

NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES

Wanda Williams &lt;wanda.williams@nara.gov&gt;

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**Request for records under the Freedom of Information Act**

1 message

**Jason Leopold** <jasonleopold@gmail.com>

Thu, Feb 3, 2022 at 11:02 AM

Reply-To: jasonleopold@gmail.com

To: FOIA &lt;foia@nara.gov&gt;

This is a request for records under the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"), 5 U.S.C. § 552 and the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552a. This request should be considered under both statutes to maximize the release of records.

**REQUESTER INFORMATION**

Name: Jason Leopold

Position: Investigative Reporter

Address: [1669 Benedict Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210](#)Email: [jasonleopold@gmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)**RECORDS SOUGHT**

I request disclosure from the National Archives and Records Administration the following records:

1. A list and/or spreadsheet or similar document containing an inventory on the number of records sent to NARA by the Trump White House that were torn, shredded and destroyed since January 20, 2017. These records would have been sent to NARA as part of the President's and his staffs' requirements under the Presidential Records Act.
2. A list and/or spreadsheet or similar document containing an inventory on the number of records from the Trump White House that were restored between January 20, 2017 and January 20, 2021.
3. Records memorializing the number of hours NARA Archivists have spent restoring documents received by the Trump White House that were either shredded, torn or destroyed between January 20, 2017 and January 20, 2021
4. Documents reflecting an accounting of the money spent to restore Trump presidential records that were shredded, torn, destroyed.
5. Emails, text messages, letters, legal opinions, between NARA staff and NARA staff and the Trump White House mentioning or referring to Trump presidential records that were shredded, torn, destroyed. The timeframe for this part of the request is June 12, 2018 through January 20, 2021.
6. All records, such as emails, memos, letters, text messages, reports, memorializing discussions between NARA staff on the methods used to restore Trump presidential records that were shredded, torn and destroyed.
7. Photographs, should any exist, of all Trump presidential records that were sent to NARA that were shredded, torn, destroyed.
8. All correspondence between NARA and the January 6 Select Committee to investigate the attack on the Capitol related to Trump presidential records that were shredded, torn, destroyed and restored with tape.

Please be sure the search for responsive records includes the [eop.gov](http://eop.gov) domain.

Reasonably Foreseeable Harm. The FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 amended the FOIA as follows (5 USC 552(a)(8)):

(A) An agency shall—

(i) withhold information under this section only if—

(I) the agency reasonably foresees that disclosure would harm an interest protected by an exemption described in subsection (b); or

(II) disclosure is prohibited by law; and

(ii) (I) consider whether partial disclosure of information is possible whenever the agency determines that a full disclosure

of a requested record is not possible; and

(II) take reasonable steps necessary to segregate and release nonexempt information. . . .

NARA should not fail to meet the requirements of Section 552(a)(8) when processing my request and release responsive records to me in full or at least in part.

#### INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING SEARCH

1. Request for Public Records:

Please search for any records even if they are already publicly available.

2. Request for Electronic and Paper/Manual Searches:

I request that searches of all electronic and paper/manual indices, filing systems, and locations for any and all records relating or referring to the subject of my request be conducted. I further request that the agencies conduct a search of its "soft files" as well as files in its locked cabinets.

3. Request regarding Photographs and other Visual Materials:

I request that any photographs or other visual materials responsive to my request be released to me in their original or comparable forms, quality, and resolution. For example, if a photograph was taken digitally, or if the agencies maintains a photograph digitally, I request disclosure of the original digital image file, not a reduced resolution version of that image file nor a printout and scan of that image file. Likewise, if a photograph was originally taken as a color photograph, I request disclosure of that photograph as a color image, not a black and white image. Please contact me for any clarification on this point.

4. Request for Duplicate Pages:

I request disclosure of any and all supposedly "duplicate" pages. Scholars analyze records not only for the information available on any given page, but also for the relationships between that information and information on pages surrounding it. As such, though certain pages may have been previously released to me, the existence of those pages within new context renders them functionally new pages. As such, the only way to properly analyze released information is to analyze that information within its proper context. Therefore, I request disclosure of all "duplicate" pages.

5. Request to Search Emails:

Please search for emails relating to the subject matter of my request.

6. Request for Search of Records Transferred to Other Agencies:

I request that in conducting its search, the agencies disclose releasable records even if they are available publicly through other sources outside the agencies, such as NARA.

#### FORMAT

I request that any releases stemming from this request be provided to me in digital format (soft-copy) on a compact disk or other like media.

