FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION
2016 Open Government Plan
September 15, 2016

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) presents its 2016 Open Government Plan pursuant to the July 14, 2016, memorandum (2016 Open Plan Guidance) from Tony Scott, U.S. Chief Information Officer. The FTC's Plan furthers the actions it took relating to the issuance of the Office of Management and Budget's 2009 Open Government Directive to incorporate the principles of transparency, participation, and collaboration set forth in the President's January 21, 2009 Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government. The FTC's Open Government page may be found at www.ftc.gov/open.

We solicit your input and feedback as we work to improve our transparency, participation and collaboration with this Plan. Please send any comments or suggestions to opengov@ftc.gov.

The FTC created its 2016 Open Government Plan in collaboration with senior policy, legal, and technical leadership within the FTC as well as through conversations with key stakeholders and the general public.

I.   Introduction

The FTC is committed to continuing to improve its transparency and integrate a presumption of openness into our mission. The FTC posts: consumer information; business guidance; economic reports analysis; press releases; information about workshops, events, speeches; FOIA responses; and a wide range of other information. The FTC also places a large volume of records relating to both its enforcement and policy mandates on its public website, www.ftc.gov. This includes, among other things, public versions of adjudicative decisions and pleadings, and rulemaking materials.

II.   Overview of Achievements from 2014 Open Government Plan

Improved Web Outreach

The FTC has long taken steps to improve its web communications and outreach based on research, analysis, usability testing, and stakeholder input. Our goal is to enable site visitors to complete their tasks and find information easily. Since its last Open Government Plan in 2014, the FTC has made the following improvements:
- Redesigned FTC.gov home page (English and Spanish) to focus on customer-driven "top tasks," enabling customers to find their top task in one click;
- Modified site search to push the most relevant result ("best bet") to the top of the search results page, helping customers find the best result more quickly;
- Integrated Commissioners' daily schedules into the agency's public event calendar on the web;
- Created an alphabetical set of Commission Rule pages;
- Removed the word limit for, and added summaries to, the Advocacy Filings page;

- Improved econsumer.gov, a website for international consumer complaints run in partnership with 33 countries. The updated site is mobile-friendly and available in eight languages — English, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Spanish and Russian;
- Consolidated content of OnGuardOnline.gov with Consumer.ftc.gov and AlertaenLinea.gov with Consumidor.ftc.gov, and consolidated Business.ftc.gov with FTC.gov to simplify customer experience;
- Redesigned and launched Bulkorder.ftc.gov with improved usability: site updates when new items are available; improved filter gives users multiple fields to sort to find items; customers can request an email alert when an item is in stock (a response to customer feedback); and
- Linked the Commission's approximately 85 Rules and Guides, (16 CFR Part 0 - Part 901) on the FTC's website, starting with the FTC's Rules of Organization, Procedure, and Practice, followed by the Rules and Guides in alphabetical order. (The FTC's Statute, Rules and Formal Interpretation for its premerger notification program are separately linked.) Each Rule and Guide has a separate page containing a link to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations (ECFR) version of the Rule or Guide. Because the U.S. Government Publishing Office continuously updates the ECFR, each page always provides the viewer with the current official version of the particular Rule or Guide.

As part of the FTC's web outreach we have also created IdentityTheft.gov (and its Spanish counterpart RoboDeIdentidad.gov). It is the FTC's answer to an executive order issued by President Obama in October 2014 directing federal agencies to create a consolidated site with essential information for consumers, including information about identity theft. The FTC launched the initial version of IdentityTheft.gov in May 2015 with checklists for consumers based on certain types of identity theft. The new one-stop website is integrated with the FTC's consumer complaint system, allowing consumers who are victims of identity theft to rapidly file a complaint with the FTC and then get a personalized guide to recovery that helps streamline many of the steps involved. Consumers can use the site to manage and store their progress in the remediation process.

Later in 2015 and 2016, we launched significant enhancements to both Identity Theft sites to make it easier for consumers to report identity theft and take steps to remedy it. For the first time, identity theft victims could go online and get a free, personalized identity theft recovery plan. The upgraded site, which is mobile and tablet accessible, offers an array of easy-to-use tools that enable identity theft victims to create the documents they need to alert police, the main credit bureaus, the IRS, and others.

