FOIAonline

Public User Guide

Version 0.04

September 14, 2012

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List of Exhibits

Revision Log

Date	Version No.	Description	Author	Reviewer	Review Date
7/24/2012	0.01	Draft Delivery to Client	K. Cannava	J. Geiger	8/10/2012
8/22/2012	0.02	Updated Screen Captures	K. Cannava	J. Geiger	8/23/2012
8/27/2012	0.03	Separated Public Section	B. Stephensen	P. Brandon	8/27/2012
09/14/2012	0.04	Removed the repeated sections and references to the agency user guide sections. Added Appeal this FOIA Request section	N. Joshi	P. Brandon	9/24/2012

1   Introduction

1.1   Background

FOIAonline is intended to create efficiencies and consistency in the way Government agencies respond to FOIA requests. The system is a multi-tenant, online FOIA repository and secure agency processing system to be used by partner agencies across the federal government. This system will improve upon the functionality currently available to agency FOIA professionals, subject matter experts, and the public.

The public will benefit from submitting FOIA requests to fewer government websites, tracking the status of requests, and searching and reviewing public requests and agency responses. Participating agencies will benefit through storing FOIA requests and responses in a repository for reuse, and report generation.

1.2   System Roles

Various user roles will be included in the system to accommodate the various usage patterns expected across agencies. Users of the system include:

- National Team: These users are in charge of the initial evaluation of requests for centralized agencies, re-routing incorrectly sent requests, and assigning requests, consultations, and referrals. Privileges include: access to the Agency User Administration page, adjusting requests' billing sheets, flagging a record as "frequently requested," and reassigning requests. The National Team can view the workload of all agency and sub-agency users. The National Team role has access to the Agency Administration pages and can assign/re-assign requests, consultations, and referrals.

- Coordinator: These users have access to the Unassigned Cases and Assigned Cases dashboards for their organizational level and edit access to the sub-Agency Administration pages. The Coordinator has the following privileges: overwriting a request's complexity, flagging a request as perfected or unperfected (as long as a higher role has not already marked it as either), extend the retention schedule for a record, and toggle notifications.

- Public Liaison: These users have the Unassigned Cases and Assigned Cases dashboards for their organizational level and the ability to: run the workload report, view sub-agency requests, reassign requests, assess the complexity of a request, reassign requests, and adjust a request's billing sheet. When a Public Liaison user runs the audit trail report, they can view only their own requests and the edits made to them.

- Professional: These users have access to only the requests that are assigned to them via the My Cases dashboard.

- Subject Matter Expert (SME): These users have access to only the tasks that are assigned to them via the My Cases dashboard.

- Reviewer: These users have read only privileges to all case files within an Agency.

1.3   Terminology

The following is a list of terms used throughout this document:

General Public vs. Registered User: General Public and Registered Users are both non-agency system users. A General Public user can create requests via the system, search, and generate reports, but does not have access to appeal, system correspondence, and in-depth request tracking. A Registered User views a dashboard of all previously created requests and appeals, has access to streamlined request creation, send correspondence via the system, notifications, and in-depth request tracking.

Action: An action is a link that displays in the Actions Menu, allowing the user to quickly navigate to key functionality.

Actions Menu: The list of actions that displays when on the Request Details page.

Agency User: The officer or analyst in charge of handling and processing requests or appeals.

Confirmation Message: Text inside a green bar that displays on the top of the page when an action is performed successfully.

Dashboard: The dashboard is a central location for FOIA content. Registered Public Users and Agency Users have access to a dashboard(s).

Error Message: Text inside a red bar that displays on the top of the page when an action is performed unsuccessfully.

Hover Text: Hover text displays when hovering over a "?" icon next to various fields throughout the system.

2 General Public

2.1 Home Page

The Home page of FOIAonline is the landing screen for both public and agency users. This page allows users to quickly access important system functionality, including searching, reporting, account creation, and request creation. Exhibit 2-1 Home Page shows the layout of the landing page.

Exhibit 2- 1 Home Page
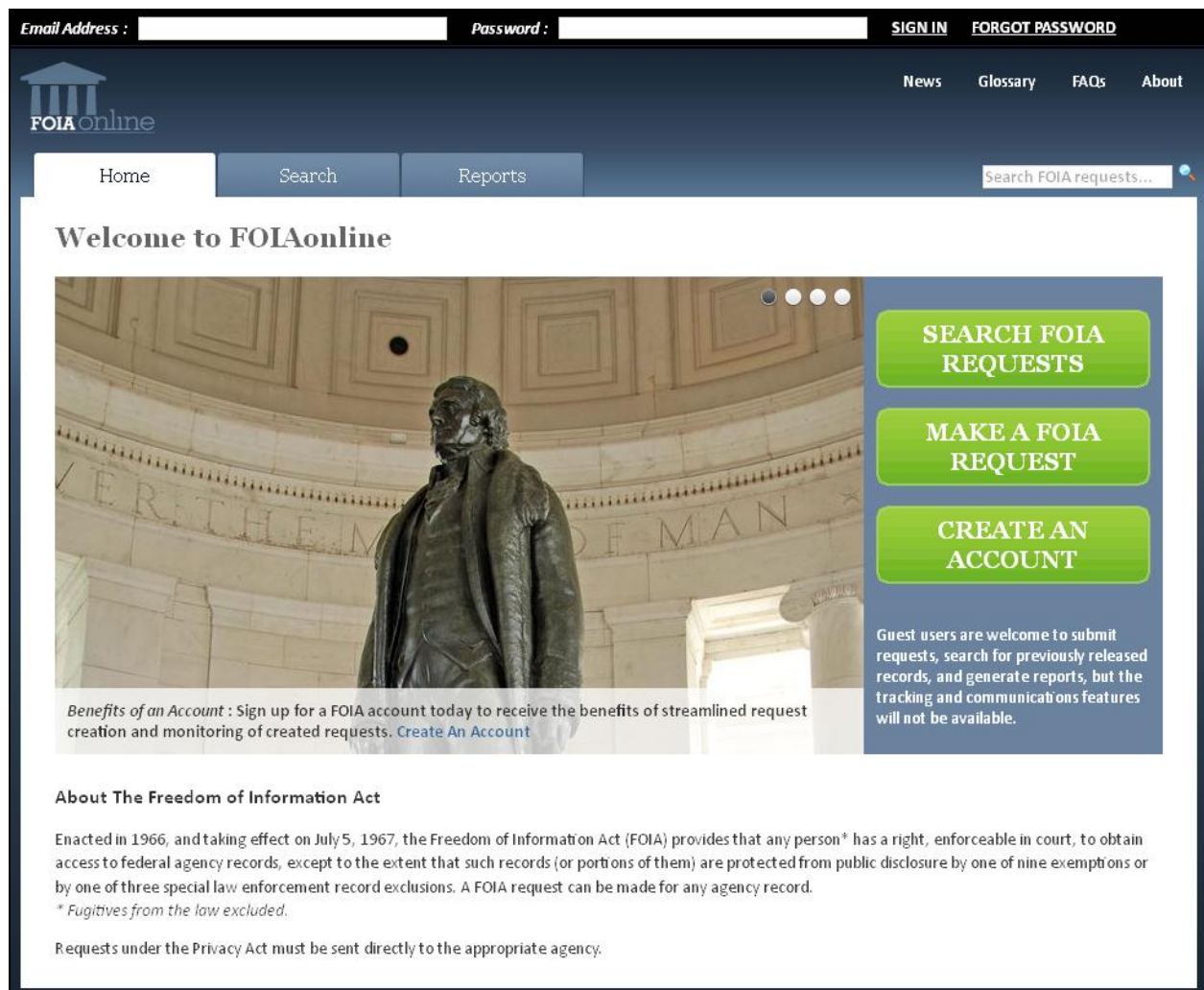
Key functionality includes the login bar at the top of the screen; two quick links in the top right corner for the glossary and more information about FOIAonline; three tabs to access the Home, Search, and Reports pages; a search field; four cycling pictures that elaborate on key system functionality; and three buttons to allow the user to search, make a FOIA request, and create an account.

