

Subject: RE: eFOIA Request Received
From: FOIPAQUESTIONS <FOIPAQUESTIONS@FBI.GOV>
Date: 4/29/19, 6:45 AM
To: Peter Aldhous <peter.aldhous@buzzfeed.com>

Dear Mr. Aldhous,

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the status of your Freedom of Information Act/Privacy (FOIPA) request. A review of your request has determined the following:

The request is being handled under FOIPA request number 1429177-000 and is presently in Initial Processing, where the assigned analyst is searching for, retrieving and reviewing potentially responsive records.

Requests are processed in the order in which they are received through our multi-track processing system. Requests are divided into two primary tracks--simple (under 50 pages of potentially responsive documents) and complex (over 50 pages of potentially responsive documents). Complex requests are further divided into medium, large, and extra-large sub-tracks based upon request size. Simple track requests typically require the least amount of time to process. Currently, simple track cases average approximately 138 days from the date of receipt for processing. Our complex requests in the medium processing track are currently averaging 571 days, large processing track are currently averaging approximately 1,289 days, and extra-large processing track are currently averaging 1,649 days for processing.

The search for responsive records is ongoing for your request, so we do not yet know into which track it will fall. The estimated date of completion is therefore based on the average processing time of complex requests in the large processing track. Accordingly, the estimated date on which the FBI will complete action on your request is 1,289 days from the date the FBI opened your request. Once the search has been completed, you may request an estimated date of completion.

Additional information regarding the Freedom of Information Act/Privacy is available at <http://www.fbi.gov/> or <http://www.fbi.gov/foia/>. If you require additional assistance please contact foipaquestions@fbi.gov.

Please check the status of your request online at <http://vault.fbi.gov> by clicking on the "Check Status of Your FOI/PA Request" link. Status updates are performed on a weekly basis.

Respectfully,

Public Information Officer

Record/Information Dissemination Section (RIDS) FBI-Information Management Division
170 Marcel Drive, Winchester, VA 22602-4843
Direct: (540) 868-4593
Fax: (540) 868-4391
Questions E-mail: foipaquestions@fbi.gov

Do you have further questions about the FOI/PA process? Visit us at <http://www.fbi.gov/foia>

Exhibit A

4/30/19, 6:25 PM

Please check the status of your request online at <https://vault.fbi.gov/fdps-1/@@search-fdps> Status updates are performed on a weekly basis.

Note: This is a non-emergency email address. If this is an emergency, please call 911 directly. If you need to report a tip for immediate action, please contact FBI Tips at <http://tips.fbi.gov/> or reach out to your local field office.

From: Peter Aldhous [mailto:peter.aldhous@buzzfeed.com]
Sent: Friday, April 26, 2019 5:51 PM
To: FOIPAQUESTIONS <FOIPAQUESTIONS@FBI.GOV>
Subject: Re: eFOIA Request Received

Attention: FBI FOIA office

I filed the attached FOIA request via the eFOIPA portal on March 11, receiving an automated acknowledgement of receipt. Since then, I have received no further correspondence, and I have not been assigned a FOIPA request number. We are well past the 20 business days allowed for an acknowledgement under the law.

On Mon, Mar 11, 2019 at 5:22 PM <efoia@subscriptions.fbi.gov> wrote:

Organization Representative Information

Organization Name BuzzFeed **Prefix** [] **First Name** Peter **Middle Name** [] **Last Name** Aldhous **Suffix** []
Email peter.aldhous@buzzfeed.com **Phone** 415 800 3471 **Location** United States

Domestic Address

Address Line 1 121 2nd Street **Address Line 2** 3rd Floor **City** San Francisco **State** California **Postal** 94105

Agreement to Pay

How you will pay

I am requesting a fee waiver for my request and have reviewed the FOIA reference guide. If my fee waiver is denied, I would like to limit my request to the two free hours of searching and 100 duplicated pages.

