

From Hollister, Amanda <noreply@ains.com>

Sep 26, 2025 Friday, September 26th, 2025 at 3:57 PM

To [REDACTED]@covenantforwarriors.org CC vacofoiase@va.gov

Friday, September 26th, 2025 at 3:57 PM

Good afternoon,

We are in receipt of your FOIA request to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. However, before we can further route and or process your request, additional clarification is needed.

You sought, "This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act. I request all records, policies, directives, memoranda, guidance, communications, reports, or data maintained by the Department of Veterans Affairs concerning the identification, tracking, or support of U.S. military veterans requiring consular assistance while located overseas, for the period January 1, 2015 through the present. This request specifically includes but is not limited to: – Any databases, spreadsheets, or tracking systems maintained for veterans abroad. – Annual reports, summaries, or statistics relating to veterans stranded overseas. – Internal policies or directives describing how VA monitors or supports such cases. – Records of coordination with the Department of State or Department of Defense on these matters. Please provide all responsive records in electronic format (PDF or native format). (Date Range for Record Search: From 01/01/2015 To 09/22/2025)".

Please clarify the following:

1. The VA has a decentralized FOIA processing structure as each Administration, e.g., VHA, Veterans Benefits Administration, and National Cemetery Administration, and numerous VA management offices have their own designated FOIA Officer to process records created and maintained by that component. Therefore, I kindly ask you to provide the name of the specific office within the Department of Veterans Affairs that you believe maintains the records for your request.

Please see additional information in support of your request:

VBA: VA Regional Office for Foreign Services:

The VA Regional Office in Houston, Texas, provides support for veterans living abroad.

Contact: VA Regional Office, P.O. Box 4444, Janesville, WI 53547-4444, USA

VHA: Foreign Medical Program (FMP) Contact:

Phone: 1-877-345-8179 (toll-free) or +1-303-331-7590

Email: HAC.FMP@va.gov

Fee Waiver

In your request you also sought a fee waiver. Based on the analysis of the information presented in your request, we have determined that VACO is not required to waive the fees associated with producing records responsive to your FOIA request. Therefore, we are denying your fee waiver request. The FOIA directs agencies to furnish documents without any charge or at reduced fee if two requirements are met, 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii). Both requirements must be met before fees can be waived. The first requirement is that "disclosure of the requested information is the public interest because it is likely to

contribute significantly to the public understanding of the operations or activities of the government”. The second requirement is that the “disclosure of the information is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester”. Where one or both requirements are not satisfied, a fee waiver is not warranted under the statute. Further, the requester should address the statutory requirements in sufficient detail for the agency to make an informed decision as to whether it can appropriately waive fees. In this regard, the requester must demonstrate his or her entitlement to a fee waiver. To waive the FOIA fees associated with producing the requested records, we must determine, based upon a review of the information submitted, that: (1) the records concern identifiable operations or activities of the agency; (2) the information in the documents is “likely to contribute significantly to the public’s understanding” of the agency’s operations and activities; and, (3) after disclosure to you, the records will be further disseminated to a reasonably broad audience of persons interested in the subject. We must also determine that (1) you do not have a commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure, or, if so, (2) the magnitude of the identified commercial interest of the requester is not sufficiently large, in comparison with the public interest in disclosure, that the disclosure would be “primarily in the commercial interest of you.” We have determined your request does not contain sufficient detail to meet the public interest requirement, as you do not specify how the requested information is likely to contribute significantly to the public’s understanding of VACO’s operations or activities and your request also does not describe how you are in a position to disseminate the information requested to members of the general public and therefore contribute to the general public’s understanding. For these reasons, your request for a fee waiver is denied.

You are provided thirty (30) calendar days from the date of this message to respond to this request for clarification. If no response is received within this timeframe, it will be concluded that you no longer wish to pursue this request, and the case file will be administratively closed.

If you should have any questions, please contact this office at vacofoiase@va.gov .

Thank you,

VA FOIA Service
Department of Veteran Affairs
Compliance, Risk and Remediation (CRR)
Office of Information and Technology (OI&T)
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