

WEST VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT
DATABASE FOR PUBLIC BODIES**

**REPORTING REQUIREMENTS
AND INSTRUCTIONS**

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We Mean Business!



Freedom of Information Act Guidance



- Consult in-house counsel
- WV Attorney General's FOIA Handbook
<http://ago.wv.gov/Documents/FOIA%20Handbook%20PDF.pdf>

NOTE: the WV Secretary of State *is not* an authority on FOIA and only manages the online database.

THE WEST VIRGINIA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305

Governing Laws



- W. Va. Code § 29B-1-1 *et seq.*
- Code of State Rules § 153-52

Who Manages the FOIA Database?



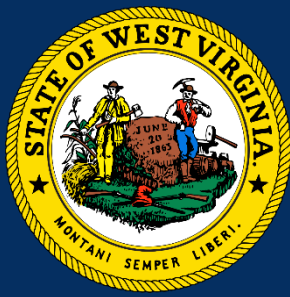
W. Va. Code § 29B-1-3(f):

The Secretary of State shall maintain an electronic data base of notices of requests as required by section three-a of this article.

The database shall be made available to the public via the Internet and shall list each freedom of information request received and the outcome of the request.

The Secretary of State shall provide on the website a form for use by a public body to report the results of the freedom of information request, providing the nature of the request and the public body's response thereto, whether the request was granted, and if not, the exemption asserted under section four of this article to deny the request.

Public Body Reporting Requirements



W. Va. Code § 29B-1-3a(a):

Each public body in receipt of a FOIA request shall the following minimum info:

1. The nature of the request;
2. The nature of the public body's response;
3. The time-frame that was necessary to comply in full with the request; and
4. The amount of reimbursement charged to the requester for the freedom of information request.

Provided, That the public body shall not provide to the Secretary of State the public records that were the subject of the FOIA request.



New User FOIA Database Summary

1. Create a FOIA Database account at <https://erls.wvsos.gov/>;
2. Wait for email confirmation
3. In the confirmation email, click the link to finalize the account
4. Login to the database, complete and upload the FOIA Database Access Form in the database;
5. Wait for authorization email; and
6. Enter FOIA information into Database.

Accessing the FOIA Database



There are 2 ways to access the FOIA Database:

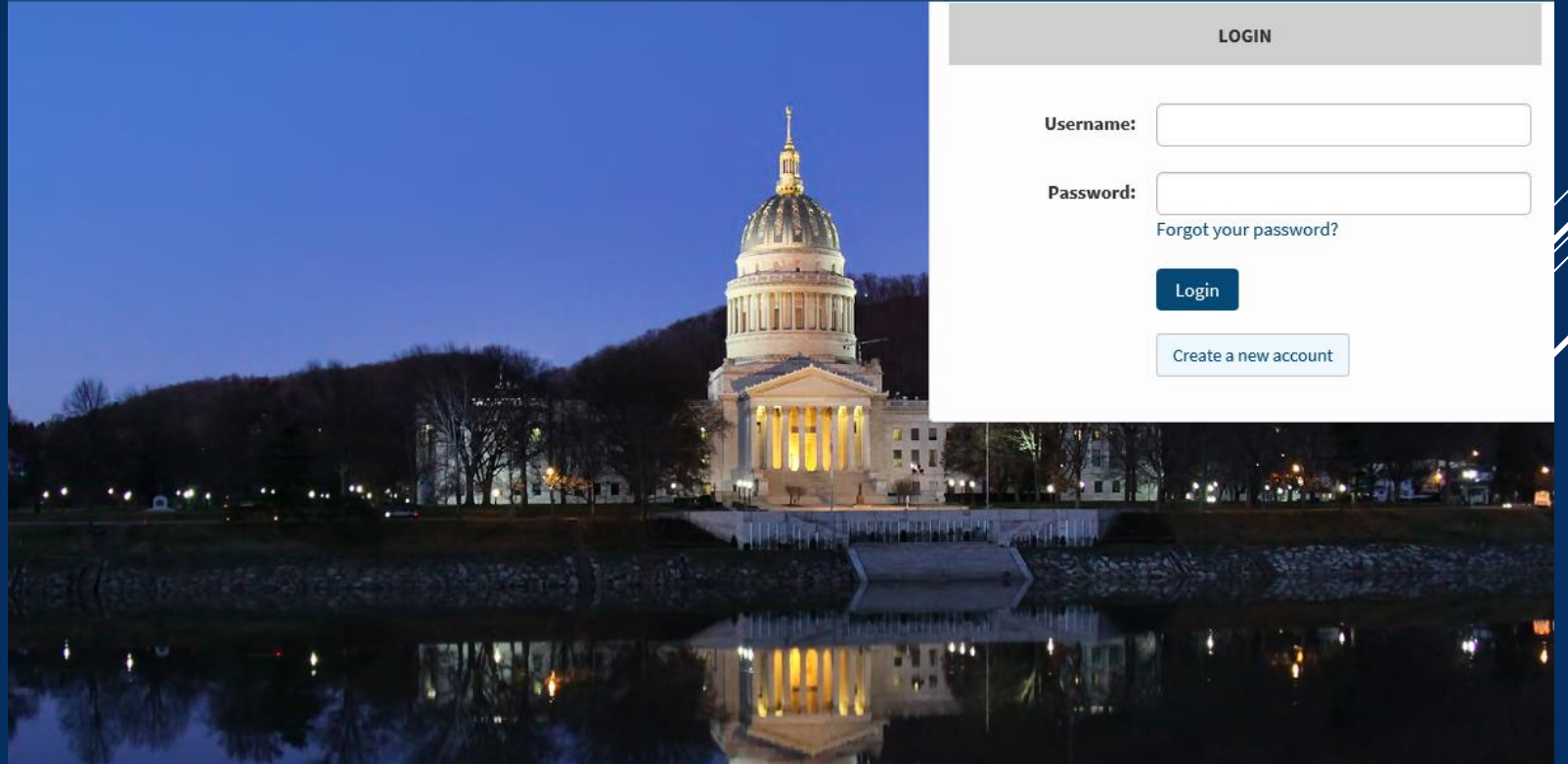
1. sos.wv.gov; or
2. erls.wvsos.gov

erls.wvsos.gov



West Virginia Secretary of State Enterprise Registration & Licensing System

[Search Charitable Organizations](#) [Search Notary Public](#) [Search Trademark/Service Mark](#) [Search Licensees](#) [Search FOIA Database](#) [Document Validation](#)



Go to <https://erls.wvsos.gov/>

erls.wvsos.gov




Click "Create a new account"

A screenshot of the West Virginia Enterprise Registration & Licensing System (erls.wvsos.gov) login page. The page features a dark blue header with the West Virginia Secretary of State logo and the text "West Virginia Secretary of State Enterprise Registration & Licensing System". Below the header is a navigation bar with links for "Search Charitable Organizations", "Search Notary Public", "Search Trademark/Service Mark", "Search Licensees", "Search FOIA Database", and "Document Validation". The main content area is divided into two sections: a large image of the West Virginia State Capitol building at night on the left, and a white login form on the right. The login form has a "LOGIN" title and contains fields for "Username" (with the value "dkersey") and "Password" (with masked characters). Below the password field is a link for "Forgot your password?". At the bottom of the form are two buttons: a blue "Login" button and a white "Create a new account" button. A red arrow points from the text "Click 'Create a new account'" to the "Create a new account" button.