The user can manually cycle through the pictures by clicking on the four radio buttons that display in the top right corner of the pictures. Clicking any of the radio buttons stops the automatic cycling.

2.1.1 Search FOIA Requests

There are two ways a public user can access the Search page from the Home page: by clicking either the Search tab or the Search FOIA Requests button. A user can skip the Search page and quickly access search results by entering criteria in the text field that is located on the upper right corner of every page, (see Exhibit 2-2 Search Bar). The Search Bar searches all agencies for requests only.

Exhibit 2- 2 Search Bar
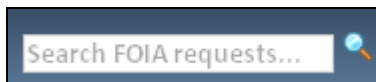
Once criteria are entered in the text field, the user can either press the Enter button on the keyboard, or click the magnifying glass icon to begin the search.

There are three different pages associated with searching: Search, Search Results, and Search Details.

Search Criteria

A public user can search for all previously created requests, appeals, and any publically available responsive records. Exhibit 2-3 Search Page shows the layout of the Search page and the fields on which users can search. The Request Type checkboxes default to checked, but a user can uncheck certain criteria in order to return more specific results.

Exhibit 2- 3 Search Page

The Agency field is a multi-select field, so a user can search for multiple agencies by pressing the CTRL button on the keyboard and then clicking the agency names. To deselect an agency, press the CTRL button and then the desired agency to remove from the search results.

Search Results

Search results display in a table with the following columns: Tracking Number, Type, Phase, Requester, Submitted, Due, and Detail. Each column can be sorted, with the exception of the Detail column, by clicking on the column header. Clicking on the Detail column header expands the Description row of all of the search results.

Exhibit 2- 4 Search Results

Key features to note: clicking the Refine Search link loads the previous page with the previously entered criterion; the Results dropdown menu can filter results to display 10, 25, 50, or 100 at a time; pagination buttons exist on top of the table; the search term(s) entered highlight(s) in the Search Results table.

Export options display beneath the Search Results table. Clicking either of the links exports the results into an Excel spreadsheet (see Exhibit 2-5 Search Results Excel Export), either in a CSV or XLS format.

Exhibit 2- 5 Search Results Excel Export

Search Details

There are three different types of Search Details pages: Request Details, Appeal Details, and Record Details. These pages are accessed by clicking on the Tracking Number links for the search results with the corresponding type.

<u>Request Details</u>

Clicking on the Tracking Number link for a Request in the Search Results table displays the Request Details page (see Exhibit 2-6 Request Details Initial Evaluation Page).

Exhibit 2- 6 Request Details Initial Evaluation Page

Limited information displays when a request is first submitted and under the initial evaluation stages: The Due Date is 'TBD' and the request's description is under Agency review. This information displays conditionally on how the agency user evaluates the request.

When a request is marked as publically available and records are released (see Exhibit 2-7 Publically Available Request), the Request Details page displays additional information. Clicking the download checkbox for a responsive record downloads the record to the user's hard drive.

Exhibit 2- 7 Publically Available Request

Request Details   Tracking Number : EPA-2012-000505

Submitted — Evaluation — Assignment — Processing — Closed

Request Information
Full Name : Laura Cordon
Organization : N/A
Request Type : Request

Phase Information
Due Date : August 29, 2012
Final Disposition : Full grant

Description :
Selected data pertaining to 404 permits for coal mining operations in Central Appalachia

Released Records

Download	Title	Type	Size (KB)	Release Date
☐	coal_mine_recovery_project	PDF	46.63	08/07/2012
☐	mining-applicability	PDF	36.93	08/07/2012

DOWNLOAD

BACK TO SEARCH RESULTS   BACK TO SEARCH   HOME

Appeal Details

The Appeal Details page displays a brief summary of the original request the appeal is associated to, and information about the appeal. The three buttons on the bottom of the screen offer quick navigation for either returning to the Search Results page, the Search Criteria page, or the Home page.

Exhibit 2- 8 Appeal Details

Appeal Details   Tracking Number : *EPA-2012-000503*

┌─ Request Information ─────────────┐   ┌─ Appeal Information ──────────────┐
│   │   │   │
│ Tracking Number : EPA-2012-000502│   │ Tracking Number : EPA-2012-000503│
│   Full Name : Ron Carpenter │   │   Full Name : Ron Carpenter │
│ Date Submitted : July 27, 2012   │   │ Date Submitted : July 30, 2012   │
│   Request Phase : Processing   │   │   Appeal Status : Closed   │
│   Request Track : TBD   │   │ Final Disposition : Affirmed on Appeal │
│ Final Disposition : Undetermined │   │   │
└───────────────────────────────────┘   └───────────────────────────────────┘

Basis for Appeal :

This is taking too long to process,

[BACK TO SEARCH RESULTS]   [BACK TO SEARCH]   [HOME]

