FOIAXpress

OPEXUS

PAL Reading Room Instructions

v11.3.0

August 2023

FX 11.3.0 PAL Reading Room Instructions

Notice of Rights

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Additional Notice

Contents

1 PAL Reading Room

The PAL Reading Room provides a repository where records designated for release to the public are stored in the appropriate format and are available for review and download. FX allows for information to be posted to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) PAL Reading Room on a scheduled basis or on-demand, so the public has access to review or download records posted for public inspection/release.

The PAL Reading Room is updated based on the frequency of the requests received by the agency, and it can include the following information:

- Final opinions and orders made in adjudicating cases.
- Frequently requested records. Agencies are required to post records that have received three or more requests for the same information. Agencies are then required to proactively post such records for public inspection.
- Final statements of policy and interpretations that have not been published in the Federal Register.
- Administrative staff manuals and instructions to staff that affect a member of the public.
- Copies of records that have been the subject of a FOIA request that are of sufficient public interest or curiosity that the agency believes other persons are likely to request them.
- Your agency's annual FOIA report, which includes:
    - The number of requests received by the agency.
    - The amount of time taken to process requests.
    - The total fee amount collected by the agency.
    - FOIA Logs regarding pending or backlog requests.
    - Other information about the agency's handling of FOIA requests.

Additionally, other documents may also be available in the FOIA PAL Reading Room. Any user that has access to the PAL Reading Room can view or download any document(s) in the FOIA PAL Reading Room.

2 Reading Room Notes and Tips

The following subsections offer items of note and tips for using the application.

2.1 Notes

The bullets below relate to searching and viewing documents in the PAL Reading Room:

- All file cabinets are selected by default. Make sure to only select the desired file cabinet before searching by clicking only the desired checkboxes.
- Refine your search by entering search criteria in the available search fields.
- By default, the *Document Name* field contains an asterisk. The asterisk causes the system to retrieve all documents based on the search criteria.
- Searching using the *Content Search* field provides more precise search results.
- When you enter a word or phrase in the *Content Search* field, the system searches the content of all documents for matches.
- When you enter a word or phrase in the *Document Name* field, the system searches the name of all documents for matches.
- Click **Clear** to remove all information entered in the search fields.

2.2 Tips

The bullets below provide some basic rules for formulating queries:

- You can type text in upper or lowercase.
- You can search for any combination of letters (a-z) and numbers (0-9).
- Symbols such as / \ @ " ' + ^ # : . are ignored during a search.
- To search for a complete phrase, use quotation marks. For example, the query "administrative appeal" returns documents exclusively containing the phrase administrative appeal. Typing the phrase without the quotes returns documents containing the separate words.
- To search using part of a word or phrase, use the asterisk to represent the missing characters. For example, if you are searching for the document titled "Texas - Natural Resources" but don't recall the word "Natural", type "Texas*resources" as the document name. The system will retrieve all documents containing the word 'Texas' and "resources" in the name.

(!!) Note: Do not use the pipe (|), ampersand (&), or exclamation point (!) as wild card expressions.

2.3 Using Boolean Operators

You can use Boolean Operators within the FX Search. Boolean operators function as follows:

- The AND & OR operators refine your search by creating a relationship between search terms.
- The AND operator locates documents containing all words in any order. For example, reading AND room returns documents with both "reading" and "room" anywhere in the documents.
- The OR operator locates documents containing either of the two words. For example, reading OR room will fetch documents that contain either the word "reading" or the word "room".

3   Searching and Viewing Documents

Before you begin, ensure you have read the *Reading Room Notes and Tips* subsection of this manual for notes and guidance when searching the reading room for documents. You can also click the **Search Tips** button in the *Search for Documents in Reading Room* page to view document search tips. Follow the steps below to search for and view documents in the FOIA PAL Reading Room:

1. Login to the *PAL Configuration* site. Within the menu panel, click **Reading Room Documents**.
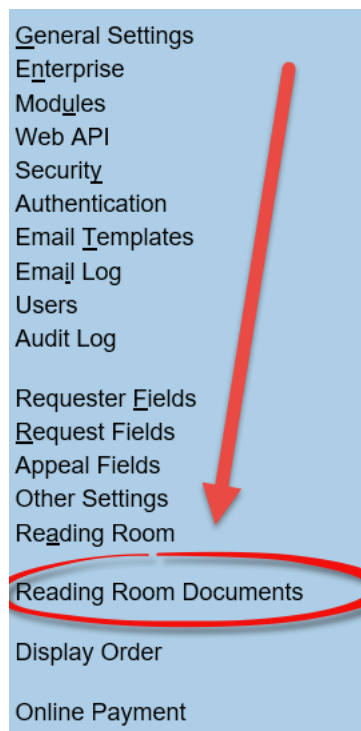
2. The *Search for Documents in Reading Room* page appears. Select the **check box** adjacent the reading room file cabinet you want to search.

(!!) Note: Click the checkbox in the header row to select all reading room file cabinets.

3. Enter the **Folder Name** to search for in the field.

(!!) Note: The Folder Name is the specific name of the folder inside which you want to search.

4. Enter the desired **search terms** in the *Content Search* field.

5. To search for documents published within a specific **date range**, use the *Published Date* pickers to select the desired date range.

6. After configuring the desired search terms, click **Search**. The page refreshes and the *Reading Room Search Results* page appears as shown below.

Reading Room Documents

	Folder Name ▾	Reading Room File Cabinet	Published Date	Expiration Date	# Pages	Format	Added From	Popular Document?
☐	The title of this document can contain up to 100 characters including spaces	Annual Reports	09/26/2018	-	32	📄	PAL Config	Yes
☐	Test Reading Room Post	FOIA Requests	10/07/2021	-	32	📄	FOIAXpress	No
☐	Test Folder 8-25-17	FOIA Requests	10/07/2021	-	32	📄	FOIAXpress	No
☐	Test Folder	Annual Reports	10/07/2021	-	28	📄	FOIAXpress	No
☐	Tagged Attachments	FOIA Requests	10/07/2021	-	957	📄	FOIAXpress	Yes
☐	Report Manual	Policies & Manuals	10/07/2021	-	32	📄	FOIAXpress	No

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[New] [Edit] [Delete] [Back]

* Note: If selection boxes are grayed out it is because the documents were published from FOIAXpress and must be edited from that application.

7. To download a document, click the desired document **icon** in the *Format* column. The system begins the file download immediately.

(!!) Note: Click the Yes/No links in the *Popular Document* column to view information regarding how frequently users have viewed the document.

8. After reviewing the search results, click **Back** to return to the *Search for Documents in Reading Room* page.