

# National Indian Gaming Commission

## 2011 Annual FOIA Report

### I. Basic Information Regarding Report

Any questions concerning this report should be directed to:

AnDrea C. Choate'  
Records Manager and FOIA/PA Assistant  
National Indian Gaming Commission  
1441 L Street, N.W., Suite 9100  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Telephone number: (202) 632-7003  
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This report is available on the NIGC Web site:

[http://www.nigc.gov/Reading\\_Room/Freedom\\_of\\_Information\\_Act/FOIA\\_Annual\\_Reports.aspx](http://www.nigc.gov/Reading_Room/Freedom_of_Information_Act/FOIA_Annual_Reports.aspx)

To obtain a copy of the report in paper form contact:

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### II. Making a FOIA Request

For basic information on how to make a FOIA request, visit our Web site at:

[http://www.nigc.gov/Reading\\_Room/Freedom\\_of\\_Information\\_Act.aspx](http://www.nigc.gov/Reading_Room/Freedom_of_Information_Act.aspx)

Address of office that receives FOIA requests:

FOIA requests are centralized and written requests should be addressed to:

AnDrea C. Choate'  
Records Manager and FOIA/PA Assistant  
National Indian Gaming Commission  
1441 L Street, N.W., Suite 9100  
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Telephone number: (202) 632-7003  
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Type of Agency records responsive to FOIA exemptions:

Responsive documents include Bulletins, Commission Final Decisions, Management Contracts, Enforcement Actions, Gaming Ordinances, Proprietary Interest Matter, and Game Classification Opinions.

Brief description of why some requests are not granted:

Requests for information are not granted if the information sought falls within one of the FOIA exemptions; the information requested falls under the jurisdiction of another authority; or no responsive records are located.

### **III. Acronyms, Definitions, and Exemptions**

Agency-specific acronyms or other terms:

FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
NIGC	National Indian Gaming Commission
PA	Privacy Act

Basic terms, expressed in common terminology:

- a. Administrative Appeal – a request to a federal agency asking that it review at a higher administrative level a FOIA determination made by the agency at the initial request level.
- b. Average Number – the number obtained by dividing the sum of a group of numbers by the quantity of numbers in the group. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the average number is 8.
- c. Backlog – the number of requests or administrative appeals that are pending at an agency at the end of the fiscal year that are beyond the statutory time period for a response
- d. Component – for agencies that process requests on a decentralized basis, a 'component' is an entity, also sometimes referred to as an Office, Division, Bureau, Center, or Directorate, within the agency that processed FOIA requests. The FOIA now requires that agencies include in their Annual FOIA Report data for both the agency overall and for each principal component of the agency.
- e. Consultation – the procedure whereby the agency responding to a FOIA request first forwards a record to another agency for its review because that other agency has an interest in the document. Once the agency is in receipt of the consultation finishes its review of the record, it responds back to the agency that forwarded it. That agency, in turn, will then respond to the FOIA requester.

- f. Exemption 3 Statute – a federal statute that exempts information from disclosure and which the agency relies on to withhold information under subsection (b)(3) of the FOIA.
- g. FOIA Request – a FOIA request is generally a request to a federal agency for access to records concerning another person (i.e., a ‘third-party’ request), or concerning an organization, or a particular topic of interest. FOIA requests also include requests made by requesters seeking records concerning themselves (i.e., ‘first-party’ requests) when those requesters are not subject to the Privacy Act, such as non-U.S. citizens. Moreover, because all first-party requesters should be afforded the benefit of both the access provisions of the FOIA as well as those of the Privacy Act, FOIA requests also include any first-party requests where an agency determines that it must search beyond its Privacy Act ‘systems of records’ or where a Privacy Act exemption applies, and the agency looks to FOIA to afford the greatest possible access. All requests which require the agency to utilize the FOIA in responding to the requester are included in this Report.
- h. Full Grant – an agency decision to disclose all records in full in response to a FOIA request.
- i. Full Denial – an agency decision not to release any records in response to a FOIA request because the records are exempt in their entireties under one or more of the FOIA exemptions, or because of a procedural reason, such as when no records could be located.
- j. Median Number – the middle, not average, number. For example, of 3, 7, and 14, the median number is 7.
- k. Multi-Track Processing – a system in which simple requests requiring relatively minimal review are placed in one processing track and more voluminous and complex requests are placed in one or more other tracks. Requests granted expedited processing are placed in yet another track. Requests in each track are processed on a first in/first out basis.
  - i. Expedited Processing – an agency will process a FOIA request on an expedited basis when a requester satisfies the requirements for expedited processing as set forth in the statute and in agency regulations.
  - ii. Simple Requests – a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in its fastest (non-expedited) track based on the low volume and/or simplicity of the records requested.