Record Details

The Record Details page (see Exhibit 2-9 Record Details page) offers a summary of the record, with modifiable fields for the agency user. The Record Details section also displays the tracking number of the associated request.
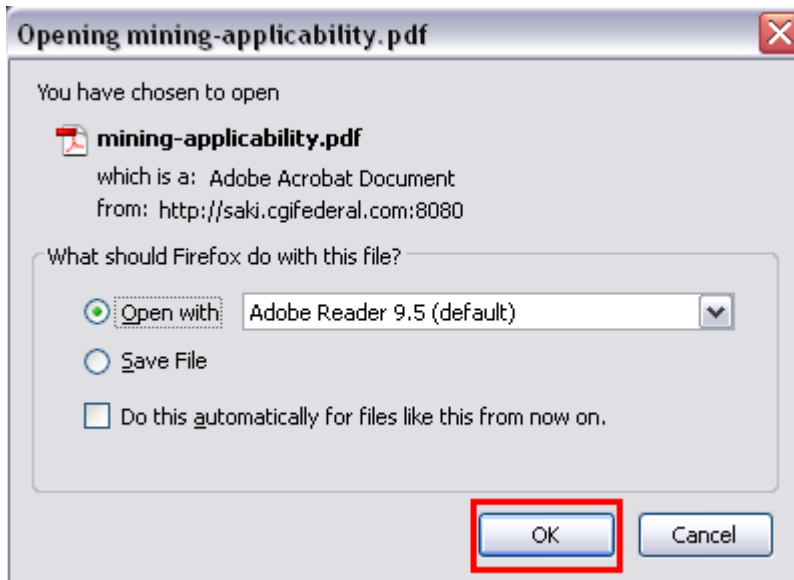
Exhibit 2- 9 Record Details Page

Clicking on the Title launches a popup, depending on the browser, prompting the user to either open or save the file, as seen in Exhibit 2-10 Download Record.
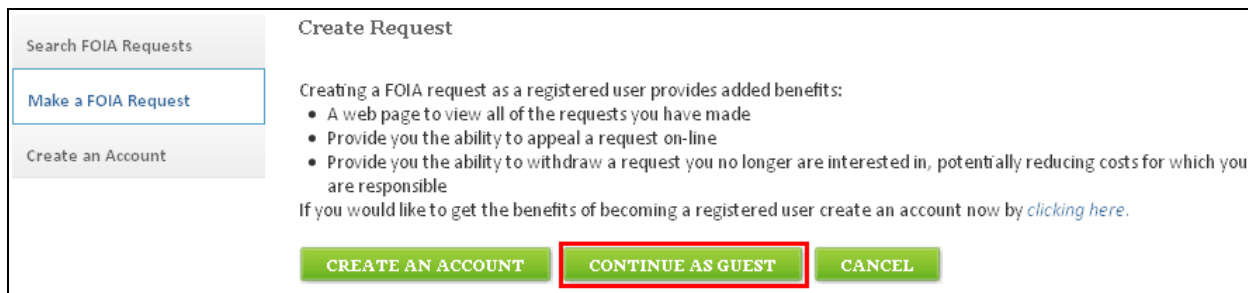
Exhibit 2- 10 Download Record

2.1.2   Make a FOIA Request

Create a FOIA request by pressing the Make a FOIA Request button on the Home page. This loads a page that lists the benefits of becoming a registered user. To continue to create a request as a public user, press the Continue as a Guest button to advance, as shown in Exhibit 2-11 Guest Request Creation.

Exhibit 2- 11 Guest Request Creation

Create Request

On this page (see Exhibit 2-12 Create Request), a public user enters, at minimum, the required fields (distinguishable with an asterisk). If a fee waiver or expedited processing request is made then the corresponding justification fields are required. To be accepted, the justification fields must adhere to the agency specific guideline. Attach files to send along with the request by pressing the Select Files button to launch a popup which allows the user to select multiple files from the computer's hard drive. Files display in a table in the Attach Supporting Files section, with a removal option.

Exhibit 2- 12 Create Request Page

Create Request

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a federal law that gives the public the right to make requests for federal agency records. All federal agencies are required to make requested records available unless the records are protected from disclosure by certain FOIA exemptions. Agencies may withhold information according to *nine exemptions* contained in the statute. The FOIA applies only to federal agencies. It does not apply to records held by Congress, the courts, or by state or local government agencies. Each state has its own public access laws that should be consulted for access to state and local records.

Contact Information

* First Name : Lindsay

Middle Initial :

* Last Name : Horton

Organization : Atural Resources Defense Counci

Email Address :

Phone Number :

Fax Number :

* Mailing Address Location : United States/U.S. Territorie

* Address Line 1 : 2837 Springress Drive

Address Line 2 :

* City : Chantilly

* State/Province : VA

* Zip Code / Postal Code : 22030

Agency and Fee Information

* Agency : Environmental Protection Agency

Sub-Agency : Environmental Protection Agency (General)

* Will Pay Up To : $ 25.00

* Description :   84/2000

NYS DEC General SPDES permits for storm water and related management design manual.

Request a Fee Waiver

Any FOIA requester may request that all fees associated with the request be waived. The request for the fee waiver must be submitted with the FOIA request. For further information about Fee Waivers, please see the Agency's FOIA website.
EPA | Dept. of Commerce

Make Request ? Yes   49/2000

This request will contribute to public knowledge.

Request Expedited Processing

Under certain conditions, you may be entitled to have your request processed on an expedited basis, i.e., within 10 calendar days of the date on which the request was received. However, in an effort to treat all requesters equitably, FOIA requests are expedited only in cases in which there is a threat to someone's life or physical safety; the requestor is primarily engaged in disseminating information and has established that the request is urgently needed to inform the public concerning some actual or alleged government activity.

Make Request ? Yes   75/2000

This request is will contribute to public knowledge of government activity.

Attach Supporting Files

SELECT FILES

Attached File	Type	Size (KB)	Remove
FOIA Fee Waiver Request - EPA.docx	Microsoft Word	18.96	✖

PREVIEW   CANCEL

When selecting an Agency from the dropdown menu, if the Agency is de-centralized then the user can send the request directly to a specific Sub-Agency's dashboard, or to a generic agency dashboard, where it can then be routed to the correct Sub-Agency (see Exhibit 2-13 De-centralized Sub-Agency).

Exhibit 2- 13 De-centralized Sub-Agency

If an Agency is configured to be centralized, then no Sub-Agency dropdown menu displays and all requests entered in the system are submitted directly to one agency dashboard.

Before submitting a FOIA request, all public users are required to preview the request by pressing the Preview button.

Preview Request

The Preview Request page offers the user one final chance to review the information entered before submittal (see Exhibit 2-14 Preview Request).

Exhibit 2- 14 Preview Request

Edit the request by pressing the Edit Request button as displayed in Exhibit 2- 15 Edit Request Button to return to the Create Request page.

Exhibit 2- 15 Edit Request Button

After editing the request or choosing to continue without editing, if the requester does not enter the reCAPTCHA and does not check the checkboxes, as seen in Exhibit 2-16 reCAPTCHA and Request Affirmations, then the request will not be submitted. Enter the correct anti-spam text in the reCAPTCHA field, check the checkboxes, and press the Submit button to display the Request Confirmation page.

Exhibit 2- 16 reCAPTCHA and Request Affirmations

Confirmation

Pressing the Submit button on the Preview page displays the Confirmation page. The Confirmation page contains a summary of the created request, including the unique tracking number that is generated.