#### FEE CATEGORY AND REQUEST FOR A FEE WAIVER

I am the senior investigative reporter for BuzzFeed News and formerly senior investigative reporter and on-air correspondent for VICE News. Additionally, my reporting has been published in The Guardian, The Wall Street Journal, The Financial Times, Salon, CBS Marketwatch, The Los Angeles Times, The Nation, Truthout, Al Jazeera English and Al Jazeera America.

I request a complete waiver of all search and duplication fees. If my request for a waiver is denied, I request that I be considered a member of the news media for fee purposes.

Under 5 U.S.C. §552(a)(4)(A)(iii), "Documents shall be furnished without any charge ... if disclosure of the information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester." Disclosure in this case meets the statutory criteria, as the records sought to detail the operations and activities of the government. This request is also not primarily in my commercial request, as I am seeking the records as a journalist to analyze and freely release to members

of the public.

If I am not granted a complete fee waiver, I request to be considered a member of the news media for fee purposes. I am willing to pay all reasonable duplication expenses incurred in processing this FOIA request.

I will appeal any denial of my request for a waiver administratively and to the courts if necessary.

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**BuzzFeed News**

**Jason Leopold** | **BuzzFeed News** | [Senior Investigative Reporter](#) | (213) 270-4334 | [@jasonleopold](#)

[6824 Lexington Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90038](#)

**Signal:** (213) 270-4334 and (646) 379-1975

**Send me documents and tips, anonymously and securely:** [tips.buzzfeed.com](https://tips.buzzfeed.com)

[My personal PGP](#)

My BuzzFeed PGP fingerprint: 46DB 0712 284B 8C6E 40FF 7A1B D3CD 5720 694B 16F0



Jason Leopold &lt;jasonleopold@gmail.com&gt;

**NGC22-295 FOIA Request Submitted February 3, 2022**

1 message

**Wanda Williams** <wanda.williams@nara.gov>  
To: Jason Leopold <jasonleopold@gmail.com>  
Cc: FOIA <foia@nara.gov>

Fri, Mar 4, 2022 at 10:38 AM

Sent via Email to <jasonleopold@gmail.com>

March 4, 2022

*BuzzFeed News*  
Jason Leopold  
Senior Investigative Reporter  
6824 Lexington Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90038  
jasonleopold@gmail.com

Re: FOIA Request NGC22-295

Dear Mr. Leopold:

On February 3, 2022, we received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request via [foia@nara.gov](mailto:foia@nara.gov) that was assigned tracking number NGC22-295. Your request falls within one of the “unusual circumstances” categories contemplated by the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(B)(iii) (I), (II) and (III), and we need additional time to respond to your request beyond the twenty business days provided by the FOIA statute. Specifically, we need to search for and collect potentially responsive records from an office separate from our office which is processing the request. To enable us to respond more quickly to you, you may wish to reformulate your request to narrow the scope of the request or to arrange an alternative time frame for the processing of this request.

We regret the necessity of this delay but assure you that your request will be processed as soon as possible. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. You may also contact our FOIA Public Liaison, Gary M. Stern for assistance at 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6002, 301-837-1750, [Garym.Stern@nara.gov](mailto:Garym.Stern@nara.gov).

You are also free to seek the assistance of the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), the Federal FOIA Ombudsman’s office that offers mediation services to help resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies. The contact information for OGIS is noted below:

Office of Government Information Services  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road—OGIS  
College Park, MD 20740-6001  
Email: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov) Website: [ogis.archives.gov](http://ogis.archives.gov)  
Tel: 202-741-5770 or 1-877-684-6448

Sincerely,  
*Wanda Williams*

Wanda Williams  
Deputy Freedom of Information Act Officer/Archivist  
Office of General Counsel (NGC)  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park, Maryland, 20740-6001  
301-837-0773 voice mail  
wanda.williams@nara.gov



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**NARA Fwd: Request for estimated dates of completion**

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jason Leopold** <[jasonleopold@gmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)>

Date: Mon, Jun 6, 2022 at 7:36 PM

Subject: Request for estimated dates of completion

To: Stern, GaryM <[garym.stern@nara.gov](mailto:garym.stern@nara.gov)>, Wanda Williams <[wanda.williams@nara.gov](mailto:wanda.williams@nara.gov)>

Hi there,

May I have estimated dates of completion for requests filed since January 13, 2022?