III. New and Expanded Initiatives

A. Open Data

The FTC works to provide easy public access to our datasets. Individuals across the Bureaus and Offices meet regularly to identify whether new datasets have been created that should be posted or whether an existing dataset not previously identified for posting should be posted. The FTC updates existing database information on a quarterly basis and if new datasets have been

identified for posting, those datasets are also loaded onto our website. In addition to meeting with key stakeholders as to what data they would like to see posted on the FTC website, the FTC also has an email address for the public to provide us with comments and suggestions. These practices help the FTC build on our past successes to ensure greater openness and transparency in the coming years.

The FTC's datasets are populated with information from Bureau of Competition and Bureau of Consumer Protection matters. These datasets consist of non-merger enforcement actions, merger enforcement actions, and civil penalties actions beginning in fiscal year 1996. Other posted datasets include information on merger filings received on a monthly basis under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act, fiscal year data on second requests issued as well as data on requests for early terminations and the outcome of those requests.

In addition, the FTC maintains the Consumer Sentinel Network. It is a secure online database holding millions of consumer complaints of alleged illegal business conduct concerning issues such as identity theft; Do-Not-Call Registry violations; and financial, telemarketing, business opportunity, and health care scams. Consumer Sentinel Network datasets, ranging from 2008 to 2015, are available to the public in a spreadsheet format. Other datasets include the Do-Not-Call Registry and product service codes for the Consumer Sentinel Network.

B. Proactive Disclosures

The Federal Trade Commission's mission strives to prevent business practices that are anticompetitive, deceptive or unfair to consumers; to enhance the choices of informed consumers and the understanding of the competitive process; and to accomplish this mission without unduly burdening legitimate business activity. The Agency's Public Affairs Office keeps the public informed of FTC activities and the Agency's educational resources through press releases, press conferences, new media outlets, and periodic town halls.

The Commission has brought numerous adjudicative (Part 3) proceedings against companies. In an effort to increase the public's awareness of the Commission's litigation activities, and as required by Federal law, the Commission posts its adjudicative records to its public website In addition, the FTC places a large volume of records relating to both its enforcement and policy mandates on its public website, including, as noted above, all adjudicative decisions as well as rulemaking materials and comments, workshop information, speeches, and a wide range of other documents.

The FTC has made and continues to make agency records available for public inspection by posting certain additional FTC records in its online FOIA reading room. Records in this FTC reading room include, among other items, recent FTC policy statements, Frequently Requested FOIA records, Hot Topics, FOIA annual report, Chief FOIA Officer report, FTC's FOIA Handbook, Track Your FOIA Request, and FTC Rules, as noted earlier.

C. Upcoming Public Involvement

As part of its mission, the FTC regularly holds public events designed to bring together broad expertise to enhance public understanding of key issues. For example, in 2016, the Federal Trade

Commission will host a Fall Technology Series to examine three new and evolving technologies that are raising critical consumer protection issues. The Fall seminars comprise three events that will explore ransomware, drones, and smart TVs. This series will gather input from academics, business and industry representatives, government experts, and consumer advocates for three-hour discussion sessions, which will take place in Washington, D.C., and will be open to the public. The FTC invites comment from the public on the events.

IV. Ongoing Initiatives

A. Privacy

The FTC continues to comply with existing OMB guidance and other Federal requirements for providing the public with notice and information about its privacy program and privacy compliance documentation. The FTC provides the public with access to information regarding its privacy program in a number of ways. First, the FTC's privacy policy page includes detailed information about the personal information collected by the FTC and how that information is handled and shared. In addition, the FTC provides links to publicly available documents pertaining to privacy, including Privacy Act systems of records notices (SORNs), privacy impact assessments (PIAs), required privacy compliance reports, and privacy regulations. The FTC also provides instructions to members of the public for requesting access to and amendment of Privacy Act records. In 2016, the FTC updated its privacy policy page to provide additional information and links to privacy-related guidance, including more information about making a request under the Privacy Act and a direct link to the request form. The FTC also provides contact information for the Senior Agency Official for Privacy (SAOP) to answer questions from members of the public about the FTC's information handling practices. The URL of the FTC web page(s) where this information is made available to the public is https://www.ftc.gov/site-information/privacy-policy, which includes links to the relevant material. See also FTC Rule 4.13, 16 C.F.R. 4.13 (FTC Privacy Act regulations), http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=cebfb9f5aac2719db4bd56be9ebc87df&mc=true&node=se16.1.4_113&rgn=div8.