Exhibit 2- 17 Request Confirmation Page

Clicking the tracking number sends the user to the Search Results page (see Exhibit 2-6 Request Details Initial Evaluation Page). Make another FOIA request by clicking the Make another FOIA Request button or return to the Home page by clicking the Home button.

2.1.3   Create an Account

Access the Create Account page via the following options:

1. The Create an Account button in the right side menu or the link in the first graphic on the Home page.

2. Press the Make a FOIA Request button on the Home page to access the Create Request public landing page. Either click the "clicking here" link or press the Create an Account button.

3. Click the Create an Account action from the left side menu when on either the search or Create Request pages.

Enter information into the User Information section and create a password on the Create an Account page. Press the Create Account button to create the account (see Exhibit 2-18 Create an Account Page).

Exhibit 2- 18 Create an Account Page
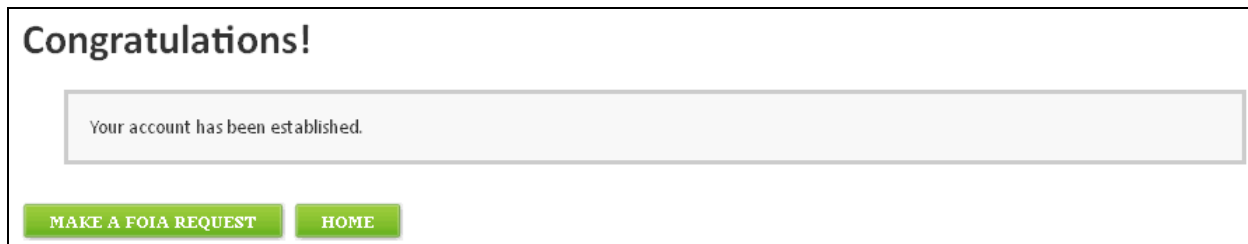
This displays the Confirmation page (see Exhibit 2-19 Account Confirmation Page) where a registered user can now immediately create a FOIA request, or view the View My FOIA Requests dashboard by clicking the Home button.

Exhibit 2- 19 Account Confirmation Page

Benefits

A public user with an account has the ability to view and track all previously created requests in a centralized dashboard, have the User Information pre-populate upon request creation, communicate within the system to agency users, create appeals for previously created requests via the system, and withdraw or modify a request.

Impact

A system account allows records to be delivered to the requester electronically which reduces reliance on paper and reduces copying costs.

2.2   Login Bar

The login bar displays at the top of every page, allowing a user to sign in conveniently.

Exhibit 2- 20 Login Bar
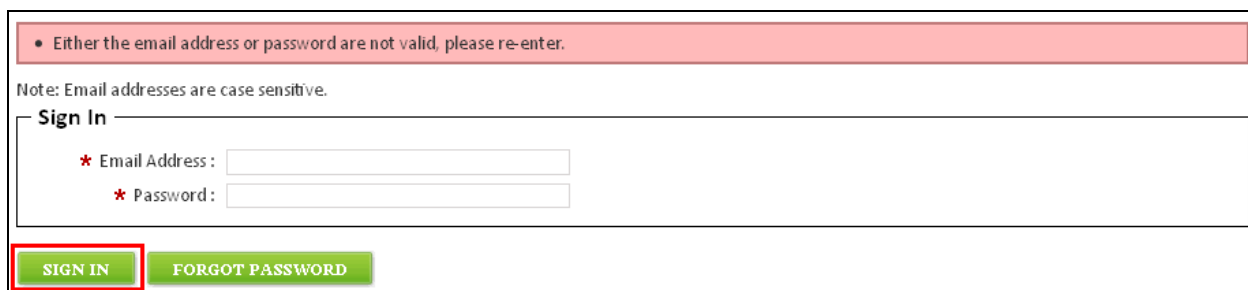
2.2.1   Sign In

A user can sign in to the system by entering the correct criteria in either the login bar or the Sign In page. If an invalid attempt to sign in is made via the Login Bar, then the Sign In page displays (see Exhibit 2-21 Sign In Page).

Exhibit 2- 21 Sign In Page

The password can be reset by pressing the Forgot Password button (see section Forgot Password 2.2.2).

Enter the correct credentials and press the Sign In button which displays a popup that the user must acknowledge before being able to access the dashboard page (see Exhibit 2-22 Privacy and Use Notice).

Exhibit 2- 22 Privacy and Use Notice

2.2.2   Forgot Password

If a registered user forgets his or her password, then the password can be reset via the Forgot Password page (see Exhibit 2-23 Forgot Password Page).

Exhibit 2- 23 Forgot Password Page

Enter the associated email address and press the Submit button to receive a temporary password via email. Enter the email address and the temporary password into either the Login Bar or the Sign In page and press the Sign In link/button.

The Change Password page displays upon signing in with the temporary password see section 3.2.2 Change Password.

2.3   Quick Links

The News, Glossary, FAQs, and About quick links display at the top of every page.

2.3.1 News

The News page (see Exhibit 2-24 News Page) offers the general public quick access to important FOIA news.