Creating a FOIA Database Account




Enter required information,
then click "Submit"

 **West Virginia Secretary of State Enterprise Registration & Licensing System**

[Search Charitable Organizations](#) [Search Notary Public](#) [Search Trademark/Service Mark](#) [Search Licensees](#) [Search FOIA Database](#) [Document Validation](#)

- Must be at least 7 characters in length
- Must contain a combination of letters and numbers
- Must contain one or more numeric characters (0-9)
- Must contain one or more special characters

First Name: *	<input type="text" value="Deak"/>	Middle Name:	<input type="text"/>
Last Name: *	<input type="text" value="Kersey"/>	Phone Number: *	<input type="text" value="304-558-6000"/>
Email Address: *	<input type="text" value="dkersey@wvsos.gov"/>	Address Line 2:	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 1: *	<input type="text" value="State Capitol, Bldg. 1, Ste. 157-K"/>	ZipCode: *	<input type="text" value="25305"/>
Country: *	<input type="text" value="United States"/>	State: *	<input type="text" value="West Virginia"/>
City: *	<input type="text" value="Charleston"/>		
Username: *	<input type="text" value="dkersey"/>		
Password: *	<input type="password" value="....."/>		
Confirm New Password: *	<input type="password" value="....."/>		



[Back to Login](#)

Request Admin FOIA Permissions



Once logged into the FOIA Database, click "FOIA Requests" tab, then click "Request Admin FOIA Permissions"

The screenshot shows the web application interface for the FOIA Database. The browser address bar displays the URL <https://erls.wvsos.gov/OnlineDashboard/Index>. The navigation menu includes "Dashboard", "Search", "Notary Public", "Trademark/Service Mark", "Charities", "Licensing", "Apostilles/ Authentications", "FOIA Requests", and "FAQs". The "FOIA Requests" menu is expanded, showing a link to "Request Admin FOIA Permissions". A red arrow points from the text above to this link. The main content area is divided into two sections: "IN PROGRESS FILINGS" and "INBOX".

IN PROGRESS FILINGS

Filing Category:

Date	Type	Filing Type	Status	Actions
------	------	-------------	--------	---------

INBOX

Correspondence: 0 Receipts: 0 Cart: 0

Request Admin FOIA Permissions



Enter public body information, then click "Next"

IMPORTANT NOTE: the "Business/Organization/Entity Name" must be your public body's name or official abbreviation

Example:

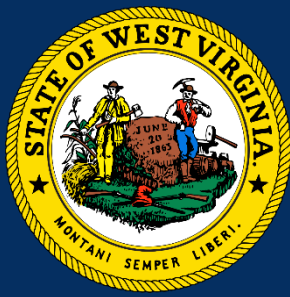
"Secretary of State" or "WVSOS"

The screenshot shows the 'ONLINE FILINGS' interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with options: Dashboard, Search, Notary Public, Trademark/Service Mark, Charities, Licensing, Apostilles/ Authentications, FOIA Requests, and FAQs. A 'LOGOUT' link is in the top right. Below the menu is a progress bar with four steps: 1. Organization Information (active), 2. Supporting Documentation, 3. Review, and 4. Done. The main content area shows 'Category Type: FOIA' and 'Transaction Type: Admin Access Request' with a 'Fee: N/A'. The 'ORGANIZATION INFORMATION' section contains the following fields:

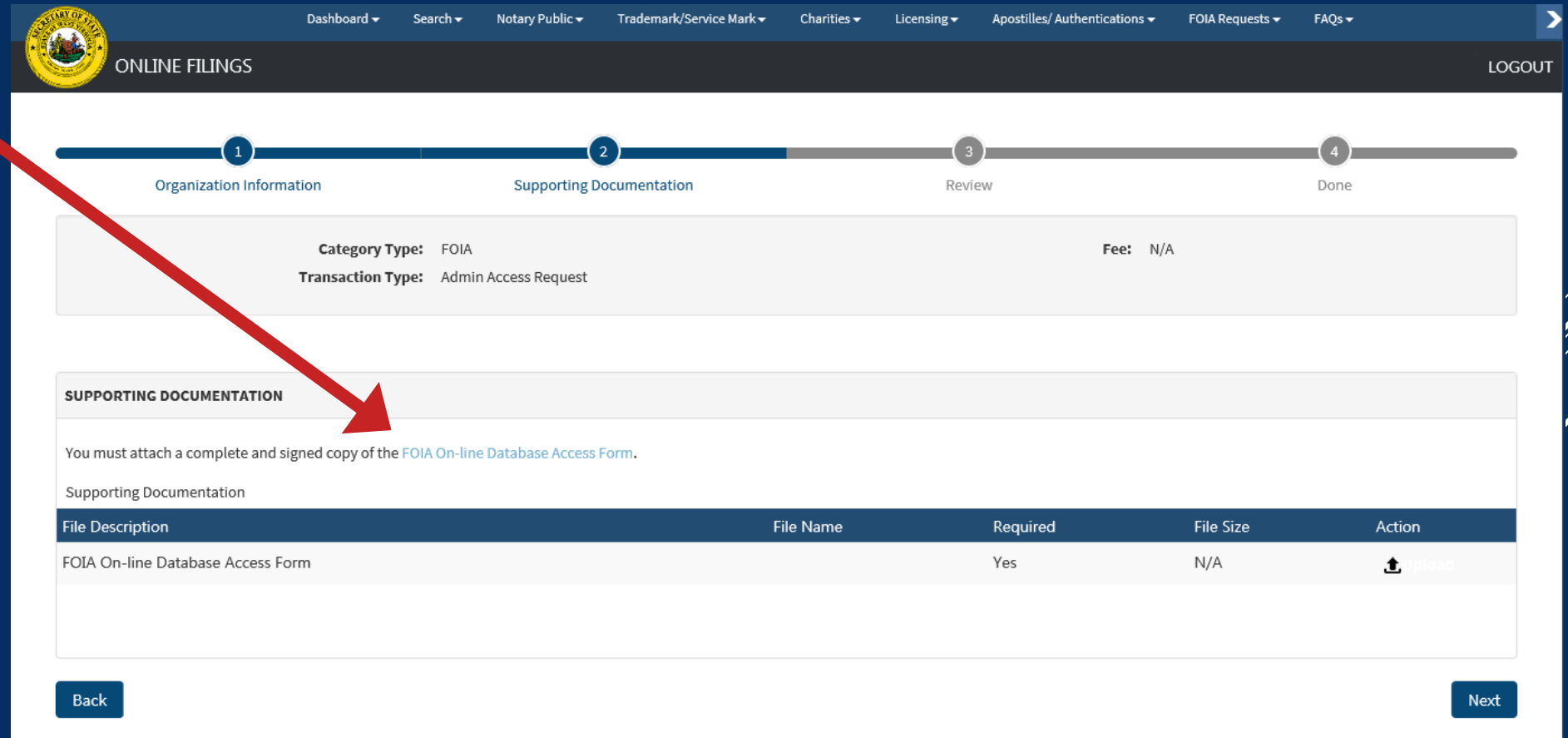
Online Account User ID:	FOIAtest	Business/Organization/Entity Name:	Secretary of State
Address 1:	State Capitol, Bldg. 1, Ste. 157-K	Address 2:	
Country:	USA	Zip/Postal Code:	25305
City:	Charleston	State:	WV

A red arrow points from the 'IMPORTANT NOTE' text to the 'Business/Organization/Entity Name' field. Another red arrow points from the bottom right of the form to a blue 'Next' button.

