AMERICAN OVERSIGHT

March 17, 2026

VIA EMAIL

Criminal Division
Department of Justice
Christina Butler
Chief, FOIA/PA Unit
950 Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20530
crm.foia@usdoj.gov

Re: Expedited Freedom of Information Act Request

Dear FOIA Officer:

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and the implementing regulations of your agency, 28 C.F.R. Part 16, American Oversight makes the following request for records.

On March 5, 2026, the Department of Justice (DOJ) released additional files on Jeffrey Epstein that had been mistakenly withheld during an earlier review.[1] These records included three Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) 302 memos detailing allegations against President Trump.[2] American Oversight seeks records with the potential to shed light on 302 memos referencing President Trump ahead of the House Oversight Committee's deposition of Attorney General Pam Bondi.

Requested Records

American Oversight seeks expedited review of this request for the reasons identified below and requests that your agency produce the following records as soon as practicable, and at least within twenty business days:

1. All FBI form 302s reflecting the content of all interviews conducted as a part of the government's investigation(s) of Jeffrey Epstein, Ghislaine Maxwell, and/or their associates containing any reference to Donald J. Trump.

[1] *See, e.g.*, *DOJ Releases 'Mistakenly Withheld' Epstein Files with Uncorroborated Claims About Trump*, CBS (March 6, 2026, 8:55 AM), https://www.cbsnews.com/news/epstein-files-on-womans-unproven-claims-about-trump-released-by-doj/.
[2] *See, e.g.*, Hannah Rabinowitz, *Justice Department Posts FBI Interview Memos Related to Trump Sex Abuse Allegation*, CNN (updated March 5, 2026), https://www.cnn.com/2026/03/05/politics/justice-department-fbi-interview-related-trump-abuse-allegation-and-other-missing-epstein-files.

2. All other records intended to summarize, memorialize, or record witness interviews or witness statements containing any reference to Donald J. Trump collected or used in the investigation(s) of Jeffrey Epstein, Ghislaine Maxwell, and/or their associates, including written proffers, written summaries of oral proffers, transcripts or recordings of any witness interviews or statements, and any other record summarizing, memorializing, or reproducing the content of witness interviews or statements collected or used in connection with the above-described investigation(s).

For both parts of this request, please provide all responsive records from January 1, 2006, through the date the search is conducted.

Fee Waiver Request

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii) and your agency's regulations, American Oversight requests a waiver of fees associated with processing this request for records. The subject of this request concerns the operations of the federal government, and the disclosures will likely contribute to a better understanding of relevant government procedures by the general public in a significant way. Moreover, the request is for non-commercial purposes.

American Oversight requests a waiver of fees because disclosure of the requested information is "in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of operations or activities of the government."[3] The public has a significant interest in DOJ and FBI's mistaken withholding of records referencing President Trump in the Epstein files.[4] Records with the potential to shed light on this matter would contribute significantly to public understanding of operations of the federal government, including whether agencies have effectively reviewed and sufficiently released the Epstein files as required by the Epstein Files Transparency Act.[5] American Oversight is committed to transparency and makes the responses agencies provide to FOIA requests publicly available, and the public's understanding of the government's activities would be enhanced through American Oversight's analysis and publication of these records.

This request "is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester."[6] In fact, as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, American Oversight does not have a commercial purpose, and the release of the information requested is not in American Oversight's commercial interest. American Oversight's mission is to promote transparency in government, to educate the public about government activities, and to ensure the accountability of government officials. American Oversight uses the information gathered, and its analysis of it, to educate the public through reports, press releases, or other media. American Oversight

[3] 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii).
[4] *See supra* note 1.
[5] *See, e.g.*, Stephen Fowler, *DOJ Releases Tranche of Epstein Files, Says It Has Met Its Legal Obligation*, NPR (updated Jan. 30, 2026, 5:32 PM), https://www.npr.org/2026/01/30/nx-s1-5693904/epstein-files-doj-trump.
[6] 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii).