Exhibit 2- 24 News Page
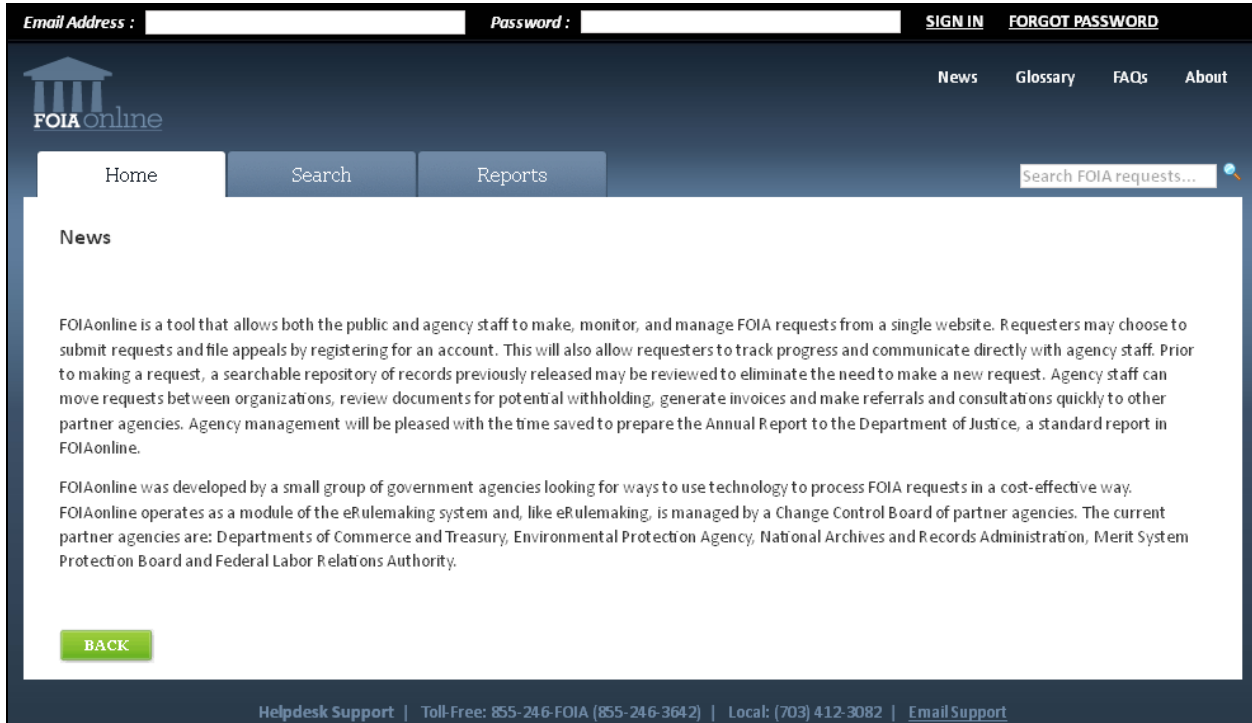
2.3.2 Glossary

The Glossary page (see Exhibit 2-25 Glossary Page) displays the FOIA.gov glossary in a separate and smaller window.

Exhibit 2- 25 Glossary Page

2.3.3   FAQs

The FAQs page (see Exhibit 2-26 FAQs Page**Error! Reference source not found.**) contains answers to Frequently Asked Questions about FOIA and FOIAonline.

Exhibit 2- 26 FAQs Page
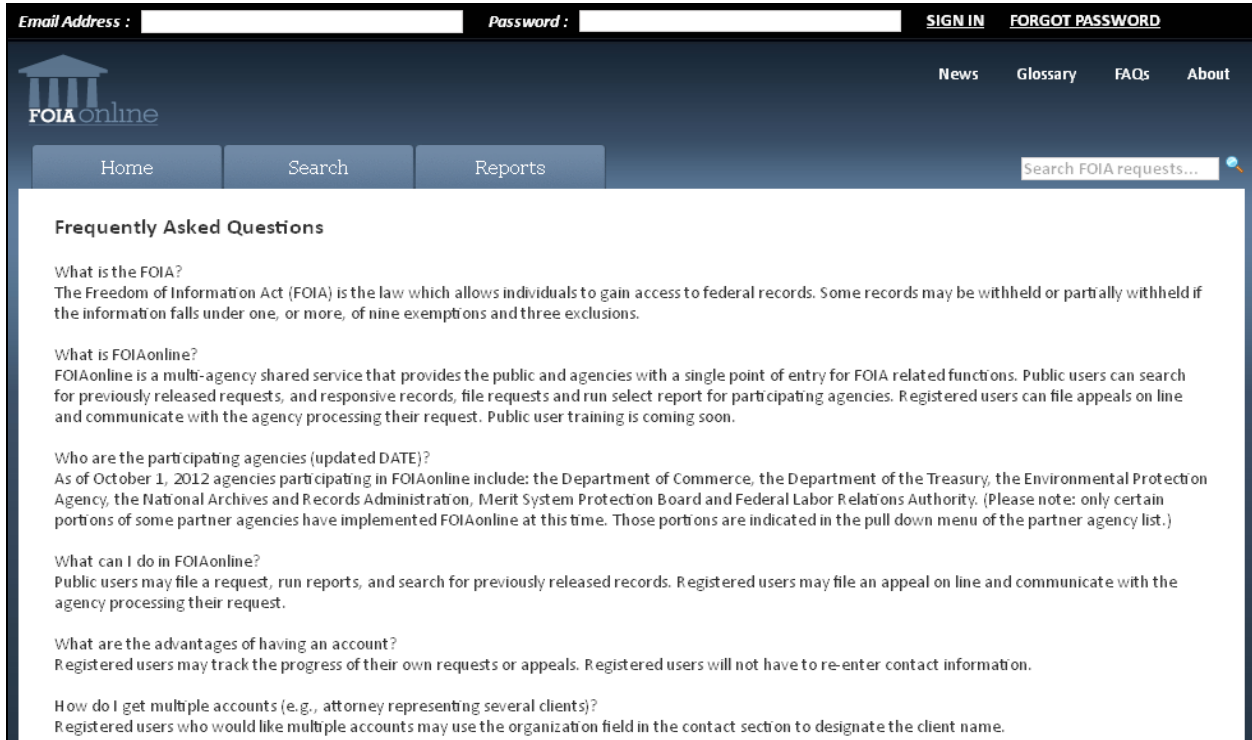
2.3.4   About

The About page displays in a separate and smaller window (see Exhibit 2-27 About Page) which offers the user more information concerning the benefits of FOIAonline.

Exhibit 2- 27 About Page
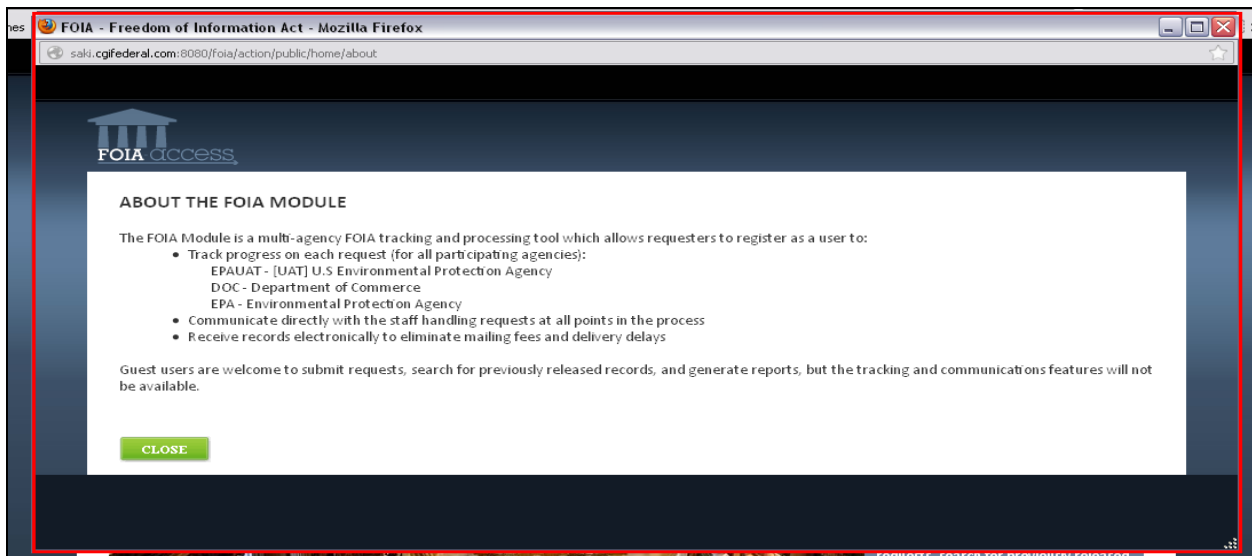
2.4   Reports

Reports are generated in real-time, providing a level of visibility that previously did not exist. Public users are able to run reports through selections in three different areas: Select Report, Select Agency, and Select Time Period.