B. Whistleblower Protection

Consistent with 5 U.S.C. 2302(c), which requires that agency employees be informed of their rights and remedies under applicable Federal civil service and whistleblower laws, the FTC sent its Registration Form for 2302(c) certification to the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) on April 8, 2016, and the OSC lists the FTC registered as of April 16, 2016.

As part of the FTC's compliance with the certification program, the FTC engages in the following activities:
- posts Informational Posters about Whistleblower protections, retaliation, and Prohibited Personnel Practices (PPPs) at the elevators and throughout its buildings;
- sends an annual notice via email to all employees on Whistleblower Protection and PPPs that includes links to information on the OSC website, (Your Rights as a Federal Employee, Know Your Rights When Reporting Wrongs, The Role of the U.S. Office of Special Counsel);

- includes, within the FTC's onboarding orientation materials, information about PPPs, the Merit System Principles, and the rights of employees under the Whistleblower Protection Act;
- mandates No Fear Act Training for all employees; and
- provides, on a three year cycle, our supervisors and managers interactive training on the 13 PPPs and whistleblower rights.

The FTC's Office of Inspector General provides Whistleblower Protection guidance and information on its web page. This describes and defines protections for whistleblowers, retaliation, protected disclosures, where whistleblower complaints should be made, and provides a link to OSC's website.

C. Website

In 2016, the FTC formed a new Digital Communications team in its Office of Public Affairs (OPA). This team will collaborate with internal stakeholders and lead the development of a Digital Communications Strategy and an agency-wide focus on the customer experience and customer top tasks. This effort encompasses all public-facing web properties, and includes developing a roadmap for continual assessment of web property performance and customer satisfaction to make iterative improvements, create efficiencies, and share information about digital communications best practices across the agency.

The FTC will solicit input from critical stakeholders and customers (e.g., consumers, legal practitioners, legislative staff, media, academics) in a structured fashion to gather insights about how the agency can improve its digital communications, outreach and the customer experience. The agency anticipates that in 2017 it will conduct the first major usability study of its website since it was redesigned in 2013 to identify issues, gaps, and opportunities for improvement.

Over the next two years, the agency will explore creating APIs to enable the sharing of critical data and content such as early terminations (part of the HSR merger review process).

The agency has begun work to make the following short-term improvements to its web communications:
- Assess the performance of site search and take steps to improve its effectiveness
- Rebuild its Military Consumer website with more articles, links to resources, and a revised site navigation focused on life events.
- Rebuild its Registered Identification Number (RN) Database website – containing RNs which companies use for labeling products under the Textile, Wool, and /or Fur Acts – for textile producers to make the site more user and mobile friendly.

The link to the agency's digital strategy is www.ftc.gov/digitalstrategy.

D. Open Innovation Methods

The FTC led four public challenges through the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Protect Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Reauthorization Act of 2010 (America COMPETES Act) to help tackle the unlawful robocalls that plague consumers.

In 2012-2013, the FTC conducted its first challenge — the FTC Robocall Challenge — and called upon the public to develop a consumer-facing solution that blocks illegal robocalls, applies to landlines and mobile phones, and operates on proprietary and non-proprietary platforms. In response, we received 798 submissions and partnered with experts in the field to judge the entries. One of the winners, "NomoRobo," was on the market and available to consumers by October 2013 — just 6 months after being named one of the winners. To date, NomoRobo reports blocking over 118,305,772 calls and is currently rolling out a mobile platform.

The following year at DEF CON 22, the FTC launched its second challenge — Zapping Rachel — which called upon information security experts to help create a robust robocall honeypot. A robocall honeypot is an information system designed to attract robocallers and help investigators and academics understand and combat illegal calls. The contest consisted of three separate phases in which participants were challenged to (1) build a robocall honeypot; (2) attack and find honeypot vulnerabilities; and (3) analyze honeypot data. Sixty teams and individuals signed up for one or more phases and FTC staff obtained new insights that improved current robocall honeypot designs and connected new partners and stakeholders. Open sourced solutions from the first and third phases were made available to the public.

As part of the National Day of Civic Hacking on June 6, 2015, the FTC sponsored its third challenge, DectectaRobo, in which it called upon the public to analyze call data to create algorithms that could predict which calls were likely robocalls. Nineteen teams from all over the U.S. participated.