also makes materials it gathers available on its public website and promotes their availability on social media platforms, such as Facebook and X (formerly Twitter).[7]

American Oversight has also demonstrated its commitment to the public disclosure of documents and creation of editorial content through regular substantive analyses posted to its website.[8] Examples reflecting this commitment include the posting of records related to the first Trump Administration's contacts with Ukraine and analyses of those contacts;[9] posting records and editorial content about the federal government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic;[10] posting records received as part of American Oversight's "Audit the Wall" project to gather and analyze information related to the first Trump administration's proposed construction of a barrier along the U.S.-Mexico border, and analyses of what those records reveal;[11] the posting of records related to an ethics waiver received by a senior Department of Justice attorney and an analysis of what those records demonstrated regarding the Department's process for issuing such waivers;[12] and posting records and analysis of federal officials' use of taxpayer dollars to charter private aircraft or use government planes for unofficial business.[13]

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[7] American Oversight currently has approximately 16,000 followers on Facebook and 94,900 followers on X (formerly Twitter). American Oversight, Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/ (last visited March 17, 2026); American Oversight (@weareoversight), X (formerly Twitter), https://x.com/weareoversight (last visited March 17, 2026).

[8] *See generally News*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/blog.

[9] *Trump Administration's Contacts with Ukraine*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/the-trump-administrations-contacts-with-ukraine.

[10] *See generally The Trump Administration's Response to Coronavirus*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/the-trump-administrations-response-to-coronavirus; *see, e.g.*, *CDC Calendars from 2018 and 2019: Pandemic-Related Briefings and Meetings*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/cdc-calendars-from-2018-and-2019-pandemic-related-briefings-and-meetings.

[11] *See generally Audit the Wall*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/audit-the-wall; *see, e.g.*, *Audit the Wall: No Plans, No Funding, No Timeline, No Wall*, American Oversight, https://americanoversight.org/audit-the-wall-no-plans-funding-or-timeline-and-no-wall/.

[12] *DOJ Records Relating to Solicitor General Noel Francisco's Recusal*, American Oversight, https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/25544090-doj-records-relating-to-solicitor-general-noel-franciscos-recusal-american-oversight; *Francisco & the Travel Ban: What We Learned from the DOJ Documents*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/francisco-the-travel-ban-what-we-learned-from-the-doj-documents.

[13] *See generally Swamp Airlines: Chartered Jets at Taxpayer Expense*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/investigation/swamp-airlines-private-jets-taxpayer-expense; *see, e.g.*, *New Information on Pompeo's 2017 Trips to His Home State*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/new-information-on-pompeos-2017-trips-to-his-home-state.

Accordingly, American Oversight qualifies for a fee waiver.

Application for Expedited Processing

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(E)(1) and 28 C.F.R. § 16.5(e)(1), American Oversight requests that your agency expedite the processing of this request.

I certify to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief that the information requested is urgently needed in order to inform the public concerning actual or alleged government activity and that American Oversight is primarily engaged in disseminating information it receives from public records requests to the public. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(E)(5)(ii); 28 C.F.R. § 16.5(e)(1)(ii).

DOJ's and FBI's handling of the investigation into Jeffrey Epstein, their review of the case files, and the release of records required by Congress's enactment of the Epstein Files Transparency Act have been the subject of overwhelming media coverage and Congressional scrutiny. As an initial matter, Congress's enactment of the Epstein Files Transparency Act itself shows extraordinary interest; the legislation passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 427-1 and passed the Senate by unanimous consent.[14] The law provides that, "[n]ot later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall, subject to subsection (b), make publicly available in a searchable and downloadable format all unclassified records, documents, communications, and investigative materials in the possession of the Department of Justice . . . that relate to" nine broad categories of records. Included in the law is a requirement that DOJ turn over all "Internal DOJ communications, including emails, memos, meeting notes, concerning decisions to charge, not charge, investigate, or decline to investigate Epstein or his associates."