FOIA Database Access Form



Next, click the link to download the "FOIA Database Access Form"



The screenshot shows the "ONLINE FILINGS" interface for the State of West Virginia. The navigation bar includes links for Dashboard, Search, Notary Public, Trademark/Service Mark, Charities, Licensing, Apostilles/ Authentications, FOIA Requests, and FAQs. The main content area displays a progress bar with four steps: 1. Organization Information, 2. Supporting Documentation, 3. Review, and 4. Done. Below the progress bar, the "Category Type" is set to "FOIA" and the "Transaction Type" is "Admin Access Request". The "Fee" is listed as "N/A". The "SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION" section contains the instruction: "You must attach a complete and signed copy of the [FOIA On-line Database Access Form](#)." Below this is a table with the following data:

File Description	File Name	Required	File Size	Action
FOIA On-line Database Access Form		Yes	N/A	Upload

At the bottom of the page, there are "Back" and "Next" buttons.

FOIA Database Access Form



Print, complete, and have the proper individuals sign the paper form

Once completed:

1. Scan and save the form to your computer

2. Click the Upload icon under "Action"

3. Attach the completed form

The screenshot displays the 'ONLINE FILINGS' portal for the State of West Virginia. The interface includes a navigation bar with options like 'Dashboard', 'Search', 'Notary Public', 'Trademark/Service Mark', 'Charities', 'Licensing', 'Apostilles/ Authentications', 'FOIA Requests', and 'FAQs'. The main content area is titled 'ONLINE FILINGS' and shows a form for filing a request. A 'SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION' section is visible, with a table of documents. One document, 'FOIA On-line Database Access Form', is listed. To the right of this document, there is an 'Action' column with an 'Upload' icon. A 'Choose File to Upload' dialog box is open over the form, showing the file 'FOIA_db_Access_Formtest' selected. A red arrow points to the 'Open' button in the dialog. The dialog also shows the file name 'FOIA_db_Access_Formtest' and the file type 'Custom Files (*.avci;*.avcs;*.avi)'. The background form has a 'Back' button at the bottom left and a 'Next' button at the bottom right.

FOIA Database Access Form



A confirmation box will appear if the form is uploaded successfully

Category Type: FOIA Fee: N/A

Transaction Type: Admin Access Request

igned copy of the FOIA On-line Database Access Form.

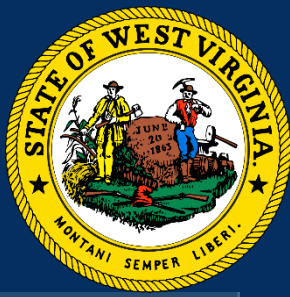
File Name	Required
10162020152543573F	Yes
	No

Alert

⚠ File uploaded Successfully.

OK

FOIA Database Access Form



Confirm the filename, then click "Next"

Dashboard Search Notary Public Trademark/Service Mark Charities Licensing Apostilles/ Authentications FOIA Requests FAQs

SECRETARY OF STATE ONLINE FILINGS LOGOUT




1 Organization Information 2 Supporting Documentation 3 Review 4 Done


Category Type: FOIA Fee: N/A
Transaction Type: Admin Access Request

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

You must attach a complete and signed copy of the FOIA On-line Database Access Form.

Supporting Documentation

File Description	File Name	Required	File Size	Action
FOIA On-line Database Access Form	10162020152543573PM_FOIA_db_Access_Formtest.pdf	Yes	116 KB	 
Additional Documentation		No	N/A	

Back  Next

Admin FOIA Account Request Submission



1 Organization Information 2 Supporting Documentation 3 Review 4 Done

Category Type: FOIA Fee: N/A
Transaction Type: Admin Access Request

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION [EDIT](#)

Online Account User ID: FOIAtest Business/Organization/Entity Name: Secretary of State

Address 1: State Capitol, Bldg. 1, Ste. 157-K Address 2:

Country: USA Zip/Postal Code: 25305


City: Charleston State: WV

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION [EDIT](#)

You must attach a complete and signed copy of the FOIA On-line Database Access Form.

