

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

JUDICIAL WATCH, INC.,)	
425 Third Street S.W., Suite 800)	
Washington, DC 20024,)	
)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	Civil Action No.
v.)	
)	
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,)	
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.)	
Washington, DC 20530-0001,)	
)	
Defendant.)	
_____)	

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff Judicial Watch, Inc., brings this action against Defendant U.S. Department of Justice to compel compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552. As grounds therefor, Plaintiff alleges as follows:

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

1. The Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(B) and 28 U.S.C. § 1331.
2. Venue is proper in this district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(e).

PARTIES

3. Plaintiff Judicial Watch, Inc. is a not-for-profit, educational organization incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia and headquartered at 425 Third Street S.W., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20024. Plaintiff seeks to promote transparency, accountability, and integrity in government and fidelity to the rule of law. As part of its mission, Plaintiff regularly requests records from federal agencies pursuant to FOIA. Plaintiff analyzes the responses and

disseminates its findings and the requested records to the American public to inform them about “what their government is up to.”

4. Defendant U.S. Department of Justice is an agency of the United States Government and is headquartered at 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20530-0001. Defendant has possession, custody, and control of records to which Plaintiff seeks access.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

5. On May 2, 2025, Plaintiff submitted a FOIA request via email/online submission to the Defendant’s Mail Referral Unit, seeking access to:

1. Copies of proposed and/or final subpoenas, warrants, court orders (including but not limited to any grand jury, state or federal court, FISA and FISC), or other authorizations obtained to surveil Donald Trump, or any other person or entity in any investigation where Donald Trump was the target of the investigation from January 20, 2021, through January 20, 2025. This includes but is not limited to surveillance of electronics, cloud-based accounts, phone records, and wiretaps.
2. Copies of all responses to the above-mentioned applications in which the authorizing body (court or grand jury, etc.) notified the FBI or Justice Department that it would not grant the proposed applications or recommended changes. If any such responses were provided orally, rather than in writing, please provide copies of FBI or Justice Department records memorializing or otherwise referencing the relevant responses.
3. Copies of all orders relating to the above-mentioned applications, whether granting or denying the applications and certifications, denying the orders, modifying the orders, granting the orders, or other types of orders.

The timeframe for the requested records was identified as January 20, 2021, through January 20, 2025.

6. By letter dated May 30, 2025, Defendant’s Office of Information Policy (OIP) acknowledged receiving Plaintiff’s request on May 8, 2025, after receiving it from Defendant’s

Mail Referral Unit. Defendant's OIP notified Plaintiff that the request had been assigned tracking number EMRUFOIA050225.

7. In the aforementioned May 30 letter, Defendant's OIP also notified Plaintiff that Plaintiff's request falls within "unusual circumstances" pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(B)(i)-(iii) based on a need to "search in and/or seek consultation with another Office." Based upon Defendant's determination of "unusual circumstances," Defendant notified Plaintiff of the need to "extend the time limit to respond to [Plaintiff's] request beyond the additional ten days provided by the statute."

8. As of the date of this Complaint, Defendant has failed to (i) produce the requested records or demonstrate that the requested records are lawfully exempt from production; (ii) notify Plaintiff of the scope of any responsive records it intends to produce or withhold and the reasons for any withholdings; or (iii) inform Plaintiff that it may appeal any adequately specific, adverse determination.

COUNT I
(Violation of FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552)

9. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 8 as if fully stated herein.
10. Defendant is in violation of FOIA.
11. Plaintiff is being irreparably harmed by Defendant's violation of FOIA, and Plaintiff will continue to be irreparably harmed unless Defendant is compelled to comply with it.
12. Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law.
13. To trigger FOIA's administrative exhaustion requirement, Defendant was required to make final determinations on Plaintiff's requests by June 23, 2025, at the latest. Because Defendant failed to make a final determination on Plaintiff's requests within the time limits set by FOIA, Plaintiff is deemed to have exhausted its administrative appeal remedies.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that the Court: (1) order Defendant to conduct searches for any and all records responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA requests and demonstrate that it employed search methods reasonably likely to lead to the discovery of records responsive to the requests; (2) order Defendant to produce, by a date certain, any and all non-exempt records responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA requests and *Vaughn* indices of any responsive records withheld under claim of exemption; (3) enjoin Defendant from continuing to withhold any and all non-exempt records responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA requests; (4) grant Plaintiff an award of attorneys' fees and other litigation costs reasonably incurred in this action pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(E); and (5) grant Plaintiff such other relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: June 24, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Christina Bobb
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