Expedite FOIA and Public Records Requests with Leading eDiscovery Solution

The [Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)](#) and similar state laws give the public the right to access records from federal, state, and local government agencies. These laws promote transparency and accountability in the public sector. However, FOIA and public records requests often pose significant challenges for the agencies that must process and respond to them.

For example, in 2021 agencies subject to FOIA received 838,164 FOIA requests. Responding to such requests can prove time-consuming and expensive, particularly if the records contain sensitive information that must be redacted. Large volumes of data spread across multiple platforms compound the problem. And not meeting tight deadlines can result in costly penalties.

Wise use of technology streamlines the process. By locating and assessing data in its original location, agencies significantly reduce response time. Additionally, automated processing, powered by AI, speeds the collection and processing of information while reducing human error.

Simplify with Centralized FOIA and Public Records Request Platform

By using tools that search all the organization's information repositories from a single view, the agency simplifies processes and reduces costs. A [competitive eDiscovery solution](#) like IPRO will allow the response team to navigate multiple data sources with ease from a centralized location.

Additionally, powerful features such as advanced searches, filtering, automated tagging, and metadata extraction allow responders to perform an initial data review in-place. This reduces both the size of the eventual data set and the opportunity for error-prone handoffs.

Defensible Data Collection and Production Improves Compliance

To minimize legal risk, the agency must ensure a defensible and compliant process. Data spoliation or failure to capture all relevant information can open the agency up to both stiff penalties and loss of public trust.

IPRO provides a powerful and flexible solution that preserves the original metadata and content of data sources, ensuring compliance with legal standards. AI-assisted review and analysis moves beyond keywords to find key data and insights that humans might miss. At the same time, automated holds and audit trails help prevent data spoliation.

Balance Public Interest with Protection of Privacy (redaction)

One of the most time-consuming and tedious tasks in responding to FOIA and public records requests involves redacting sensitive or confidential information from the records. Redacting information manually can be prone to errors, inconsistencies, and inefficiencies. But laws like Daniel's Law make it imperative that agencies protect sensitive data.

Fortunately, tools like IPRO simplify the redaction process. Using keywords, patterns or concept searches, digital redaction tools automatically find and redact sensitive data. For instance, the system can automatically identify PII and apply annotations in preparation for final redaction. It can then apply different types of redactions depending on the level of protection required.

Digital redaction tools process large volumes of records faster and more accurately than humans. They can redact different formats of records – from text to images, audio, or video – while preserving the original records. And they can generate reports of redacted information.

Proven Solution from Messaging Architects and IPRO

The information governance and eDiscovery consultants at Messaging Architects offer both the expertise and the tools that agencies need to expedite public records requests. As an IPRO partner, Messaging Architects will help your agency save time and money while improving the quality and compliance of your response.

IPRO eDiscovery solutions automate and simplify the public records request workflow from end to end. From a centralized dashboard, responders can identify and analyze potentially relevant information from across the organization. Legally defensible processes speed the response time while preserving transparency and protecting sensitive information.

Contact a Messaging Architects representative for a free consultation.