Best,

Jason

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**BuzzFeed News**

**Jason Leopold** | **BuzzFeed News** | [Senior Investigative Reporter](#) | (213) 270-4334 | [@jasonleopold](#)

[1669 Benedict Canyon Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90210](#)

**Signal:** (213) 270-4334

**Send me documents and tips, anonymously and securely on Signal or Proton Mail** [jasonleopold@protonmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@protonmail.com)



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**2nd request: Estimated date of completion sought for NGC22-295**

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jason Leopold** <jasonleopold@gmail.com>  
Date: Mon, Jun 27, 2022, 2:08 PM  
Subject: Re: 2nd request: Estimated date of completion sought for NGC22-295  
To: Wanda Williams <wanda.williams@nara.gov>  
Cc: Stern, GaryM <garym.stern@nara.gov>

Thank you, Wanda. So by response, do you mean you estimate a possible production in 4 to 6 weeks? Sorry, but it's still unclear to me.

Can you also provide me with an estimated date of completion on request 22-285?

Best,  
Jason

Jason Leopold  
Investigative Reporter  
(213) 270-4334 (Signal)  
@jasonleopold  
<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/author/jasonleopold>

On Mon, Jun 27, 2022, 1:53 PM Wanda Williams <wanda.williams@nara.gov> wrote:

Jason,

We hope to have a response to your FOIA request in the next 4 to 6 weeks, which is our estimation.

Thanks for your patience.

Wanda Williams  
Deputy Freedom of Information Act Officer/Archivist  
Office of General Counsel (NGC)  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park, Maryland, 20740-6001  
301-837-0773 voice mail  
301-875-3028 cell  
wanda.williams@nara.gov



On Mon, Jun 27, 2022 at 4:34 PM Jason Leopold <jasonleopold@gmail.com> wrote:

Wanda,

Thank you. To clarify, you'll be able to provide me with an estimated date of completion in 4 to 6 weeks?

Best,  
Jason

Jason Leopold  
Investigative Reporter  
(213) 270-4334 (Signal)  
@jasonleopold  
<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/author/jasonleopold>

On Mon, Jun 27, 2022, 1:32 PM Wanda Williams <[wanda.williams@nara.gov](mailto:wanda.williams@nara.gov)> wrote:

Hi Jason,

Due to the numerous FOIA requests received for identical and/or similar documents, we are still processing your request along with many others and hope to provide a response in the next four to six weeks. We appreciate your patience.

Sincerely,

Wanda Williams  
Deputy Freedom of Information Act Officer/Archivist  
Office of General Counsel (NGC)  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road  
College Park, Maryland, 20740-6001  
301-837-0773 voice mail  
[wanda.williams@nara.gov](mailto:wanda.williams@nara.gov)



On Tue, Jun 14, 2022 at 6:43 PM Jason Leopold <[jasonleopold@gmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)> wrote:

Wanda,  
May I have an estimated date of completion for this request as well?

Best,  
Jason

On Fri, Mar 4, 2022 at 10:39 AM Wanda Williams <[wanda.williams@nara.gov](mailto:wanda.williams@nara.gov)> wrote:

[Sent via Email to <jasonleopold@gmail.com >](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)

March 4, 2022

*BuzzFeed News*  
Jason Leopold  
Senior Investigative Reporter  
6824 Lexington Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90038  
[jasonleopold@gmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)

Re: FOIA Request NGC22-295

Dear Mr. Leopold:

On February 3, 2022, we received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request via [foia@nara.gov](mailto:foia@nara.gov) that was assigned tracking number NGC22-295. Your request falls within one of the “unusual circumstances” categories contemplated by the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(B)(iii) (I), (II) and (III), and we need additional time to respond to your request beyond the twenty business days provided by the FOIA statute. Specifically, we need to search for and collect potentially responsive records from an office separate from our office which is processing the request.

To enable us to respond more quickly to you, you may wish to reformulate your request to narrow the scope of the request or to arrange an alternative time frame for the processing of this request.



We regret the necessity of this delay but assure you that your request will be processed as soon as possible. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. You may also contact our FOIA Public Liaison, Gary M. Stern for assistance at 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6002, 301-837-1750, [Garym.Stern@nara.gov](mailto:Garym.Stern@nara.gov).