- iii. Complex Request – a FOIA request that an agency using multi-track processing places in a slower track based on the high volume and/or complexity of the records requested.
- l. Partial Grant/Partial Denial – in response to a FOIA request, an agency decision to disclose portions of the records and to withhold other portions that are exempt under the FOIA, or to otherwise deny a portion of the request for a procedural reason.
- m. Pending Request or Pending Administrative Appeal – a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has not taken final action in all respects.
- n. Perfected Request – a request for records which reasonably describes such records and is made in accordance with published rules stating the time, place, fees (if any) and procedures to be followed.
- o. Processed Request or Processed Administrative Appeal – a request or administrative appeal for which an agency has taken final action in all respects.
- p. Range in Number of Days – the lowest and highest number of days to process requests or administrative appeals.
- q. Time Limits – the time period in the statute for an agency to respond to a FOIA request (ordinarily twenty working days from receipt of a perfected FOIA request).

Description of nine FOIA exemptions:

- a. Exemption 1 – classified national defense and foreign relations information.
- b. Exemption 2 – internal agency rules and practices
- c. Exemption 3 – information that is prohibited from disclosure by another federal law.
- d. Exemption 4 – trade secrets and other confidential business information.
- e. Exemption 5 – inter-agency or intra-agency communications that are protected by legal privileges.
- f. Exemption 6 – information involving matter of personal privacy.
- g. Exemption 7 – records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, to the extent that the production of those records (A) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings, (B) would deprive a person of a

right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, (C) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, (E) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual.

- h. Exemption 8 – information relating to the supervision of financial institutions.
- i. Exemption 9 – geological information on wells.

#### **IV. Exemption 3 Statutes**

##### Exemption 3 Statutes Relied upon to Withhold Information

List of all Exemption 3 statutes relied upon and the number of times:

Exemption 3 was not cited in any of the requests.

Provide a brief description of the types of information withheld under each statute:

Not applicable.

Indicate whether a court has upheld the use of the statute by providing a citation to a court decision:

Not applicable.

#### **V. FOIA Requests**

A. Received, Processed and Pending FOIA Requests:

	Number of Requests Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Received in Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Processed in Fiscal Year	Number of Requests Pending as of End of Fiscal Year
Agency Overall	4	76	66	14

B. (1) Disposition of FOIA Requests – All Processed Requests:

	Number of Full Grants	Number of Partial Grants/ Partial Denials	Number of Full Denials Based on Exemptions	Number of Full Denials Based on Reasons Other than Exemptions									TOTAL
				No Records	All Records Referred to Another Component or Agency	Request Withdrawn	Fee-Related Reason	Records not Reasonably Described	Improper FOIA Request for Other Reason	Not Agency Record	Duplicate Request	Other *Explain in chart below	
Agency Overall	19	12	4	19	3	7	1	0	0	0	1	0	66

B. (2) Disposition of FOIA Requests – ‘Other’ Reasons for ‘Full Denials Based on Reasons Other than Exemptions’ from Section V, B (1) Chart:

Component	Description of ‘Other’ Reasons for Denials from Chart B (1) & Numbers of Times Those Reasons Were Relied Upon	Total
Agency	N/A	0

B. (3) Disposition of FOIA Requests – Number of Times Exemptions Applied:

	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
Agency Overall	0	1	0	10	4	9	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0

## VI. Administrative Appeals of Initial Determinations of FOIA Requests

A. Received, Processed and Pending Administrative Appeals:

Number of Appeals Pending as of Start of Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Received in Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Processed in Fiscal Year	Number of Appeals Pending as of End of Fiscal Year
1	1	2	0

B. Disposition of Administrative Appeals – All Processed Appeals:

Number Affirmed on Appeal	Number Partially Affirmed & Partially Reversed / Remanded on Appeal	Number completely Reversed / Remanded on Appeal	Number of Appeals Closed for Other Reasons	Total
1*	0	0	1	2

\*After reviewing its database, the agency adjusted its number of appeals pending as of the start of Fiscal Year 2011.

C. (1) Reasons for Denial on Appeal – Number of Times Exemptions Applied:

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
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0

C. (2) Reasons for Denial on Appeal – Reasons Other than Exemptions:

No Records	Records Referred at Initial Request Level	Request Withdrawn	Fee – Related Reason	Records not Reasonably Described	Improper Request for Other Reasons	Not Agency Record	Duplicate Request or Appeal	Request in Litigation	Appeal Based Solely on Denial of Request for Expedited Processing	Other *Explain in Chart below
0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

C. (3) Reasons for Denial on Appeal – ‘Other’ Reasons from Section VI, C (2) Chart:

Description of ‘Other’ Reasons for Denial on Appeal from Chart C (2) & Number of Times Those Reasons Were Relied Upon	Total
N/A	0



C. (4) Response Time for Administrative Appeals:

Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
28.00	28.00	28.00	28.00

C. (5) Ten Oldest Pending Administrative Appeals:

	10 <sup>th</sup> Oldest Appeal	9 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Oldest Appeal
Date of Receipt of Ten Oldest Appeals	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Number of Days Pending	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

