DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Washington DC 20420

May 15, 2026

In Reply Refer To: 001B
FOIA Request: 26-14629-F

Emma Lewis
Counsel
American Oversight
[no physical address provided]
foia@americanoversight.org

Dear Ms. Lewis,

This is the Initial Agency Decision to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Office of the Secretary, U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (OSVA) dated and received March 13, 2026 and assigned FOIA tracking number **26-14629-F**. You requested, as quoted:
"All email communications (including emails, email attachments, complete email chains, calendar invitations, and calendar invitation attachments) sent by any of the officials listed below, and/or anyone communicating on their behalf, such as an assistant, secretary, or chief of staff, and containing both a key term from Column A and a key term from Column B.
Department of Veterans Affairs Officials:

a. Douglas Collins, Secretary
b. Paul Lawrence, Deputy Secretary
c. Anyone serving in the capacity of Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology
d. Anyone serving in the capacity of Chief Information Officer
e. Anyone serving in the capacity of Chief Data Officer
f. Anyone serving in the capacity of Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer
g. Curt Cashour, Chief of Staff
h. Joshua Quill, Deputy Chief of Staff
i. Jennifer Burch, Deputy Chief of Staff
j. Phillip Christy, Principal Executive Director and Chief Acquisition Officer
k. Zachary Schwartz, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology
l. Anyone serving in the capacity of Director, Assistant Secretary, or the equivalent at the Office of Regulation of Policy and Management

Key Terms:

Column A
i. claim*

Column B
A. dispos*
B. appeal*
C. error
D. AI
E. 'artificial intelligence'
F. automat*
G. quota*
H. backlog
I. processor
J. inventory
K. 'higher-level review'
L. 'higher level review'
M. HLR
N. 'wait time'
O. 'waiting time'
P. 'wait times'

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Q. 'waiting times'

[. . .]
Please provide all responsive records from June 1, 2025, through August 31, 2025" (emphasis in original).

As a reminder, OSVA processes your FOIA request only for OSVA custodians. As a reminder, for your related FOIA request **26-14627-F for** VBA claim AI-related records, OSVA processed 297 pages and released to you 69 pages in full and 155 pages in part.

4/30/26 Narrowed FOIA Request
On April 30, 2026, you narrowed your FOIA request to:
A term from Column A AND a term from Column B AND a term from Column C, NOT "insurance", NOT "travel"

Key Terms:

Column A	Column B	Column C
i. "benefits claim"	A. dispos*	I."Artificial intelligence"
	B. appeal*	I.AI
	C. error	I.LLM
	D. quota*	
	E. backlog	
	F. "higher-level review"	
	G. "higher level review"	
	H. HLR	
	I. "wait time"	
	J. "waiting time"	

All-Other Fee Category and Fee Waiver Grant
We have placed you in the all-other category and granted your fee waiver request. OSVA reserves the right to charge FOIA fees for any future FOIA requests.

Reasonable Searches Dated 5/5/26 & 5/11/26
On May 5, 2026, the OSVA FOIA Officer requested the below searches.

Search – May 5, 2026
By: Office of Information and Technology
Custodians: Douglas Collins, Paul Lawrence, Curt Cashour, Jen Burch, Joshua Quill
Information System: Microsoft 365 (emails, MS Teams, outlook calendars)
Timeframe: 6/1/25 to 8/31/2025
Search Parameters: your wildcarded or stemmed search term

On May 11, 2026, the OI&T office found no responsive records. Note, for your FOIA request **26-14628** for the same search parameters but the timeframe of September 1, 2025, to May 1, 2026, the VA OI&T submitted responsive records to review. These searches constitute reasonable searches.

Initial Agency Decision
From the reasonable searches described above, VA found no responsive records. As such, VA issues you a "no records" response.

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FOIA Mediation

Under the provisions of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016, the following contact information is provided to assist FOIA requesters in resolving disputes:

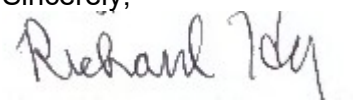
VA Central Office FOIA Public Liaison:
Email Address: vacofoiaservice@va.gov
Office of Government Information Services (OGIS)
Email Address: ogis@nara.gov
Mailing address:
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, MD 20740-6001

FOIA Appeal

This concludes OSVA's Initial Agency Decision to request **26-14629-F**. Please be advised that should you desire to do so, you may appeal the determination made in this response to:
ogcfoiaappeals@va.gov
Office of General Counsel (024)
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

If you should choose to file an appeal, please include a copy of this letter with your written appeal and clearly indicate the basis for your disagreement with the determination set forth in this response. Please be advised that in accordance with VA's implementing FOIA regulations at 38 C.F.R. § 1.559, your appeal must be postmarked no later than ninety (90) days of the date of this letter.

Sincerely,



Richard Ha, JD, CIPP/G
OSVA FOIA Officer

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