You are also free to seek the assistance of the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), the Federal FOIA Ombudsman's office that offers mediation services to help resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies. The contact information for OGIS is noted below:

Office of Government Information Services  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road—OGIS  
College Park, MD 20740-6001  
Email: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov) Website: [ogis.archives.gov](http://ogis.archives.gov)  
Tel: 202-741-5770 or 1-877-684-6448

Sincerely,

*Wanda Williams*

Wanda Williams

Deputy Freedom of Information Act Officer/Archivist

Office of General Counsel (NGC)

National Archives and Records Administration

8601 Adelphi Road

College Park, Maryland, 20740-6001

301-837-0773 voice mail

[wanda.williams@nara.gov](mailto:wanda.williams@nara.gov)



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**BuzzFeed News**

Jason Leopold | BuzzFeed News | Senior Investigative Reporter | (213) 270-4334 | [@jasonleopold](https://twitter.com/jasonleopold)

1669 Benedict Canyon Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Signal: (213) 270-4334

Send me documents and tips, anonymously and securely on Signal or Proton Mail [jasonleopold@protonmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@protonmail.com)



Jason Leopold &lt;jasonleopold@gmail.com&gt;

## Request for records under the Freedom of Information Act

1 message

Jason Leopold &lt;jasonleopold@gmail.com&gt;

Tue, Feb 8, 2022 at 4:43 PM

Reply-To: jasonleopold@gmail.com

To: FOIA &lt;foia@nara.gov&gt;

This is a request for records under the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"), 5 U.S.C. § 552 and the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552a. This request should be considered under both statutes to maximize the release of records.

### REQUESTER INFORMATION

Name: Jason Leopold

Position: Investigative Reporter

Address: 1669 Benedict Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Email: [jasonleopold@gmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)

### RECORDS SOUGHT

I request disclosure from the National Archives and Records Administration the following records:

1. All records, with the exception of news clippings and press releases, relating or referring to NARA's planning, preparation and retrieval of Presidential records from Mar-a-Lago. Please be sure to include any and all photographs of presidential records that were recovered.
2. All emails, letters, memos, text messages, reports sent and received between NARA officials and officials representing former President Donald Trump relating or referring to Presidential records stored at Mar-a-Lago, discussions about the retrieval of those records, the Presidential Records Act and the ongoing search for Presidential records.
3. A list and/or spreadsheet or similar document containing an inventory of the records retrieved from Mar-a-Lago.
4. Documents reflecting an accounting of the money spent to retrieve Trump presidential records that were taken to Mar-a-Lago.
5. All records, with the exception of news clippings and press releases, mentioning or referring to descriptions of Trump Presidential records that were not turned over to NARA after former President Donald Trump left office.
6. Any and all letters, memos, reports, NARA officials and archivists have exchanged with other federal government agencies and congressional committees relating or referring to presidential records stored at Mar-a-Lago.

Reasonably Foreseeable Harm. The FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 amended the FOIA as follows (5 USC 552(a)(8)):

(A) An agency shall—

(i) withhold information under this section only if—

(I) the agency reasonably foresees that disclosure would harm an interest protected by an exemption described in subsection (b); or

(II) disclosure is prohibited by law; and

(ii) (I) consider whether partial disclosure of information is possible whenever the agency determines that a full disclosure of a requested record is not possible; and

(II) take reasonable steps necessary to segregate and release nonexempt information. . . .

NARA should not fail to meet the requirements of Section 552(a)(8) when processing my request and release responsive records to me in full or at least in part.

### INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING SEARCH

1. Request for Public Records:

Please search for any records even if they are already publicly available.

2. Request for Electronic and Paper/Manual Searches:

I request that searches of all electronic and paper/manual indices, filing systems, and locations for any and all records relating or referring to the subject of my request be conducted. I further request that the agencies conduct a search of its "soft files" as well as files in its locked cabinets.

3. Request regarding Photographs and other Visual Materials:

I request that any photographs or other visual materials responsive to my request be released to me in their original or comparable forms, quality, and resolution. For example, if a photograph was taken digitally, or if the agencies maintains a photograph digitally, I request disclosure of the original digital image file, not a reduced resolution version of that image file nor a printout and scan of that image file. Likewise, if a photograph was originally taken as a color photograph, I request disclosure of that photograph as a color image, not a black and white image. Please contact me for any clarification on this point.

4. Request for Duplicate Pages:

I request disclosure of any and all supposedly "duplicate" pages. Scholars analyze records not only for the information available on any given page, but also for the relationships between that information and information on pages surrounding it. As such, though certain pages may have been previously released to me, the existence of those pages within new context renders them functionally new pages. As such, the only way to properly analyze released information is to analyze that information within its proper context. Therefore, I request disclosure of all "duplicate" pages.

5. Request to Search Emails:

Please search for emails relating to the subject matter of my request.

6. Request for Search of Records Transferred to Other Agencies:

I request that in conducting its search, the agencies disclose releasable records even if they are available publicly through other sources outside the agencies, such as NARA.

FORMAT

I request that any releases stemming from this request be provided to me in digital format (soft-copy) on a compact disk or other like media.

