

PIA Tips for Requestors & MD Agencies

Our advice for **MAKING OR RESPONDING TO A PIA REQUEST**:

Requestors

Keep it Simple & Specific

Do's:

- Make requests simple and straight forward.
- Make requests specific and precise.
- Treat people as you want to be treated. Always be polite and respectful.
- Identify your request as a PIA request. Follow agency procedures for submitting PIA requests.

Don'ts:

- Do **not** make complicated or convoluted requests.
- Do **not** use vague and imprecise language in your request.
- Do **not** be inconsiderate or antagonistic.
- Do **not** submit stealth requests. Do not embed a PIA request in your other correspondence.

With these guidelines in mind, requestors and agencies can simplify the PIA process and avoid unnecessary conflict. If you have issues or problems, **we are here to help**. You can ask for Ombudsman assistance by email at pia.ombuds@oag.state.md.us, or by calling 410-576-6560.

Agencies

Communicate & Follow Through

Do's:

- Communicate with the requestor. When in doubt, **ask**.
- Calculate actual costs to estimate fees and explain the basis for the estimate to the requestor.
- Treat people as you want to be treated. Always be polite and respectful.

Don'ts:

- Do **not** ignore requests that are submitted outside of your standard procedures. A PIA request does **not** have to say "MPIA Request" to be one; a PIA request does **not** have to be submitted via designated agency forms or portals to be one.
- Do **not** ignore or deny fee waiver requests without consideration. "Indigence" can be a basis for waiver of fees to individuals.
- Do **not** be inconsiderate or antagonistic. Do **not** wait until the 30th day to respond to PIA requests.

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