Select Report provides nine report options which display metrics from the Annual Report through the use of graphs and charts. Those nine reports are: 1. Requests (Disposition, Expedited Processing), 2. Exemptions (Exemption 3 Statutes), 3. Appeals (Disposition, Disposition Exemptions, Disposition Other Than Exemptions, Disposition"Other" Reasons, Response Time, Ten Oldest Pending), 4. Processing Time (Requests Granted, Simple Requests, Complex Requests, Expedited Requests, Pending Requests, Ten Oldest Requests), 5. Fee Waiver, 6. Administration (FOIA Personnel, FOIA Costs), 7. Backlog, 8. Consultations (Ten Oldest), and 9. Comparisons (Requests Backlogged, Administrative Appeals, Appeals Backlogged).

2.4.1   Report Criteria

Public users are able to run reports through selections in three different areas: Report Type, Agency, and Time Period. Multiple agencies can be selected from the Agency multi select box by pressing the CTRL button on the keyboard, and selecting the desired agencies. An agency can be deselected in the same manner. The Time Period provides From and To date entry fields so the report information can be specified down to the month. Clicking either entry field opens a date picker for the selection of the appropriate time period.

Exhibit 2- 28 Report Criteria

Press the Create Report button to generate the selected report.

2.4.2   Description of Public Reports

The Public has access to a variety of reports that display corresponding criteria, including: Requests, Exemptions, Appeals, Processing Time, Fee Waiver, Administration, Backlog, Consultations, and Comparisons reports.

Each report, if applicable, displays both a bar graph and a table of the data, as shown in Exhibit 2-29 Public Report**Error! Reference source not found.**. Each agency selected displays in the bar graph in its own color, and each agency's data displays in a table below the bar graph. Hide and unhide agency tables by clicking the "Hide" and "Show" links next to the Agency name. Data can be exported to .csv or .xls files by clicking on the corresponding link in the Export Options field on the bottom of each table.

Exhibit 2- 29 Public Report

Press the Back button to return to the Report Criteria page.

2.4.2.1   Requests

There are 3 types of Request reports: Requests, Disposition, and Expedited Processing.

The Requests report is titled Received, Processed, and Pending FOIA Requests and displays in columns for Number of Requests Pending as of Start of the Time Period, Number of Requests Received in the Time Period, Number of Requests Processed in the Time Period, and Number of Requests Pending as of End of the Time Period. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Disposition

The report is titled Disposition of FOIA Requests – All Processed Requests and displays in columns for Full Grants, Partial Grants/Partial Denials, Full Denials Based on Exemptions, and Full Denials Based on Reasons Other than Exemptions. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Expedited Processing

The report is titled Requests for Expedited Processing and displays in columns for Number Granted, Number Denied, Median Number of Days to Adjudicate, Average Number of Days to Adjudicate, and Number Adjudicated within 10 Calendar Days. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

2.4.2.2   Exemptions

There are 2 types of Exemptions reports: Exemptions and Exemption 3 Statutes.
The Exemptions report is titled Disposition of FOIA Requests - Number of Times Exemptions Applied and displays in columns for Ex.1, Ex. 2, Ex. 3, Ex. 4, Ex. 5, Ex. 6, Ex. 7(A), Ex. 7(B), Ex. 7.(C), Ex. 7(D), Ex. 7(E), Ex. 7(F), Ex. 8, Ex. 9. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Exemption 3 Statutes
The report is titled Exemption 3 Statutes and displays only a chart displays with the columns Statute, Type of Information Withheld, Case Citation, Number of Times Relied Upon per Component, and Total Number of Times Relied upon by Agency.

2.4.2.3   Appeals

There are 7 types of Appeals reports: Appeals, Disposition, Exemptions, Disposition Other Than Exemptions, Disposition "Other" Reasons, Response Time, and Ten Oldest Appeals.

The Appeals report is title Received, Processed, and Pending Administrative Appeals and displays in columns for Number of Appeals Pending as of Start of the Time Period, Number of Appeals Received in the Time Period, Number of Appeals Processed in the Time Period, and Number of Appeals Pending as of End of the Time Period. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Disposition

The report is titled Appeals Received – Processed and Pending and displays in columns for Number Affirmed on Appeal, Number Partially Affirmed & Partially Reserved/Remanded on Appeal, Number Completely Reserved/Remanded on Appeal, Number of Appeals Closed for Other Reasons, and Total. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Exemptions

The report is titled Appeal Determinations - Based on the Use of a FOIA Exemption and displays in columns for Ex.1, Ex. 2, Ex. 3, Ex. 4, Ex. 5, Ex. 6, Ex. 7(A), Ex. 7(B), Ex. 7.(C), Ex. 7(D), Ex. 7(E), Ex. 7(F), Ex. 8, and Ex. 9. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Disposition Other Than Exemptions

The report is titled Appeal Determinations Based on Reasons Other Than the Use of a FOIA Exemption and displays in columns for No Records, All Records Referred, Request Withdrawn, Fee-Related Reason, Not Reasonably Described, Improper FOIA Request, Not Agency Record, Duplicate Request, Request in Litigation, Appeal Based Solely on Denial for Expedited Processing, and Other. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Disposition "Other" Reasons

The report is titled Appeal Determinations Based on Reasons Other Than the Use of a FOIA Exemption and displays only a chart displays with the columns Component, Description, No. of Times Used, and Total.

Response Time

The report is titled Response Time for Administrative Appeals and displays in columns for Median Number of Days, Average Number of Days, Lowest Number of Days, and Highest Number of Days. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Ten Oldest Appeals

The report is titled Pending Appeal - Ten Oldest Pending Administrative Appeals and displays only a chart with the columns Component <blank>, 10th, 9th, 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th, 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and Oldest Appeal.

2.4.2.4   Processing Time

There are 7 types of Processing Time reports: Processing Time, Requests Granted, Simple Requests, Complex Requests, Expedited Requests, Pending Requests, and Ten Oldest Requests.

