

YOUR WORKING CHECKLIST

Read a FOIA release and determination as a records package

How should I review a USCIS FOIA response with withheld pages or missing records?

Keep the determination, released files and request description together. Distinguish a withheld portion, a stated search result and a record that was never requested. A FOIA release is access to agency material, not a new immigration decision or a certification that every historical statement is accurate.

Check the boxes on screen or by hand. Use the notes area for records to find and questions to ask.

Your preparation checklist

- ☐ Match the response to the request actually made.
- ☐ Keep the determination with the released files.
- ☐ Distinguish redactions from factual conclusions.
- ☐ Track record gaps precisely.
- ☐ Separate access review from a benefit or correction action.

Notes and questions to follow up

Source links and current instructions

Sources checked October 25, 2026. Follow current instructions at the linked institution.

National Archives / OGIS: Using FOIA to access immigration records

<https://www.archives.gov/ogis/resources/foia-ombuds-observer/2023-02>

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: How to make FOIA requests

<https://www.dhs.gov/dhs-foia-handbook>

Immigrant Insider: Editorial policy and verification status

<https://immigrantinsider.com/editorial-policy/>

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<https://immigrantinsider.com/procedures/foia-response-reading/>

General information

This free organizer is not a government form and does not submit an application, establish eligibility, preserve a deadline or replace individual legal advice. Government filing fees and professional services are separate.