Later in 2015, the FTC returned to DEF CON23 to challenge information security experts to create tools people could use to block and forward robocalls automatically to a honeypot—the Robocalls: Humanity Strikes Back challenge. DEF CON contestants built and submitted robocall solutions to the judges and finalists then competed to "seed" their solutions and collect the highest number of robocalls. Finalists also demonstrated their solutions to DEF CON 23 attendees. The winning mobile app, RoboKiller, allows users to block and forward unwanted robocalls to a crowd-sourced honeypot.

E. Open Source Software

The FTC relies on the Drupal content management system framework – a free open source solution – to manage the content of FTC informational public web properties that do not contain sensitive personally identifiable information. These include FTC.gov (English and Spanish), Consumer Center, Business Center, Free Publications online store, a military consumer website, Spanish versions of websites, and blogs. The agency's informational web properties rely on Solr, an open source enterprise search platform, to power their search engines.

F. Spending Information

The FTC has updated its Open Government page to link to the FTC Performance page, which contains updated information about the FTC's Performance Snapshots, Strategic Plans, Agency Financial Reports, Summaries of Performance and Financial Information, Performance Plans and Reports, and the FTC's historical Performance and Accountability Reports.

Contractors conducting business with the FTC are registered in SAM.gov prior to contract award. Generally, members of the public can search SAM.gov to learn more about active and inactive vendors who have done business with the government, or who are preparing to do business with the government, including the FTC.

Contracts awarded at the FTC are reported via the Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation (FPDS-NG) with the appropriate contract values. The system data is cross-referenced with SAM.gov and DUNS information for verification. Data in the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) is made available to the public via a single, searchable website: USAspending.gov.

Under the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA ACT) and pursuant to OMB Memorandum M-15-12, Increasing Transparency of Federal Spending by Making Federal Spending Data Accessible, Searchable, and Reliable, the FTC submitted a DATA Act implementation plan to OMB, to ensure that FTC data subject to the Act are reported in consistent and widely accessible formats.

G. Participation in Transparency Initiatives

Grants.gov: The FTC does not participate in Grants.Gov because we do not award grants.

CFDA.gov: The FTC does not award or administer grants or federal domestic "assistance" for the purpose of "public support or stimulation." (See "assistance" as defined in the CFDA legislation (31 U.S.C. 6101(3)), which also expressly excludes "conventional public information services" provided by an agency.) Nonetheless, the FTC participates in the CFDA program and is listed in the CFDA website catalogue as providing "Advisory Services and Counseling" and "Investigation of Complaints," to the limited extent the FTC makes compliance guides and consumer information available free of charge to businesses and consumers, and is authorized to open law enforcement investigations of complaints filed by consumers, businesses, and other entities (e.g., advocacy groups), as appropriate.

IT Dashboard: The FTC is not among the agencies required to submit data from any Exhibit 53 or 300 for the public IT Dashboard.

eRulemaking: The FTC participates in the eRulemaking initiative, as part of eGov, through its interagency agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency, the lead partner in the initiative. FTC Federal Register Notices seeking public comment in FTC proceedings, such as proposed rules and Commission consent agreements, appear on www.regulations.gov, and the public can submit comments through that site. Most public comments in FTC proceedings are

submitted electronically, providing the public a user-friendly way of participating in these proceedings. Most commenters on FTC proceedings submit comments through web-based forms maintained by a Commission vendor, rather than through www.regulations.gov. The link to the comment form is included in the agency's Federal Register Notices, on all the www.regulations.gov postings of those notices, and on the agency's website. The agency posts the comments on www.ftc.gov for public access.

Data.gov: The FTC maintains and frequently updates its webpage dedicated to the datasets it has made public. When new FTC datasets are uploaded on the FTC site, we also post data on Data.gov.

The FTC's Open Government page requests the public to give us their thoughts on how we can better develop our Open Government Plan, prioritize information, and improve the availability and quality of information. We ask the community to provide feedback to opengov@ftc.gov.

H. Public Notice

1. Media

The Commission continues to publish news releases to the FTC.gov website to inform the public about relevant agency news, resources, and upcoming events including press conferences, press call-ins, proposed and final rulemakings, public comment periods, and workshops. News will initially post to the FTC homepage, and reside indefinitely on the FTC's news pages. News releases also are distributed via email to relevant U.S. media outlets. To highlight major events and news, the FTC may use a banner across the top of its website, or use a slider on the homepage slide show that links to embedded site content for more information. Furthermore, the FTC hosts a public calendar on its website to promote upcoming events including workshops, speeches, hearings, and Commission meetings.