FEE CATEGORY AND REQUEST FOR A FEE WAIVER

I am the senior investigative reporter for BuzzFeed News and formerly senior investigative reporter and on-air correspondent for VICE News. Additionally, my reporting has been published in The Guardian, The Wall Street Journal, The Financial Times, Salon, CBS Marketwatch, The Los Angeles Times, The Nation, Truthout, Al Jazeera English and Al Jazeera America.

I request a complete waiver of all search and duplication fees. If my request for a waiver is denied, I request that I be considered a member of the news media for fee purposes.

Under 5 U.S.C. §552(a)(4)(A)(iii), "Documents shall be furnished without any charge ... if disclosure of the information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester." Disclosure in this case meets the statutory criteria, as the records sought to detail the operations and activities of the government. This request is also not primarily in my commercial request, as I am seeking the records as a journalist to analyze and freely release to members of the public.

If I am not granted a complete fee waiver, I request to be considered a member of the news media for fee purposes. I am willing to pay all reasonable duplication expenses incurred in processing this FOIA request.

I will appeal any denial of my request for a waiver administratively and to the courts if necessary.

--

**Jason Leopold** | **BuzzFeed News** | Senior Investigative Reporter | (213) 270-4334 | @jasonleopold

6824 Lexington Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90038

**Signal:** (213) 270-4334 and (646) 379-1975

**Send me documents and tips, anonymously and securely:** [tips.buzzfeed.com](https://tips.buzzfeed.com)

[My personal PGP](#)

My BuzzFeed PGP fingerprint: 46DB 0712 284B 8C6E 40FF 7A1B D3CD 5720 694B 16F0



Jason Leopold &lt;jasonleopold@gmail.com&gt;

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**(no subject)**

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**Wanda Williams** <wanda.williams@nara.gov>  
To: jasonleopold@gmail.com  
Cc: FOIA <foia@nara.gov>

Fri, Feb 18, 2022 at 3:13 PM

Sent via Email to <jasonleopold@gmail.com>

February 18, 2022

*BuzzFeed News*  
Jason Leopold  
Senior Investigative Reporter  
[6824 Lexington Avenue](#)  
Los Angeles, CA 90038  
[jasonleopold@gmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)

Re:FOIA Request NGC22-285

Dear Mr. Leopold:

Your FOIA request, dated February 8, 2022, was received by the National Archives and Records Administration's Office of General Counsel on the same day via our [foia@nara.gov](mailto:foia@nara.gov) inbox. We assigned your request tracking number **NGC22-285**. Please provide this number in any future correspondence about your case.

If you have any questions, you may contact me. You may also contact our FOIA Public Liaison, Gary M. Stern for assistance at [8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6002](#), 301-837-1750, [Garym.Stern@nara.gov](mailto:Garym.Stern@nara.gov).

If you have any questions about the status of your request, you may contact us at [foia@nara.gov](mailto:foia@nara.gov).

Sincerely,

Wanda Williams  
Deputy FOIA Officer/Archivist  
Office of General Counsel  
National Archives and Records Administration  
301-837-0773 (office)  
301-875-3028 (cell)  
[wanda.williams@nara.gov](mailto:wanda.williams@nara.gov)



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## 2nd request: Estimated date of completion sought

1 message

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Jason Leopold <jasonleopold@gmail.com>

Tue, Jun 14, 2022 at 5:41 PM

Reply-To: jasonleopold@gmail.com

To: Wanda Williams <wanda.williams@nara.gov>, "Stern, GaryM" <garym.stern@nara.gov>

Cc: FOIA <foia@nara.gov>

Bcc: eun@loevy.com

Hi Wanda,

Can you please provide me with an estimated date of completion for this request.

Best,

Jason

On Tue, Mar 8, 2022 at 10:39 AM Wanda Williams <wanda.williams@nara.gov> wrote:

**Sent via Email to <jasonleopold@gmail.com >**

March 8, 2022

*BuzzFeed News*

Jason Leopold

Senior Investigative Reporter

6824 Lexington Avenue

Los Angeles, CA 90038

jasonleopold@gmail.com

Re: FOIA Request NGC22-285

Dear Mr. Leopold:

On February 8, 2022, we received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request via [foia@nara.gov](mailto:foia@nara.gov) that was assigned tracking number NGC22-285. Your request falls within one of the "unusual circumstances" categories contemplated by the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(B)(iii) (I), (II) and (III), and we need additional time to respond to your request beyond the twenty business days provided by the FOIA statute. Specifically, we need to search for and collect potentially responsive records from an office separate from our office which is processing the request. To enable us to respond more quickly to you, you may wish to reformulate your request to narrow the scope of the request or to arrange an alternative time frame for the processing of this request.