The Processing Time report is titled Processed Requests - Response Time for All Processed Perfected Requests and displays in columns for Simple – Lowest Days, Simple – Highest Days, Complex – Lowest Days, Complex – Highest Days, Expedited – Lowest Days, and Expedited – Highest Days. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Requests Granted

The report is titled Requests Granted - Response Time for Perfected Requests in Which Information Was Granted and displays in columns for Simple – Lowest Days, Simple – Highest Days, Complex – Lowest Days, Complex – Highest Days, Expedited – Lowest Days, and Expedited – Highest Days. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Simple Requests

The report is titled Processing Simple Requests -- Response Time in Day Increments and displays in columns for 1-20 Days, 21-40 Days, 41-60 Days, 61-80 Days, 81-100 Days, 101-120 Days, 121-140 Days, 141-160 Days, 161-180 Days, 181-200 Days, 201-300 Days, 301-400 Days, 400+ Days, and Total. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Complex Requests

The report is titled Complex Requests -- Response Time in Day Increments and displays in columns for 1-20 Days, 21-40 Days, 41-60 Days, 61-80 Days, 81-100 Days, 101-120 Days, 121-140 Days, 141-160 Days, 161-180 Days, 181-200 Days, 201-300 Days, 301-400 Days, 400+ Days, and Total. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Expedited Requests

The report is titled Expedited Requests -- Response Time in Day Increments and displays in columns for 1-20 Days, 21-40 Days, 41-60 Days, 61-80 Days, 81-100 Days, 101-120 Days, 121-140 Days, 141-160 Days, 161-180 Days, 181-200 Days, 201-300 Days, 301-400 Days, 400+ Days, and Total. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Pending Requests

The report is titled Pending Requests - All Pending Perfected Requests and displays in columns for Simple – Number Pending, Simple – Median No. of Days, Simple – Average No. of Days,

Complex – Number Pending, Complex – Median No. of Days, Complex – Average No. of Days, Expedited – Number Pending, Expedited – Median No. of Days, Expedited – Average No. of Days,. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Ten Oldest Requests

The report is titled Pending Requests - Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Requests and displays only a chart with the columns Component, <blank>, 10th, 9th, 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th, 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and Oldest Request.

2.4.2.5 Fee Waiver

The report is titled Requests for Fee Waivers and displays in columns for Number Granted, Number Denied, Median Number of Days to Adjudicate, and Average Number of Days to Adjudicate. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

2.4.2.6 Administration

There are 2 types of Administration reports: FOIA Personnel and FOIA Costs.

FOIA Personnel

The report is titled FOIA Personnel and displays in columns for Number of 'Full-Time FOIA Employees', Number of 'Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees', and Total Number of 'Full-Time FOIA Staff'. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

FOIA Costs

The report is titled Total Costs and Fees and displays in columns for Processing Costs, Litigation-Related Costs, Total Costs, Collected Amount, and Collected Percentage. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

2.4.2.7 Backlog

The report is titled Backlogged Requests and Appeals and displays in columns for Number of Backlogged Requests as of the End of Time Period and Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Time Period. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

2.4.2.8 Consultations

There are 2 types of Consultations reports: Consultations and Ten Oldest Consultations.
The Consultations report is titled Consultations on FOIA Requests Received, Processed and Pending Consultations and displays in columns for Number of Consultations Pending as of Start of the Time Period, Number of Consultations Received in Time Period, Number of Consultations Processed in Time Period, and Number of Consultations Pending as of End of Time Period. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Ten Oldest

The report is titled Pending Consultations - Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Consultations and displays only a chart displays with the columns Component <blank>, 10th, 9th, 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th, 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and Oldest Request.

2.4.2.9 Comparisons

Selecting Comparisons from the Report Type dropdown menu expands two new date fields, as shown in Exhibit 2-30 Comparisons Report Dates: Previous Time Period and Current Time Period.

Exhibit 2- 30 Comparisons Report Dates

There are 4 types of Comparisons reports: Requests, Requests Backlogged, Administrative Appeals, and Appeals Backlogged.

The report is titled Number of Requests Received and Processed Comparison and displays in columns for Number of Requests Received During Time Period Last Year, Number of Requests Received During Time Period From Current Year, Number of Requests Processed During Time Period Last Year, and Number of Requests Processed During Time Period From Current Year. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Requests Backlogged

The report is titled Number of Backlogged Requests Received and Processed Comparison and displays in columns for Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Time Period from Previous Year and Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Time Period from Current Year. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Administrative Appeals

The report is titled Number of Administrative Appeals Received and Processed Comparison and displays in columns for Number of Appeals Received During Time Period Last Year, Number of Appeals Received During Time Period From Current Year, Number of Appeals Processed During Time Period Last Year, and Number of Appeals Processed During Time Period From Current Year. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

Appeals Backlogged

The report is titled Number of Backlogged Appeals Received and Processed Comparison and displays in columns for Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Time Period from Previous Year and Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Time Period from Current Year. Each additional agency's data displays in a different colored bar.

3   Registered User

3.1   Home Actions Menu

The Home Page for a registered user, pre sign-in, is the same as a general public user (see section 2.1 Home Page).

3.1.1   View My FOIA Requests

After signing in to the registered user account and pressing the Proceed button in the Privacy and Use Notice popup (see section 2.2.1 Sign In), the View My FOIA Requests dashboard displays. This dashboard provides a central location for all requests and appeals that are created by the user. If a registered user signs into the system and has not yet created a request, then the text "No requests currently exist" displays.

Exhibit 3- 1 View My FOIA Requests Dashboard

Layout

The View My FOIA Requests dashboard displays requests and appeals in the following columns: Tracking Number, Type, Track, Submitted, Due, Phase, and Detail. The three actions that display in the left side menu are the View My FOIA Requests, Search FOIA Requests, and Make a FOIA Request. Clicking the Home tab will always return the user to the dashboard.

The number of maximum items that display at one time defaults to 25, but this can be changed by clicking the Results dropdown menu and selecting 10, 25, 50, or 100. Changing the default results dropdown is a one-time change and does not save after navigating away from the dashboard.

Requests that have new correspondence associated with them have a mail icon (see Exhibit 3-2 New Correspondence) that displays to the left of the tracking number.

Exhibit 3- 2 New Correspondence

*Sorting*The dashboard default sorts by the Submitted date. All columns except for Detail are sortable by clicking on the column headers.

Table Actions

- Clicking on the Detail column header expands/collapses the Description for each of the rows.

- Clicking the arrow icon in the Detail column expands/collapses the individual row's Description.

- Clicking the Tracking Number link takes the user to the Details page.

Request Details

The Request Details page displays additional information than is available to a public user. A workflow graphic displays at the top of the page, indicating where in the process the request is currently.

Exhibit 3- 3 Registered User Request Details

3.1.2 Search FOIA Requests

Searching FOIA requests for a registered user is the same as the general public, see section 2.1.1 Search FOIA Requests.

3.1.3 Make a FOIA Request

Creating a FOIA request follows the same process as section 2.1.2 Make a FOIA Request, with the exception that the Contact Information section pre-populates with the user's information, as shown in Exhibit 3-4 Registered User Create Request.

