

UNITED STATES ANNOUNCES 45 NEW OPEN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

October 28, 2015

This week, representatives from the United States Government and the Department of Justice are joining 1,500 participants from governments and civil society organizations around the globe to participate in the [2015 Open Government Partnership \(OGP\) Summit](#). Founded in 2011, the [Partnership](#) has grown from eight to sixty-six participating countries committed to working both domestically and internationally to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and transform the way the governments serve and engage with the public. Each participating member of the OGP is required to work with civil society to [develop an Open Government National Action Plan \(NAP\)](#), and today the Department is excited to highlight the issuance of the [United States' third National Action Plan](#).

Each country's NAP covers a two year period and includes specific and measurable commitments that advance transparency, accountability, participation and/or technological innovation. The [United States' third NAP](#) released yesterday represents its most ambitious and extensive plan consisting of forty-five commitments on a wide range of actions the Administration will take over coming months to strengthen, deepen and expand upon our open government efforts. As with the prior two NAPs, the Department of Justice is proud to be working on a number of initiatives, which promote the principals of open government and together will improve public services, access to information, government integrity and the administration of justice. These commitments include:

Open Government to Improve Public Services

- **Making it easier for individuals to access their own information.** DOJ will assist an interagency team led by OPM, GSA, and the Department of Commerce to develop new authentication tools to protect individual privacy and ensure that personal records only go to the intended recipients.

Access to Information

- **Modernizing the implementation of the FOIA.** Building on its efforts to improve the government-wide administration of the FOIA, the Department will expand the services offered on FOIA.gov, conduct a proactive disclosure pilot for posting FOIA-released records online, and improve agency FOIA websites.
- **Strengthening and improving transparency of privacy safeguards.** The Administration will revise and reconstitute guidance to agencies on the collection and protection of individuals' personally identifiable information.
- **Enhancing transparency of Federal use of investigative technologies.** As law enforcement and homeland security have employed new technologies, such as unmanned aircraft systems, the Administration has recognized that these must be used in a manner that protects the privacy and civil liberties of the public. Agencies are encouraged to develop and make public a privacy analysis for advanced technologies.

Government Integrity

- **Increasing transparency of foreign intelligence surveillance activities.** The Administration will increase efforts to make information regarding foreign intelligence surveillance activities more publicly available, while



continuing to protect such information when disclosure could harm national security.

- **Strengthening whistleblower protection for government employees.** The Department of Justice will propose revisions to its regulations providing whistleblower protection procedures for employees of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), including proposing to expand the list of officials to whom protected disclosures may be made. Additionally, the Department will continue to evaluate and update its mandatory training program to ensure all employees understand their rights and responsibilities under whistleblower protection laws.

Justice and Law Enforcement

- **Expand Access to Justice to promote Federal programs.** The White House Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable, co-led by the White House Domestic Policy Council and the Department of Justice, works to raise awareness about the profound impact that legal aid programs can have in advancing efforts to promote access to health and housing, education and employment, family stability, and public safety. On September 24, 2015, President Obama issued a memorandum intended to institutionalize this Roundtable, expand the participating agencies, and include consideration of equal access to justice for low-income people in both the civil and criminal justice systems. The Roundtable will seek input from civil society, and will annually report on the progress of this work.

Since the signing of both his [FOIA](#) and [Transparency and Open Government](#) memoranda on his first full day in office, President Obama has committed to “creating an unprecedented level of openness in government.” The U.S. published its [first NAP in 2011](#), with twenty-six commitments that have increased public integrity, enhanced public access to information, improved management of public resources, and given the public a more active voice in the U.S. Government’s policymaking process. In 2013, the U.S. released [its second NAP](#), which included twenty-three commitments. In 2014, the Administration added three additional commitments to the second NAP and further expanded one existing commitment, bringing the total for that plan to twenty-six.

The forty-five commitments in the [third NAP](#) issued yesterday build on the commitments fulfilled in the prior two plans. In putting together the [third NAP](#), the U.S. engaged in unprecedented consultations inside and outside of government, including with a broad range of U.S. departments and agencies and subnational governments as well as the general public, civil society groups, foundations, academia, and the private sector. The Department is proud to have worked with the Administration and civil society on the formulation of the plan issued yesterday and looks forward to working on the commitments noted above.

Topic(s):

FOIA

Component(s):

[Office for Access to Justice](#)

[Office of Information Policy](#)

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April 2, 2013

Since the signing of both his FOIA and Transparency and Open Government memoranda on his first full day in office, President Obama has committed to “creating an unprecedented level of openness in government.” Attorney General Eric Holder, in his FOIA Guidelines issued in March 2009, built on these directives, instructing agencies on how to apply the presumption of openness called for by the President and emphasizing the need for agencies to release records proactively and promptly and to...

[Common Core FOIA Regulations Kickoff Meeting](#)

May 1, 2014

As part of the efforts described in the Second Open Government National Action Plan (NAP) to modernize FOIA, the Administration has committed to developing common FOIA regulations and practices for agencies. OIP is pleased to announce that this month we will host the kickoff meeting for the interagency process of developing a common set of FOIA regulations. Agencies promulgate FOIA regulations to procedurally assist in the implementation of certain provisions of the law, such as where and how...

Summer Requester Roundtable on Agency FOIA Websites

May 27, 2016

Kicking off our efforts for a key NAP 3.0 initiative, agency personnel and the public are invited to join us for a requester roundtable discussion on FOIA websites.

Developing a Consolidated FOIA Service for Making Requests

September 8, 2014

GSA's 18F team highlights efforts towards our National Action Plan commitment to develop a consolidated FOIA request service.

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Updated November 17, 2015