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You are also free to seek the assistance of the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), the Federal FOIA Ombudsman's office that offers mediation services to help resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies. The contact information for OGIS is noted below:

Office of Government Information Services  
National Archives and Records Administration  
[8601 Adelphi Road](mailto:8601 Adelphi Road)—OGIS  
College Park, MD 20740-6001  
Email: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov) Website: [ogis.archives.gov](http://ogis.archives.gov)  
Tel: 202-741-5770 or 1-877-684-6448

Sincerely,

*Wanda Williams*

Wanda Williams

Deputy Freedom of Information Act Officer/Archivist

Office of General Counsel (NGC)

National Archives and Records Administration

8601 Adelphi Road

College Park, Maryland, 20740-6001

301-837-0773 voice mail

301-875-3028 cell

wanda.williams@nara.gov



--  
**BuzzFeed News**

**Jason Leopold** | **BuzzFeed News** | Senior Investigative Reporter | (213) 270-4334 | @jasonleopold

1669 Benedict Canyon Drive, Beverly Hills, CA 90210

**Signal:** (213) 270-4334

**Send me documents and tips, anonymously and securely on Signal or Proton Mail [jasonleopold@protonmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@protonmail.com)**





Wanda Williams &lt;wanda.williams@nara.gov&gt;

## Request for records under the Freedom of Information Act

1 me age

Jason Leopold &lt;jasonleopold@gmail.com&gt;

Thu, Feb 10, 2022 at 3:22 PM

Reply-To: jasonleopold@gmail.com

To: FOIA foia@nara.gov

This is a request for records under the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"), 5 U.S.C. § 552 and the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552a. This request should be considered under both statutes to maximize the release of records.

### REQUESTER INFORMATION

Name: Jason Leopold

Position: Investigative Reporter

Address: [1669 Benedict Canyon Dr., Beverly Hills, CA 90210](#)Email [jasonleopold@gmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)

### RECORDS SOUGHT

I request disclosure from the National Archives and Records Administration's Office of the Inspector General the following record

1. Final reports of investigation and audits and reviews relating or referring to the presence of classified information contained in Presidential records removed from the Trump White House and retrieved from Mar-a-Lago by NARA official ; and final report of investigation and audit relating or referring to missing Presidential record from the Trump White House.
2. All emails, memos, reports, text messages, letters, criminal referrals, exchanged between NARA Office of Inspector General and the Department of Justice and its component , including the FBI, CIA, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, State Department, Department of Defense, and the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community, relating or referring to the presence of classified information contained in all presidential records retrieved from Mar-a-Lago by NARA officials.
3. All records, such as letters, memos, reports, exchanged with any Congressional committee relating or referring to the presence of classified information contained in all presidential records retrieved from Mar-a-Lago by NARA officials.

Reasonably Foreseeable Harm The FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 amended the FOIA as follows (5 USC 552(a)(8))

(A) An agency shall—

(i) withhold information under this section only if

(I) the agency reasonably foresees that disclosure would harm an interest protected by an exemption described in subsection (b); or

(II) disclosure is prohibited by law; and

(ii) (I) consider whether partial disclosure of information is possible whenever the agency determines that a full disclosure of a requested record is not possible; and

(II) take reasonable steps necessary to segregate and release nonexempt information. . . .

NARA should not fail to meet the requirement of Section 552(a)(8) when processing my request and releasing responsive records to me in full or at least in part.

### INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING SEARCH

1. Request for Public Records:

Please search for any records even if they are already publicly available.

2. Request for Electronic and Paper/Manual Searches:

I request that searches of all electronic and paper/manual indices, filing systems, and locations for any and all records relating or referring to the subject of my request be conducted. I further request that the agencies conduct a search of its "soft files" as well as files in its locked cabinets.

3. Request regarding Photograph and other Visual Material

I request that any photographs or other visual materials responsive to my request be released to me in their original or comparable forms, quality, and resolution. For example, if a photograph was taken digitally, or if the agencies maintain a photograph digitally, I request disclosure of the original digital image file, not a reduced resolution version of that image file nor a printout and scan of that image file. Likewise, if a photograph was originally taken as a color photograph, I request disclosure of that photograph as a color image, not a black and white image. Please contact me for any clarification on this point.

