



May 28, 2021

Zachary Heiden
ACLU of Maine
63 Arcadia St.
Portland, Maine 4103

COW2019500947

Dear Zachary Heiden:

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act (FOIA/PA) request received in this office on August 5, 2019, regarding information pertaining to approvals, referrals, and denials of affirmative asylum cases arising out of the Newark Asylum Office and Boston Asylum Sub-Office.

Enclosed is our fifth release of records, which consists of 1,317 pages that are responsive to your request. We have reviewed and have determined to release all information except those portions that are exempt pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552 (b)(5), (b)(6), (b)(7)(c), and (b)(7)(e) of the FOIA.

The following exemptions are applicable:

Exemption (b)(5) provides protection for inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters, which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency. The types of documents and/or information that we have withheld under this exemption may consist of documents containing pre-decisional information, documents or other memoranda prepared in contemplation of litigation, or confidential communications between attorney and client.

Exemption (b)(6) permits the government to withhold all information about individuals in personnel, medical and similar files where the disclosure of such information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. The types of documents and/or information that we have withheld may consist of birth certificates, naturalization certificates, drivers' licenses, social security numbers, home addresses, dates of birth, or various other documents and/or information belonging to a third party that are considered personal.

Exemption (b)(7)(E) of the FOIA provides protection for records or information for law enforcement purposes which would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law. The types of documents and/or information we have withheld could consist of law enforcement systems checks, manuals, checkpoint locations, surveillance techniques, and various other documents.

Exemption (b)(7)(C) provides protection for personal information in law enforcement records, which could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. We have

withheld information relating to third-party individuals. The types of documents and/or information that we have withheld could consist of names, addresses, identification numbers, telephone numbers, fax numbers, or various other documents that are considered personal.

We have finished the initial processing of the records responsive to your request, which includes a total of 6,145 pages, of which 3,748 pages were released in their entirety and 2,309 pages released in part. We withheld 7 pages in full. Additionally, there are 81 pages out for consultation with other agencies that will be processed and sent to you as they are completed. We are consulting with the Department of Homeland Security on 59 pages, U.S. Customs and Border Protection on 4 pages, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement on 18 pages.

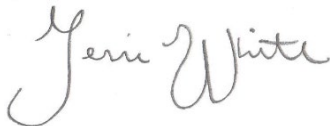
As a result of discussion between agency personnel and a member of our staff, as a matter of administrative discretion, we are releasing computer codes found on system screen prints previously withheld under exemption b(2). There may be additional documents that contain discretionary releases of exempt information. If made, these releases are specifically identified in the responsive record. These discretionary releases do not waive our ability to invoke applicable FOIA exemptions for similar or related information in the future.

The enclosed record consists of the best reproducible copies available. Certain pages contain marks that appear to be blacked-out information. The black marks were made prior to our receipt of the file and are not information we have withheld under the provisions of the FOIA or PA.

The National Records Center does not process petitions, applications or any other type of benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act. If you have questions or wish to submit documentation relating to a matter pending with the bureau, you must address these issues with your nearest District Office.

All FOIA/PA related requests, including address changes, must be submitted in writing and be signed by the requester. Questions concerning this FOIA/PA request may be mailed to the FOIA/PA Officer at the PO Box listed at the top of the letterhead or emailed to FOIAPAQuestions@uscis.dhs.gov. Please include the control number listed above on all correspondence with this office. You can now submit a new FOIA request online using our new Freedom of Information Act Records System (FIRST). If you wish to submit a new FOIA/PA request, please visit www.uscis.gov/FOIA for instructions and requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Terri White".

Terri White
Acting Director, FOIA Operations

Enclosure(s)