

## § 1206.603

### § 1206.603 Procedures and time limits for initial determinations.

(a) Except as provided in § 1206.608, an initial determination on a request for an Agency record, addressed in accordance with § 1206.601(a) or made in person at a NASA FOIA Office shall be made, and the requester shall be sent notification thereof, within 20 working days after receipt of the request, as required by 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(6).

(b) An initial determination on a request for an Agency record by mail not addressed in accordance with § 1206.601(a) shall be made, and the requester shall be sent notification thereof, within 20 working days after the correspondence is recognized as a request for an Agency record under the "Freedom of Information Act" and received by the appropriate NASA FOIA Office. With respect to such a request, unless an initial determination can reasonably be made within 20 working days of the original receipt, the request will be promptly acknowledged and the requester notified of the date the request was received at that FOIA Office and that an initial determination on the request will be made within 20 working days of that date.

(c) If it is determined that the requested record (or portion thereof) will be made available, and if the charges are under \$250, NASA will either send a copy of the releasable record and a bill for the fee or send the initial determination and a bill for the fee to the requester. In the latter case, the documents will be released when the fee is received. If the fee chargeable is over \$250, a request for payment of the fee will always be sent with the initial determination, and the records will be mailed only upon receipt of payment. When records are sent before payment is received, the fact that interest will be charged from the 31st day after the day of the response shall be stated in the response. The date of the mailing of an initial determination, with or without the records(s), shall be deemed to satisfy the time limit for initial determinations.

(d) Any notification of an initial determination that does not comply fully with the request for an Agency record, including those searches that produce no documents, shall include a state-

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ment of the reasons for the adverse determination, include the name and title of the person making the initial determination, and notify the requester of the right to appeal to the Administrator, or the Inspector General, as appropriate, under § 1206.605.

(e) If the requester demonstrates a "compelling need" as defined in § 1206.101(r) for records, NASA shall provide expedited processing of the request. NASA will inform the requester as to whether the request for expedited processing has been granted within 10 working days after the date of the request.

### § 1206.604 Request for records that exist elsewhere.

(a) If a request for an Agency record is received by a FOIA Office not having cognizance of the record (for example, when a request is submitted to one NASA Center or Headquarters and the requested record exists only at another NASA Center), the FOIA Office receiving the request shall promptly forward it to the NASA FOIA Office having cognizance of the record requested. That Center shall acknowledge the request and inform the requester that an initial determination on the request will be sent within 20 working days from the date of receipt by such Center.

(b) If a request is received for Agency records which exist at two or more Centers, the FOIA Office receiving the request shall undertake to comply with the request, if feasible, or to forward the request (or portions thereof) promptly to a more appropriate Center for processing. The requester shall be kept informed of the actions taken to respond to the request.

(c) If a request is received by a NASA FOIA Office for a record of another agency, the requester shall promptly be informed of that fact, and the request shall be returned to the requester, with advice as to where the request should be directed.

### § 1206.605 Appeals.

(a) A member of the public who has requested an Agency record in accordance with § 1206.601 or § 1206.602, and who has received an initial determination which does not comply fully with

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the request, may appeal such an adverse initial determination to the Administrator, or, for records as specified in §1206.504, to the Inspector General under the procedures of this section.

(b) The Appeal must:

(1) Be in writing;

(2) Be addressed to the Administrator, NASA Headquarters, Washington, DC 20546, or, for records as specified in §1206.504, to the Inspector General, NASA Headquarters, Washington, DC 20546;

(3) Be identified clearly on the envelope and in the letter as an "Appeal under the Freedom of Information Act";

(4) Include a copy of the request for the Agency record and a copy of the adverse initial determination;

(5) To the extent possible, state the reasons why the requester believes the adverse initial determination should be reversed; and

(6) Be sent to the Administrator or the Inspector General, as appropriate, within 30 calendar days of the date of receipt of the initial determination.

(c) An official authorized to make a final determination may waive any of the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section, in which case the time limit for the final determination (see §1206.607(a)) shall run from the date of such waiver.

### § 1206.606 Request for additional records.

If, upon receipt of a record (or portions thereof) following an initial determination to comply with a request, the requester believes that the materials received do not comply with the request, the requester may elect either to request additional records under the procedures of §1206.601 or §1206.602, or to file an appeal under the procedures of §1206.605, in which case the appeal must be sent to the Administrator, or to the Inspector General, in the case of records as specified in §1206.504, within 30 days of receipt of the record (or portions thereof), unless good cause is shown for any additional delay.

### § 1206.607 Actions on appeals.

(a) Except as provided in §1206.608, the Administrator or designee, or in the case of records as specified in

§1206.504, the Inspector General or designee, shall make a final determination on an appeal and notify the requester thereof, within 20 working days after the receipt of the appeal.

(b) If the final determination reverses in whole or in part the initial determination, the record requested (or portions thereof) shall be made available promptly to the requester, as provided in the final determination.

(c) If the final determination sustains in whole or in part an adverse initial determination, the notification of the final determination shall:

(1) Explain the basis on which the record (or portions thereof) will not be made available;

(2) Include the name and title of the person making the final determination;

(3) Include a statement that the final determination is subject to judicial review under 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4); and

(4) Enclose a copy of 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4).

### § 1206.608 Time extensions in unusual circumstances.

(a) In "unusual circumstances" as that term is defined in §1206.101(f), the time limits for an initial determination (see § 1206.603 and §1206.604) and for a final determination (see §1206.607) may be extended, but not to exceed a total of 10 working days in the aggregate in the processing of any specific request for an Agency record.

(b) If an extension of time under this section would be required, the requester shall be promptly notified of the reasons therefor and the date when a determination will be sent.

(c) If a record described in a request cannot be located within the 20-working-day time limit for an initial determination, after consultation with a professional NASA employee who is familiar with the subject area of the request, that fact normally will justify an initial determination that the record requested cannot be identified or located, rather than a decision that an extension of time under this section would be appropriate.

(d) In exceptional circumstances, if it would be impossible to complete a search for or review of Agency records within the 20-working-day period for an