4. Request for Duplicate Pages:

I request disclosure of any and all supposedly "duplicate" pages. Scholars analyze records not only for the information available on any given page, but also for the relationship between that information and information on pages surrounding it. As such, though certain pages may have been previously released to me, the existence of those pages within new context renders them functionally new pages. As such, the only way to properly analyze released information is to analyze that information within its proper context. Therefore, I request disclosure of all "duplicate" pages.

5. Request to Search Emails:

Please search for emails relating to the subject matter of my request.

6. Request for Search of Records Transferred to Other Agencies:

I request that in conducting its search, the agencies disclose releasable records even if they are available publicly through other sources outside the agency, such as NARA.

FORMAT

I request that any release stemming from this request be provided to me in digital format (soft copy) on a compact disk or other like media.

FEE CATEGORY AND REQUEST FOR A FEE WAIVER

I am the senior investigative reporter for BuzzFeed News and formerly senior investigative reporter and on-air correspondent for VICE News. Additionally, my reporting has been published in The Guardian, The Wall Street Journal, The Financial Times, Salon, CBS Marketwatch, The Los Angeles Times, The Nation, Truthout, Al Jazeera English and Al Jazeera America.

I request a complete waiver of all search and duplication fees. If my request for a waiver is denied, I request that I be considered a member of the news media for fee purposes.

Under 5 U.S.C. §552(a)(4)(A)(iii), "Documents shall be furnished without any charge ... if disclosure of the information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester." Disclosure in this case meets the statutory criteria, as the record ought to detail the operation and activities of the government. This request is also not primarily in my commercial request, as I am seeking the records as a journalist to analyze and freely release to members of the public.

If I am not granted a complete fee waiver, I request to be considered a member of the news media for fee purposes. I am willing to pay all reasonable duplication expenses incurred in processing this FOIA request.

I will appeal any denial of my request for a waiver administratively and to the courts if necessary.

--

**BuzzFeed News**

Jason Leopold | BuzzFeed News | Senior Investigative Reporter | (213) 270-4334 | @jasonleopold  
6824 Lexington Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90038

**Signal:** (213) 270-4334 and (646) 379-1975

**Send me document and tip , anonymously and securely tip [buzzfeed.com](https://www.buzzfeed.com)**

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Jason Leopold &lt;jasonleopold@gmail.com&gt;

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**FOIA Request BuzzFeed News**

2 messages

**Wanda Williams** <wanda.williams@nara.gov>

Thu, Feb 10, 2022 at 1:31 PM

To: Jason Leopold &lt;jasonleopold@gmail.com&gt;

Cc: John Simms &lt;john.simms@nara.gov&gt;, Brett Baker &lt;brett.baker@nara.gov&gt;, FOIA &lt;foia@nara.gov&gt;

**RE: foia@nara.gov Referred to NARA's Office of Inspector General***BuzzFeed News*

Jason Leopold

Senior Investigative Reporter

6824 Lexington Avenue

Los Angeles, CA 90038

jasonleopold@gmail.com

Dear Jason,

We received your FOIA request dated February 10, 2022, and received by the National Archives and Records Administration's Office of General Counsel (NGC) on the same day via the [foia@nara.gov](mailto:foia@nara.gov) inbox.

Due to the nature of your request, we have forwarded your FOIA directly to NARA's Office of Inspector General for direct response to you. That component processes FOIA requests for documents under that office's custody. I have copied their FOIA Public Liaison and that office's director, Dr. Brett Baker.

NARA Office of Inspector General Records

FOIA requester Service Center telephone number: 301-837-3000

FOIA Public Liaison: John Simms, Counsel to the Inspector General

8601 Adelphi Road, Room 1300

College Park, MD 20740-6001

Telephone number: 301-837-3197

E-mail address: [john.simms@nara.gov](mailto:john.simms@nara.gov)

Thank you for contacting the National Archives and Records Administration; please feel free to contact us if you have any further questions. A copy of your request is attached to this email.

Sincerely,

Wanda Williams

Deputy Freedom of Information Act Officer/Archivist

Office of General Counsel (NGC)

National Archives and Records Administration

8601 Adelphi Road

College Park, Maryland, 20740-6001

301-837-0773 voice mail

[wanda.williams@nara.gov](mailto:wanda.williams@nara.gov)

---

**Jason Leopold** <jasonleopold@gmail.com>

Thu, Feb 10, 2022 at 1:43 PM

Reply-To: jasonleopold@gmail.com

To: Wanda Williams <wanda.williams@nara.gov>

Cc: John Simms <john.simms@nara.gov>, Brett Baker <brett.baker@nara.gov>, FOIA <foia@nara.gov>

Thank you, Wanda. I appreciate it and I'll make note of it for the future.