Despite the law's requirement that those releases be made by December 19, 2025, DOJ released only a portion of the Epstein files on that date, which prompted criticism from lawmakers from both political parties[15] and widespread public outcry, including from Epstein's victims.[16] Despite subsequent releases of additional files over the following months, public reporting indicates more than 47,000 records remain withheld, including records that contain allegations by at least one woman that President Donald Trump

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[14] H.R. 4405, Epstein Files Transparency Act, https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/4405/all-actions.

[15] Anna Betts, "US Legislators Say Justice Department is Violating Law by Not Releasing All Epstein Files," The Guardian (Dec. 19, 2025, 6:15pm EST), https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/dec/19/epstein-files-release-deadline.

[16] *See, e.g.*, Victoria Bekiempis, "Nearly All Epstein Files Still Unreleased a Month After Congress Deadline," The Guardian (Jan. 19, 2026, 8am EST), https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/19/jeffrey-epstein-files-unreleased-trump-doj; Stephen Fowler, "With Few Epstein Files Released, Conspiracy Theories Flourish and Questions Remain," NPR (Jan. 2, 2026 5am ET), https://www.npr.org/2026/01/02/nx-s1-5662638/epstein-files-release-trump-conspiracy-2026.

sexually assaulted her when she was a child between the ages of 13 and 15.[17] Although three FBI Form 302s reflecting interviews conducted with a woman who accused Trump of misconduct were released late in the evening on March 5, 2026, DOJ did not explain why they had been withheld, nor what other similar records it continues to withhold.[18] The withholding of this large number of records prompted further criticism from Members of Congress. Rep. Nancy Mace (R-SC), stated on X (formerly Twitter) that "AG Bondi claims the DOJ has released all of the Epstein files. The record is clear: they have not."[19] For that reason, Rep. Mace made a motion in the House Oversight Committee, which passed on a bipartisan vote, to subpoena Attorney General Bondi to testify in a deposition before the committee.[20]

All these actions demonstrate the overwhelming public interest in how DOJ and FBI have handled the Epstein files and what instructions may have been given to personnel reviewing those files. The public therefore urgently needs the information American Oversight has requested so that citizens can inform themselves and engage with their senators or representatives who have the power to investigate whether the agencies have properly handled the Epstein files—including ahead of the House Oversight Committee's deposition of Attorney General Pam Bondi.

I also certify to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief that there is widespread and exceptional media interest and there exist possible questions concerning the government's integrity, which affect public confidence, which serves as an independent basis to grant expedited processing. There is widespread media coverage of the agencies' failures to release records and that Attorney General Bondi has been subpoenaed to testify as to why that is.[21] This conduct also necessarily raises questions concerning the government's integrity, with lawmakers questioning whether DOJ has violated the law,[22] and the government's handling of the Epstein files raising

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[17] *See, e.g.*, Sadie Gurman & Caitlin Ostroff, "There Are 47,635 Epstein Files Offline for Review, DOJ Says," Wall St. J. (Mar. 3, 2026, 6:05pm ET), https://www.wsj.com/us-news/law/there-are-47-635-epstein-files-offline-for-review-doj-says-bf2b31fe; Stephen Fowler, *Justice Department Withheld and Removed Some Epstein Files Related to Trump*, NPR (Feb. 24, 2026, 2:55pm ET), https://www.npr.org/2026/02/24/nx-s1-5723968/epstein-files-trump-accusation-maxwell.

[18] Erica Orden, "Justice Department Publishes Documents With Sexual Assault Allegations Against Trump," Politico (Mar. 5, 2026 updated 10:30pm EST), https://www.politico.com/news/2026/03/05/donald-trump-epstein-files-allegations-00816123.

[19] Nancy Mace (@RepNancyMace), X (formerly Twitter) (Mar. 4, 2026, 1:02pm), https://x.com/RepNancyMace/status/2029256140190523658.