Users can search FTC.gov with a series of topic tags, which are hyperlinked throughout the website to make relevant content easily accessible. The agency is in the process of making further improvements to the search functionality of the website.

To supplement news releases, FTC staff uses social media to promote upcoming events, and engage the public in an open and transparent manner. All official social media accounts are approved and monitored by the agency's Social Media Task Force. Commission staff actively blogs for a variety of audiences to provide simple, plain language information across multiple topics including general consumer protection, competition, technology, computer security, business education, military consumer protection, scam alerts, and National Consumer Protection Day.

Users can subscribe to FTC press releases, blogs, and newsletters via email. This is a service provided at no cost to users. For blogs, users can also subscribe to free RSS feeds.

The FTC also uses Twitter, Facebook, and other social networking sites to share FTC news and resources, promote upcoming events, and more. The Commission maintains official accounts on

Twitter in English and Spanish, and each of the current Commissioners, maintains her own individual Twitter account. When the FTC hosts an interactive Twitter chat or live-tweets a workshop, the agency may publish a press release online, post the upcoming event to its Events Calendar, and/or share the information via email and other official social media channels. When the agency participates in or hosts interactive events, staff creates a chat or workshop transcript for historical reference. This also applies for chats on other official agency sites such as Facebook or reddit.

When feasible, the FTC will live-webcast press conferences and workshops from its offices in Washington, D.C. Archives and transcripts of webcasts are posted to FTC.gov/videos for at least three years. The FTC will provide webcast links to users via a press releases, email notices, and/or via official agency social media channels. During live events, the FTC may take questions from the public via telephone conference. In addition to enhancing the overall look and feel of the FTC website, staff continues to evaluate content throughout the site on a rolling basis to ensure content is fresh and current for maximum transparency.

2. Public Documents

The Commission provides members of the public with extensive information regarding all the public actions it takes or proposes to take, and all the public proceedings and other significant activities it conducts. The FTC's website at www.ftc.gov provides public access to more than 100,000 Commission documents, including in particular:
- Statutes Enforced or Administered by the Commission;
- Rules and Guides;
- Commission and Commission Staff Speeches;
- Commission and Commissioner Public Statements and Letters;
- all the public documents arising from Commission federal court and administrative Cases and Proceedings;
- Press Releases;
- Federal Register Notices;
- Amicus Briefs;
- Advocacy Filings;
- FTC Annual Reports;
- other Commission and Staff Reports;
- International and Interagency Cooperation Agreements;
- Congressional Testimony;
- Policy Statements;
- Advisory Opinions;
- and the Commission Decision Volumes, which contain all the administrative documents issued by the Commission since 1915.

Finally, the Commission Actions page provides chronological access to all of the above Commission documents.

The Commission provides through its website -- consistent with Section 207 of the E-Government Act of 2002, 44 U.S.C. § 3501 Note -- public access to virtually all public

documents generated in its public proceedings. In particular, the Commission posted all public documents it has authorized or approved since 1996, when the Commission website became fully operational, on www.ftc.gov. The Commission also posts all the information required by Section 206(b) of the E-Government Act and subsections (a)(1) and (2) of the Freedom of Information Act, including in particular the Commission Rules of Organization, Procedure, and Practice, Commission and Commissioner Opinions and Final Orders in Adjudicative Proceedings (as well as all other public orders issued and filings effected in adjudicative proceedings), and Commission Policy Statements. Moreover, as prescribed by Section 206(c) of the E-Government Act, the Commission accepts electronic submissions -- through the creation and maintenance of either comment filing forms or email boxes -- whenever it solicits public comment in rulemaking proceedings, administrative consent agreement proceedings, and other public proceedings such as workshops. Furthermore, as prescribed by Section 206(d) of the E-Government Act, the Commission posts all the rulemaking and other Notices it publishes in the Federal Register on its Federal Register Notices page, as noted above, and posts the public comments filed in such proceedings on its Public Comments page. In addition, as noted above the Commission continues to participate in the ongoing initiative to establish a centralized Federal regulatory docket at www.regulations.gov.[1]

I. Records Management

FTC has adopted records management policies and procedures to implement the requirements of the Federal Records Act and National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) regulations. The Records and Filings Office (RFO) webpage provides an explanation of its work.