## VII. FOIA Request: Response Time for Processed and Pending Requests

### A. Processed Requests – Response Time for All Processed Perfected Requests:

	SIMPLE				COMPLEX				EXPEDITED PROCESSING			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
Agency Overall	156	30.15	1	121	128	64	15	270	25	25	25	25

### B. Processed Requests – Response Time for Perfected Requests in Which Information Was Granted:

	SIMPLE				COMPLEX				EXPEDITED PROCESSING			
	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Lowest Number of Days	Highest Number of Days
Agency Overall	156	30.15	1	210	128	64	120	245	25	25	25	25

C. Processed Requests – Response Time in Day Increments:

Simple Requests

	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	401+ Days	Total
Agency Overall	35	12	5	7	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	62

Complex Requests

	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	401+ Days	Total
Agency Overall	1	1	1	3	3	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	0	14

Requests Granted Expedited Processing

	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	401+ Days	Total
Agency Overall	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

D. Pending Requests – All Pending Perfected Requests:

	SIMPLE			COMPLEX			EXPEDITED PROCESSING		
	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Number Pending	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days
Agency Overall	3	173	97	10	161	140.6	0	N/A	N/A

E. Pending Requests – Ten Oldest Pending Perfected Requests:

	10 <sup>th</sup> Oldest Request and Number of Days Pending	9 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Oldest Request and Number of Days Pending
Agency Overall	08/22/11 38	08/10/11 50	06/27/11 93	06/27/11 93	06/02/11 118	05/12/11 138	05/12/11 138	05/12/11 138	12/14/11 245	10/19/10 335

### VIII. Requests For Expedited Processing and Requests For Fee Waiver

A. Requests for Expedited Processing

	Number Granted	Number Denied	Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	Average Number of Days to Adjudicate	Number Adjudicated Within Ten Calendar Days
Agency Overall	1	0	1	1	1

B. Request for Fee Waiver

	Number Granted	Number Denied	Median Number of Days to Adjudicate	Average Number of Days to Adjudicate
Agency Overall	2	0	21	21

## IX. FOIA Personnel and Costs

	Personnel			Costs		
	Number of 'Full-Time FOIA Employees'	Number of 'Equivalent Full-Time FOIA Employees'	Total Number of 'Full-Time FOIA Staff'	Processing Costs	Litigation Related Costs	Total Costs
Agency Overall	1	1	2	174,242	532.60	174,774.60

## X. Fees Collected For Processing Requests

	Total Amount of Fees Collected	Percentage of Total Costs
Agency Overall	1234.90	0.71

## XI. FOIA Regulations

NIGC FOIA regulations and fee schedule can be found in 25 CFR § 517. A paper copy of this regulation can be obtained by contacting the FOIA Officer (see section 1 of this report) or electronically at the following:

<http://www.nigc.gov/Portals/0/NIGC%20Uploads/foia/nigcfoiaregs51906.pdf>

## XII. Backlogs, Consultations, and Comparisons

A. Backlogs of FOIA Requests and Administrative Appeals:

	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Fiscal Year	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Fiscal Year
Agency Overall	14	0

B. Consultations on FOIA Requests – Received, Processed, and Pending Consultations:

	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <u>Pending</u> at the NIGC as of <u>Start</u> of the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations <u>Received</u> from Other Agencies During the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were Processed by the NIGC During the Fiscal Year	Number of Consultations Received from Other Agencies that were <u>Pending</u> at the NIGC as of <u>End</u> of the Fiscal Year
Agency Overall	0	0	0	0

C. Consultations on FOIA Requests – Ten Oldest Consultations Received from Other Agencies and Pending at the NIGC:

Agency Overall	10 <sup>th</sup> Oldest Consultation and Number of Days Pending	9 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Oldest Consultation and Number of Days Pending
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D. Comparison of Numbers of Requests from Previous and Current Annual Report – Requests Received, Processed, and Backlogged:

	Number of Requests <u>Received</u>		Number of Requests <u>Processed</u>	
	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
Agency Overall	70	76	72	66

	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of Fiscal Year From Previous Annual Report	Number of Backlogged Requests as of End of the Fiscal Year From Current Annual Report
Agency Overall	4	14

E. Comparison of Number of Administrative Appeals from Previous and Current Annual Report – Appeals Received, Processed, and Backlogged

	Number of Appeals <u>Received</u>		Number of Appeals <u>Processed</u>	
	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Received During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Last Year's Annual Report	Number Processed During Fiscal Year from Current Annual Report
Agency Overall	2	1	2	2

	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of Fiscal Year From Previous Annual Report	Number of Backlogged Appeals as of End of the Fiscal Year From Current Annual Report
Agency Overall	4	0

F. Discussion of Other FOIA Activities (Optional)

N/A