Supporting Documentation

File Description	File Name	Required	File Size
FOIA On-line Database Access Form	10162020152543573PM_FOIA_db_Access_Formtest.pdf	Yes	116 KB
Additional Documentation		No	N/A

[Back](#)  [Submit](#)

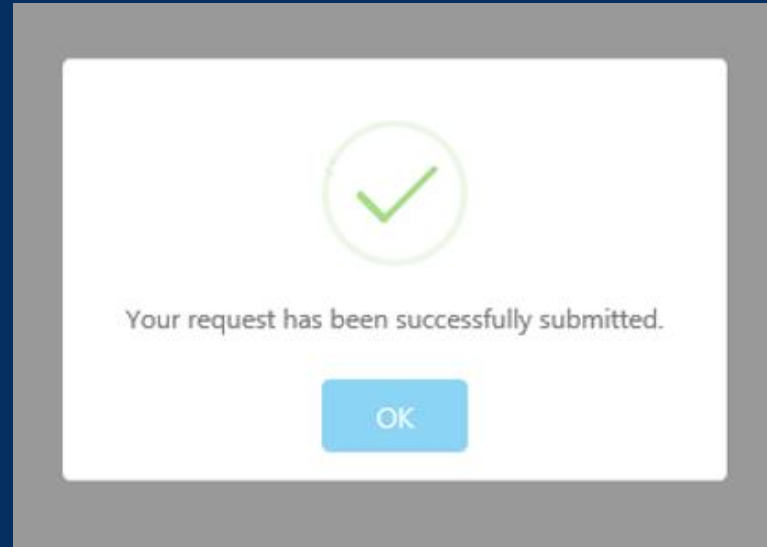
Review the account information, then click "Submit"

