.

The Chief Privacy and Civil Liberties Officer, Erika Brown Lee, and the Director of the Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties, Joo Chung, have arranged meetings with privacy advocacy groups to engage in a dialogue to improve transparency regarding the Department's privacy practices and further support the goals of public participation.

In March 2014, the Community Relations Service (CRS) introduced a transgender cultural professionalism training program for law enforcement, which was developed with input from transgender advocates and law enforcement leadership from around the country.

- b. *Toolkits and Other Publications.* Through both its various litigating and non-litigating components, the Department has disseminated information to educate the public and raise awareness about available legal resources. Since 2012, the Department has published new toolkits on topics ranging from immigration-related unfair employment practices to consumer protection.
- Collaboration
 - a. *The Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable (LAIR).* Co-chaired by Associate Attorney General Tony West and Tonya Robinson of the White House Domestic Policy Council, LAIR is a 17-agency group that works to raise awareness about the profound impact legal aid programs can have in advancing federal efforts to promote access to health and housing, education and employment, family stability, and community well-being.
 - b. *National Security Cyber Specialists (NSCS) Network.* The National Security Division launched NSCS in an effort to better address cyber intrusions and attacks carried out by nation-states and terrorist organizations. The network collaborates with private companies to respond to cyber incidents and conducts outreach to gain a better understanding of private-sector cyber security concerns.
 - c. *Forensic Science.* Over the last several years, the Office of Legal Policy has worked closely with the National Institution for Standards and Technology (NIST) at the Department of Commerce on issues relating to forensic science.

Next Steps

This outline serves as a general roadmap for the content that will be included in the Department's next Open Government Plan and is subject to revision as we continue to receive input from stakeholders, employees, the public, and the Department's leadership. Please communicate any questions, comments, or concerns to the Department's Open Government Working group at opengov@usdoj.gov.