Exhibit 3- 4 Registered User Create Request

The Contact Information displays as read-only so if any of the contact information needs to be changed, the account information needs to be modified (see section 3.2.1 Edit Account for more details).

3.1.4 Modify a FOIA Request

One of the benefits of having a registered user account is being able to modify the description of any previously created, open requests. Modify a request by clicking the Modify this FOIA Request link from the Request Details page:

Exhibit 3- 5 Modify this FOIA Request Action

The Modify this FOIA Request page is the same layout as the Request Details page, with the exception that the Description field is editable, as indicated in Exhibit 3-6 Modify this FOIA Request Page.

Exhibit 3- 6 Modify this FOIA Request Page

Files can also be uploaded to support the description modification. Pressing the Select Files button launches the popup for a user to select file(s) from the user's hard drive, as indicated in Exhibit 3-7 Modify this FOIA Request with File Upload.

Exhibit 3- 7 Modify this FOIA Request with File Upload

Once the desired modifications are made, press the Submit button on the bottom of the page to update the request, as indicated in Exhibit 3-8 Modify this FOIA Request Submission. The agency individual assigned to process the request will receive an email with the modification.

Exhibit 3- 8 Modify this FOIA Request Submission

To cancel any modifications, press the Cancel button to return to the View My FOIA Requests dashboard.

3.1.5   Withdraw a FOIA Request

Another benefit of a registered user account is the ability to withdraw a request. Access the Withdraw this Request page by clicking the Withdraw this FOIA Request action from the left side menu. The Withdraw this FOIA Request page is identical to the Request Details page, with the exception of the Withdraw button on the bottom of the screen.

Pressing the Withdraw button displays the View My FOIA Requests dashboard with a confirmation message of the withdrawal at the top of the page (see Exhibit 3-9 Withdrawal Confirmation). Withdrawing a request sends an email to the agency individual assigned to process the request, and also logs the withdrawal in the Correspondence section of the case file.

Exhibit 3- 9 Withdrawal Confirmation

- The request was withdrawn. The requester may be responsible for accrued fees.

View My FOIA Requests   Results 25

3 items found, displaying all items.   1

Tracking Number	Type	Track	Submitted	Due	Phase	Detail
EPA-2012-000519	Request	TBD	08/03/2012	TBD	Processing	▶
EPA-2012-000503	Appeal	Simple	07/30/2012	08/27/2012	Processing	▶
✉ EPA-2012-000502	Request	Simple	07/27/2012	08/24/2012	Processing	▶

The withdrawn request's phase will display as "Processing" until the request is manually closed by the agency. Depending on the amount of fees that have accrued between the submittal and the time of withdrawal, the requester may still receive an invoice.

3.1.6 Appeal this FOIA Request

Requesters who are dissatisfied with the response made on their initial request have a statutory right to appeal that initial determination to an office within the agency which will then conduct an independent review; and one of the important benefits of being a registered public user is being able to submit an appeal online.Unregistered users can only submit appeals external to FOIAonline e.g. by mail.

Access the Appeal this FOIA Request page by clicking on Appeal this FOIA Request action from the left side action menu. A registered user's contact information is automatically populated on this page. Enter the Basis of Appeal explaining the reasons for your appeal and attach any supporting files you may have for the appeal.

Exhibit 3- 10 Appeal an Existing Request
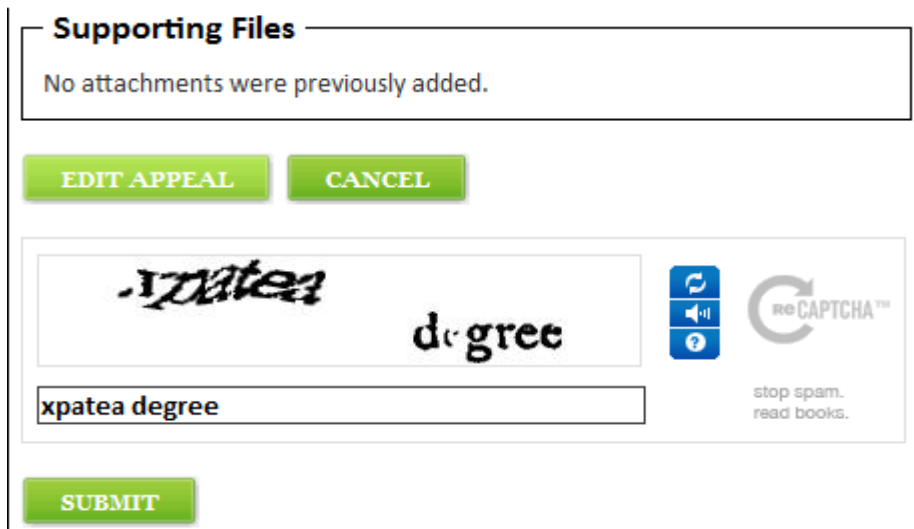

Click on the Preview button to continue.

Preview Appeal

The Preview Appeal page offers the user one final chance to review the information entered before submittal of the appeal. It also allows a registered user to edit the appeal by clicking on the Edit button.

Exhibit 3- 11 Preview Appeal page- bottom part

If no editing is necessary, enter the correct anti-spam text in the reCAPTCHA field, and press the Submit button to display the Appeal Request Confirmation page.

Confirmation

The Confirmation page contains a summary of the original request and the newly created appeal including the unique appeal tracking number that is generated. Users are able to navigate to the Request details or Appeal Details page by clicking on the respective tracking numbers. This page also contains the Home button to allow the users to go back to the Home page.

Exhibit 3- 12 Appeal Request Confirmation Page

3.2   My Account

The My Account tab contains two pages to maintain user information: The Edit Account page and the Change Password page. System users can manually update their user information and password as desired.

3.2.1   Edit Account

Clicking the My Account tab displays the Edit Account page. Update the information that displays automatically when creating a request, edit the information on the Edit Account page and press the Save Changes button.

Exhibit 3- 13 Edit Account

3.2.2   Change Password

The Change Password page is accessed by either logging in for the first time after receiving a temporary password, logging in after the password expires, or by selecting the Change Password action from the left side action menu:

Exhibit 3- 14 Change Password Action
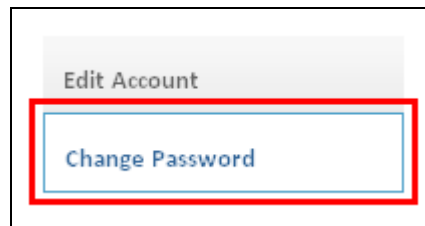
The Change Password page (see Exhibit 3-15 Change Password Page) requires the email address, old password, and the new password (twice for validation). Pressing the Change Password button sets the new password and restarts the 90 day expiration clock.

Exhibit 3- 15 Change Password Page