If any information is incorrect, click "Back" and edit the information

FOIA Account Request Confirmation

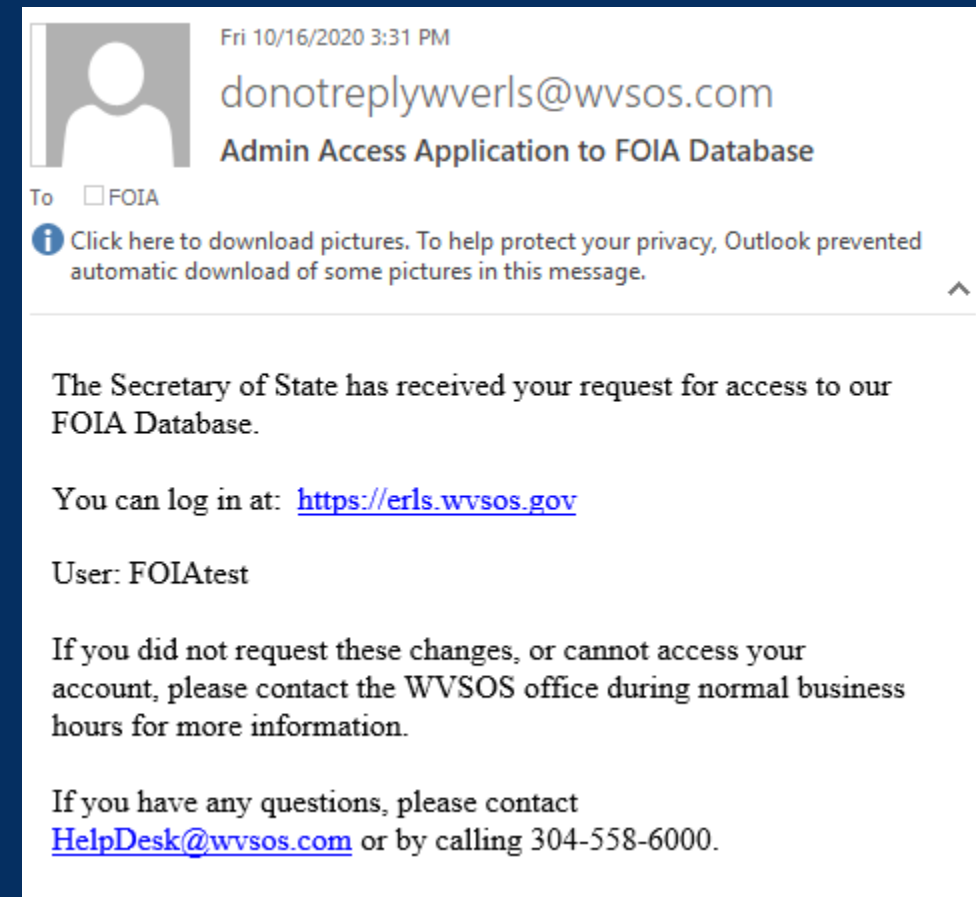


A confirmation box will appear on the database screen, and you will receive a confirmation email for your request



WVSOS will review the account request

Once an account is authorized, a confirmation email will be sent to the User's email address on file

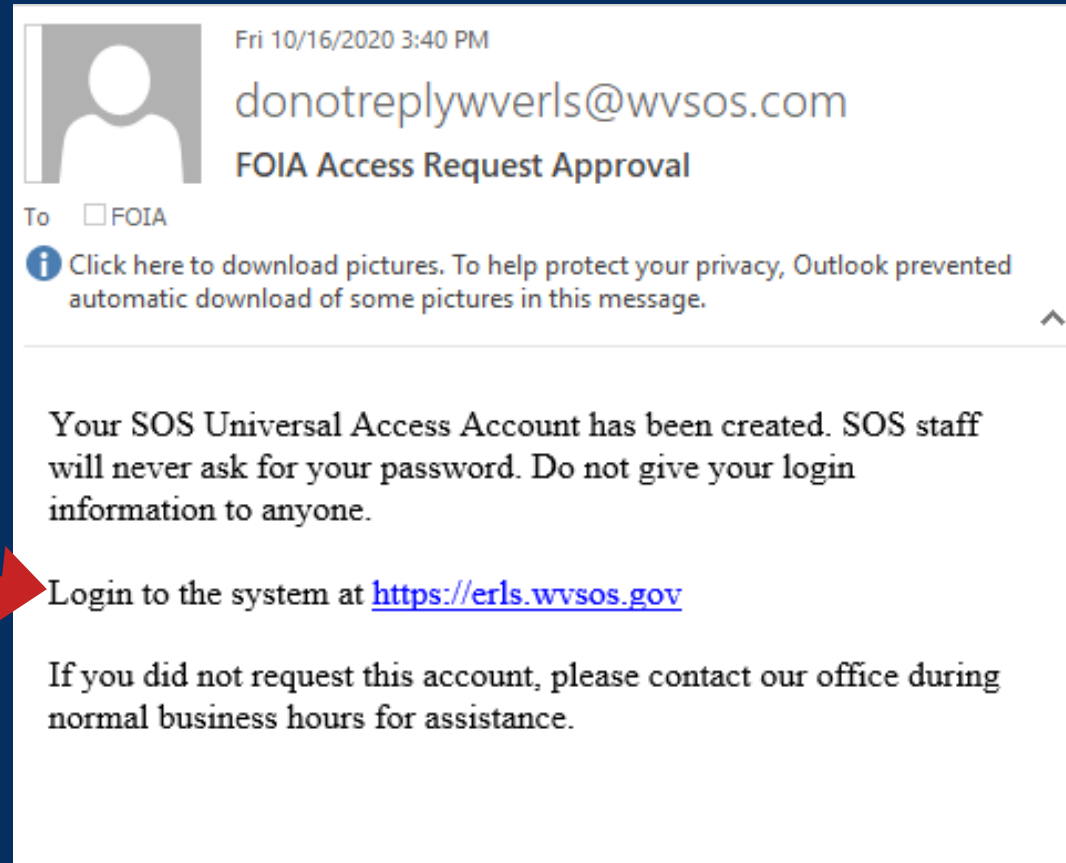


FOIA Account Confirmation Email



An email will be sent to email account associated with your Username

Click the link to login to the system, or type the URL into your internet browser





Login to FOIA Database

Enter your Username and Password, then click "Login"

The screenshot shows the login interface for the West Virginia Secretary of State Enterprise Registration & Licensing System. The page features a dark blue header with the state seal and navigation links. The main content area has a background image of the West Virginia State Capitol building at night. A white login form is overlaid on the right side, containing fields for Username and Password, a "Forgot your password?" link, and "Login" and "Create a new account" buttons. A red arrow points to the "Login" button.