[20] Dareh Gregorian et al., "House Oversight Committee Votes to Subpoena Pam Bondi for Testimony on Epstein Files," NBC News (Mar. 4, 2026, 4:02PM ET), https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/justice-department/pam-bondi-subpoenaed-testify-epstein-files-house-oversight-committee-rcna261779.

[21] *See, e.g.*, sources cited *supra* notes 15-18.

[22] *See, e.g.*, Betts, *supra* note 15; Mace, *supra* note 19; Gregorian et al., *supra* note 20.

the question of whether its withholdings may be improperly motivated by instructions to shield President Trump from allegations of misconduct.[23]

Lastly, I certify that American Oversight is primarily engaged in disseminating information to the public. American Oversight's mission is to promote transparency in government, to educate the public about government activities, and to ensure the accountability of government officials. Similar to other organizations that have been found to satisfy the criteria necessary to qualify for expedition,[24] American Oversight "'gathers information of potential interest to a segment of the public, uses its editorial skills to turn the raw material into a distinct work, and distributes that work to an audience.'"[25] American Oversight uses the information gathered, and its analysis of it, to educate the public through reports, press releases, and other media. American Oversight also makes materials it gathers available on its public website and promotes their availability on social media platforms, such as Facebook and X (formerly Twitter).[26] As discussed previously, American Oversight has demonstrated its commitment to the public disclosure of documents and creation of editorial content.[27]

Accordingly, American Oversight's request satisfies the criteria for expedition.

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[23] *See, e.g.*, Fowler, *supra* note 17.

[24] *See ACLU v. U.S. Dep't of Justice*, 321 F. Supp. 2d 24, 30–31 (D.D.C. 2004); *EPIC v. Dep't of Defense*, 241 F. Supp. 2d 5, 15 (D.D.C. 2003).

[25] *ACLU*, 321 F. Supp. 2d at 29 n.5 (quoting *EPIC*, 241 F. Supp. 2d at 11).

[26] American Oversight currently has approximately 16,000 followers on Facebook and 94,800 followers on X (formerly Twitter). American Oversight, Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/weareoversight/ (last visited Mar. 10, 2026); American Oversight (@weareoversight), X (formerly Twitter), https://x.com/weareoversight (last visited Mar. 10, 2026).

[27] *See generally News*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/blog; *see, e.g.*, *Emails and Resume of Trump's Pick to Head Government Personnel Office*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/emails-and-resume-of-trumps-pick-to-head-government-personnel-office; *CDC Calendars from 2018 and 2019: Pandemic-Related Briefings and Meetings*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/cdc-calendars-from-2018-and-2019-pandemic-related-briefings-and-meetings; *State Department Releases Ukraine Documents to American Oversight*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/state-department-releases-ukraine-documents-to-american-oversight; *Documents Reveal Ben Carson Jr.'s Attempts to Use His Influence at HUD to Help His Business*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/documents-reveal-ben-carson-jr-s-attempts-to-use-his-influence-at-hud-to-help-his-business; *Investigating the Trump Administration's Efforts to Sell Nuclear Technology to Saudi Arabia*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/investigating-the-trump-administrations-efforts-to-sell-nuclear-technology-to-saudi-arabia; *Sessions' Letter Shows DOJ Acted On Trump's Authoritarian Demand to Investigate Clinton*, American Oversight, https://www.americanoversight.org/sessions-letter.

Guidance Regarding the Search & Processing of Requested Records

In connection with its request for records, American Oversight provides the following guidance regarding the scope of the records sought and the search and processing of records:

- Please search all locations and systems likely to have responsive records, regardless of format, medium, or physical characteristics.

- In conducting your search, please understand the terms "record," "document," and "information" in their broadest sense, to include any written, typed, recorded, graphic, printed, or audio material of any kind.