All best,

Jason

[Quoted text hidden]

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**BuzzFeed News**

**Jason Leopold** | **BuzzFeed News** | [Senior Investigative Reporter](#) | (213) 270-4334 | [@jasonleopold](#)

6824 Lexington Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90038

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**Fwd: NARA OIG FOIA requests**

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **John Simms** <[john.simms@nara.gov](mailto:john.simms@nara.gov)>  
Date: Tue, Jun 21, 2022, 6:14 AM  
Subject: Re: NARA OIG FOIA requests  
To: <[jasonleopold@gmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)>

Jason,

Thank you so much for reaching out, and I apologize about the delay in responding. I am trying to get an estimated date of completion from the other offices I had to consult. As soon as I have any information I will forward it to you. Please feel free to call me anytime at 301-837-1966 if you have any questions or need something specific. Thank you.

Respectfully,

John Simms  
Counsel to the Inspector General  
Office of Inspector General  
National Archives and Records Administration  
301-837-1966

**CAUTION!** This message may contain Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) that requires safeguarding or dissemination controls, in part because it may contain information protected by the attorney-client, attorney work product, deliberative process, or other privilege; Inspector General Protected information (PRIIG); Investigation information (INV); General Law Enforcement information (LEI); Law Enforcement - Communications (LCOMM); privacy information; and/or information exempted from release under the Freedom of Information Act or Privacy Act. Do not disseminate without the approval of the NARA IG. If received in error, please notify the sender by reply e-mail and delete all copies of this message.

On Mon, Jun 13, 2022 at 1:57 PM Jason Leopold <[jasonleopold@gmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)> wrote:

Hey John,  
Do you have an estimated date of completion for this request?

Best,  
Jason

Jason Leopold  
BuzzFeed News  
Senior Investigative Reporter  
(213) 270-4334 (Signal)  
[@jasonleopold](https://www.buzzfeednews.com/author/jasonleopold)  
Send me documents and tips, securely and anonymously: [tips.buzzfeed.com](https://tips.buzzfeed.com)  
PGP fingerprint: ACE4 2447 7163 6F94 4466 3591 5E7A E882 D89B DFFB  
<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/author/jasonleopold>

On Mon, Apr 4, 2022, 1:30 PM Jason Leopold <[jasonleopold@gmail.com](mailto:jasonleopold@gmail.com)> wrote:

John,  
How are you? Hope all is well. Thanks so much for this.

Best,  
Jason

On Mon, Apr 4, 2022 at 8:23 AM John Simms <[john.simms@nara.gov](mailto:john.simms@nara.gov)> wrote:

Mr. Leopold,

Thank you very much for talking with me on March 22nd. Your reference number for the FOIA request we discussed concerning records "relating or referring to the presence of classified information, contained in Presidential records removed from the Trump White House and retrieved from Mar-a-Lago by NARA officials" is NARA OIG FOIA 22-13.

Also, on Friday April 1, 2022 the NARA agency FOIA office sent me a referral for part of a request you made to NARA agency FOIA office. You requested:

- "1. All emails, memos, letters and text messages mentioning or referring to certificates sent to the National Archives declaring, falsely, that Donald Trump won the 2020 presidential election in Georgia, Arizona, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Nevada, New Mexico and Wisconsin.
2. All emails, letters, text messages and correspondence between the National Archives and officials representing the Republican Party in each of these states mentioning or referring to these fraudulent certificates.
3. All emails, memos, letters and text messages mentioning or referring to a second fake certificate sent to the National Archives in 2020 by a group identified as Sovereign Citizens of the State of Arizona declaring Trump the winner of the presidential election.
4. Any and all referrals, be it criminal or civil, NARA sent to the Department of Justice, FBI and/or any other federal agency relating or referring to the fake certificates."

The agency responded to items 1, 2, and 3 only. The agency only referred, "4. Any and all referrals, be it criminal or civil, NARA sent to the Department of Justice, FBI and/or any other federal agency relating or referring to the fake certificates." to my office for processing. A search has begun for any potentially responsive records. The tracking number for this FOIA request is NARA OIG FOIA 22-15.

As a reminder, the NARA agency FOIA office does not have access to NARA OIG records, and generally a response from the NARA agency FOIA office does not encompass NARA OIG records. I understand the agency response to the first three parts of your request included some emails between OIG personnel and NARA officials. This should not be interpreted as the entirety of OIG records which may be responsive to the other parts of your request. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 301-837-1966.

Respectfully,

John Simms  
Counsel to the Inspector General  
Office of Inspector General  
National Archives and Records Administration  
301-837-1966

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