West Virginia Secretary of State Enterprise Registration & Licensing System

[Search Charitable Organizations](#) [Search Notary Public](#) [Search Trademark/Service Mark](#) [Search Licensees](#) [Search FOIA Database](#) [Document Validation](#)

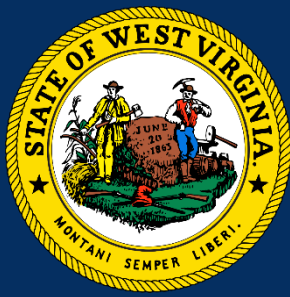
LOGIN

Username:

Password:

[Forgot your password?](#)

Enter Information into FOIA Database



Click "FOIA Requests" tab, then click "Add New Entry"

A screenshot of the FOIA database interface. The top navigation bar includes "Dashboard", "Search", "Notary Public", "Trademark/Service Mark", "Charities", "Licensing", "Apostilles/ Authentications", "FOIA Requests", and "FAQs". The "FOIA Requests" tab is selected, and a red arrow points to the "Add New Entry" button in the dropdown menu. Below the navigation bar is a "MY DASHBOARD" section with a "Filing Category:" dropdown menu. To the right is an "INBOX" section with icons for "Correspondence: 0", "Receipts: 0", and "Cart: 0".

Dashboard ▾ Search ▾ Notary Public ▾ Trademark/Service Mark ▾ Charities ▾ Licensing ▾ Apostilles/ Authentications ▾ **FOIA Requests ▾** FAQs ▾

MY DASHBOARD LOGOUT

IN PROGRESS FILINGS

Filing Category:

Date	Type	Filing Type	Status	Actions
------	------	-------------	--------	---------

INBOX

Correspondence: 0 Receipts: 0 Cart: 0

Enter Information into FOIA Database



Enter required information into the blank fields, then click "Save"

AGENCY INFORMATION

Agency: *i*

REQUESTOR INFORMATION

First Name: *i*

Middle Name: *i*

Last Name: *i*

Organization: *i*

REQUEST ITEMS

Subject: *i*

Details of Request: *i*

Resolution: *i*


Reason for Denial or Exemption: *i*

REQUEST DETAILS

Request Date: *i*

Completion Date: *i*

Fee: *i*



Enter Information into FOIA Database



Review the completed entry

Click "Edit" to correct information

Click "Create New" to create another entry

Click "Back to Dashboard" to return to the FOIA admin homepage

FOIA ENTRY DETAILS

Agency: Secretary of State
Organization: Williams Law Firm PLLC
First Name: Dominique
Middle Name:
Last Name: Williams
Request Date: 10/01/2020
Completion Date: 10/08/2020
Entry Date: 10/16/2020
Fee: \$0.00

Request Items

Subject Employee Payroll
Details Request for payroll records of employee Hans Freund from Jan 1, 2020 - present.
Resolution Granted in part
Response Personal information redacted pursuant to W. Va. Code 29B-1-4(a)(2).

[Back to Dashboard](#) [Edit](#) [+ Create New](#)

WEST VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE

RESOURCES:

FOIA Database Technical Help: email FOIA@wvsos.com

FOIA Legal Advice: consult in-house counsel or refer to the
WV Attorney General FOIA Handbook at:
<http://ago.wv.gov/Documents/FOIA%20Handbook%20PDF.pdf>

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