Proof Of Affiliation for Fee Waiver

Waiver Explanation

See attached PDF

Documentation Files FBI genetic genealogy - Mar 11-1.pdf

Non-Individual FOIA Request

Request Information

See attached PDF

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Please be advised that efoia@subscriptions.fbi.gov is a no-reply email address. Questions regarding your FOIA request may be directed to foipaquestions@fbi.gov. If you have received a FOIPA request number, please include this in all correspondence concerning your request. Please note eFOIPA requests are processed in the order that they are received. If you have not received a FOIPA request number, your request is in the process of being opened at which time it will be assigned a FOIPA request number and correspondence will be forthcoming.

**

Upon receipt of your FOIPA request number, you may check the status of your FOIPA request on the FBI's electronic FOIA Library (The Vault) on the FBI's public website, <http://vault.fbi.gov> by clicking on the "Check Status of Your FOI/PA Request tool" link. Status updates are performed on a weekly basis. If you receive a comment that your FOIPA request number was not located in the database, please check back at a later date.

--

Peter Aldhous

Science reporter | **BuzzFeed News**

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[@paldhous](#)

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BuzzFeed News

REPORTING TO YOU

Mar 11, 2019

Peter Aldhous,
Science Reporter,
BuzzFeed News
415 800 3471
peter.aldhous@buzzfeed.com

Dear FOIA officer,

This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 USC 552.

I am a journalist working on behalf of BuzzFeed, reporting on the emerging science and practice of investigative genealogy.

I request the following records:

- a) Communications between Steve Kramer, Melissa Parisot, or any other staff of the Los Angeles FBI Field Office *and* Bennett Greenspan or any other employee of Family Tree DNA (<https://www.familytreedna.com/>) or Gene by Gene (<https://www.genebygene.com/>), including but not limited to email correspondence, from Jan 2018 to present.
- b) Communications between Steve Kramer, Melissa Parisot, or any other staff of the Los Angeles FBI field office *and* any employee of MyHeritage (<https://www.myheritage.com/>), including but not limited to email correspondence, from Jan 2018 to present.
- c) Communications between Steve Kramer, Melissa Parisot, or any other staff of the Los Angeles FBI field office *and* any employee of Parabon NanoLabs (<https://parabon-nanolabs.com/>), including but not limited to email correspondence, from Jan 2018 to present.
- c) Contracts or purchase orders for services between FBI field office and Family Tree DNA, Gene by Gene, or Parabon NanoLabs, from Jan 2018 to present.
- d) Documents describing the commercial services available to process crime scene samples for submission to genetic genealogy services, and describing available genetic

genetic genealogy services, compiled by Steve Kramer of the Los Angeles FBI Field Office and distributed to other law enforcement agencies, from Jan 2018 to present.

Please ensure that you search both investigative *and* non-investigative record keeping systems and databases. Some of the records above will be located in the Los Angeles FBI field office, and in the email accounts of Steve Kramer and Melissa Parisot.

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. .

FBI 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.

In the event some portions of the requested records are properly exempt from disclosure, please disclose any reasonably segregable non-exempt portions of the requested records. If it is your position that a document contains non-exempt segments, but that those non-exempt segments are so dispersed throughout the document as to make segregation impossible, please state what portion of the document is non-exempt, and how the material is dispersed throughout the document. If a request is denied in whole, please state specifically that it is not reasonable to segregate portions of the record for release.

As a member of the media, I am entitled to be placed in the "news media, educational, or scientific requesters" category. As such, I should only be charged for duplication fees beyond the first 100 pages. Further, I assert that this request is in the public interest, because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations and activities of the government, and therefore request a fee waiver.

As I am making this request as a journalist and this information is of timely value, I would appreciate your communicating with me by telephone or email, rather than by mail, if you have questions regarding this request.

I look forward to your reply within 20 business days, as the statute requires.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Aldhous", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Aldhous

on behalf of BuzzFeed