- Our request for records includes any attachments to those records or other materials enclosed with those records when they were previously transmitted. To the extent that an email is responsive to our request, our request includes all prior messages sent or received in that email chain, as well as any attachments to the email.

- Please search all relevant records or systems containing records regarding agency business. Do not exclude records regarding agency business contained in files, email accounts, or devices in the personal custody of your officials, such as personal email accounts or text messages. Records of official business conducted using unofficial systems or stored outside of official files are subject to the Federal Records Act and FOIA.[28] It is not adequate to rely on policies and procedures that require officials to move such information to official systems within a certain period of time; American Oversight has a right to records contained in those files even if material has not yet been moved to official systems or if officials have, by intent or through negligence, failed to meet their obligations.[29]

- Please use all tools available to your agency to conduct a complete and efficient search for potentially responsive records. Agencies are subject to government-wide requirements to manage agency information electronically,[30] and many agencies have adopted the National Archives and Records Administration

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[28] *See Competitive Enter. Inst. v. Office of Sci. & Tech. Policy*, 827 F.3d 145, 149–50 (D.C. Cir. 2016); *cf. Judicial Watch, Inc. v. Kerry*, 844 F.3d 952, 955–56 (D.C. Cir. 2016).
[29] *See Competitive Enter. Inst. v. Office of Sci. & Tech. Policy*, No. 14-cv-765, slip op. at 8 (D.D.C. Dec. 12, 2016).
[30] Presidential Memorandum—Managing Government Records, 76 Fed. Reg. 75,423 (Nov. 28, 2011), https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/28/presidential-memorandum-managing-government-records; Office of Mgmt. & Budget, Exec. Office of the President, Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments & Independent Agencies, "Managing Government Records Directive," M-12-18 (Aug. 24, 2012), https://www.archives.gov/files/records-mgmt/m-12-18.pdf.

(NARA) Capstone program, or similar policies. These systems provide options for searching emails and other electronic records in a manner that is reasonably likely to be more complete than just searching individual custodian files. For example, a custodian may have deleted a responsive email from his or her email program, but your agency's archiving tools may capture that email under Capstone. At the same time, custodian searches are still necessary; agencies may not have direct access to files stored in .PST files, outside of network drives, in paper format, or in personal email accounts.

- In the event some portions of the requested records are properly exempt from disclosure, please disclose any reasonably segregable non-exempt portions of the requested records. If a request is denied in whole, please state specifically why it is not reasonable to segregate portions of the record for release.

- Please take appropriate steps to ensure that records responsive to this request are not deleted by the agency before the completion of processing for this request. If records potentially responsive to this request are likely to be located on systems where they are subject to potential deletion, including on a scheduled basis, please take steps to prevent that deletion, including, as appropriate, by instituting a litigation hold on those records.

Conclusion

If you have any questions regarding how to construe this request for records or believe that further discussions regarding search and processing would facilitate a more efficient production of records of interest to American Oversight, please do not hesitate to contact American Oversight. American Oversight welcomes an opportunity to discuss its request with you before you undertake your search or incur search or duplication costs. By working together at the outset, American Oversight and your agency can decrease the likelihood of costly and time-consuming litigation in the future.

Where possible, please provide responsive material in an electronic format by email. Alternatively, please provide responsive material in native format or in PDF format on a USB drive. Please send any responsive material being sent by mail to American Oversight, 1030 15th Street NW, Suite B255, Washington, DC 20005. If it will accelerate release of responsive records to American Oversight, please also provide responsive material on a rolling basis.

We share a common mission to promote transparency in government. American Oversight looks forward to working with your agency on this request. If you do not understand any part of this request, please contact David Kronig at foia@americanoversight.org or (202) 897-3915. Also, if American Oversight's request

for expedition is not granted or its request for a fee waiver is not granted in full, please contact us immediately upon making such a determination.

Sincerely,

/s/ David Kronig
David Kronig
on behalf of
American Oversight