The agency provides training and guidance to Commission personnel on identifying federal records and on retention and disposition under the agency's comprehensive retention schedule approved by NARA in 2012 and the new NARA General Records Schedules (GRS). The agency uses the comprehensive "big bucket" retention schedule that groups agency business records by function and uses the new NARA GRS for agency administrative records. Annual training, required for all staff and all contractors with network access, conducted in connection with FTC's "Privacy Week," focuses on document management, protecting confidential information, federal records management, and privacy and data security. All records for FTC case matters, once they are closed, are transferred to RFO for management.

FTC is working to meet the requirements of the November 28, 2011, Presidential Memorandum on Managing Government Records and the accompanying August 24, 2012, OMB/NARA Managing Government Records Directive (the Directive). The Directive requires agencies transition to electronic recordkeeping to the fullest extent possible. This is an important part of meeting open government goals.

J. FOIA

On June 22, 2016, Senate Bill 337, FOIA Improvement Act of 2016, was submitted to President Obama and on June 30, 2016, the President signed it, making it effective immediately. The Act

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[1] The Commission's Web Publication Schedule, as required by Section 207 of the E-Government Act, is set forth at https://www.ftc.gov/site-information/website-policy/web-publication-schedule.

contains several substantive and procedural amendments to the FOIA as well as new reporting requirements for agencies. The FTC is currently updating its FOIA regulations to be consistent with the amendments. Once the regulations have been updated, they will be posted in the FTC's online FOIA Reading Room. In the meantime, the FTC has already updated its FOIA response letters to include information about how FOIA requesters can seek assistance from NARA's Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), the availability of dispute resolution services through the FTC's FOIA Public Liaison, and the 90-day period for requesters to appeal an adverse FOIA decision.

Many of the FTC's agency records are available for public inspection on the FTC FOIA reading room website. The FTC reorganized its FOIA reading room to categorize FOIA requests by topic and subject matter. Now, topics are listed in alphabetical order and contain FOIA request numbers along with the size and type of the file for downloading. Further, all posted FOIA requests are reviewed to ensure each has the request description, responsive documents, and signed final letter. This improved organization should help requesters quickly identify information by topic and, if desired, to specifically request further information using the listed FOIA number. The topics and FOIA requests also provide the dates for each request, response, and disclosure, which enables requesters to ask for information after the date of the most recent response. Records in the FOIA reading room include, among other items, recent FTC policy statements, Frequently Requested FOIA records, Hot Topics, FOIA annual report, Chief FOIA Officer report, FTC's FOIA Handbook, and FTC Rules.

FOIA staff reviews each document that might be responsive to a FOIA request to determine if an exemption applies as well as whether a specific harm may result from its release. Whenever possible, FOIA officers will release more information than is legally required when that disclosure will increase public understanding of a subject matter so long as it will not interfere with agency proceedings or violate the law. Routinely, FOIA staff requires the author or submitter of a document to articulate a harm if the document were to be released. In the absence of staff articulating a reasonably foreseeable harm that a disclosure could create, FOIA staff will release the document to the requester. Further, for many years, when processing FOIA requests, the FTC has worked under the presumption that most information protected by the Deliberative Process Privilege (Exemption 5) should be released if the file has been closed for more than ten years unless staff can articulate a compelling reason for withholding the information.

The FTC also posts FOIA logs that enable requesters (and the public) to track requests and to determine whether they are still pending or have been closed. FOIA logs contain the name of the requester (excluding private individuals), the FOIA request number, the type of organization making the request, and a description of the request. Recently, the webpage was updated to include not only open requests received within the past two weeks, but also all pending requests, regardless of the time of receipt. Requests closed within the past two weeks appear on the website as well.

The FTC strives to remain fully compliant with FOIA. In fiscal year 2015, the FTC received 1529 FOIA requests and processed the vast majority of requests within the statutory period. The FTC does not have a significant backlog. Rather, the FTC consistently has less than 10 overdue requests at the close of the fiscal year. For a more in-depth description of the Commission's

FOIA program and responding to FOIA requests, please review the FTC's FOIA page as well as the most recent FOIA Annual Report and Chief FOIA Officer Report.

K. Congressional Requests

The FTC serves as a resource for Congress on competition and consumer protection policy, and each year responds to as many as 1,000 letters from Members of Congress. Information about the Office of Congressional Relations can be found here. FTC Commissioners and staff are often asked to testify before congressional panels. The FTC also works with Congressional staff to provide constituents with the FTC's free consumer publications.

L. Declassification

Not applicable. The FTC does not maintain any classification or de-classification program for its information.

M. Participation, Collaboration, and Outreach.

The FTC collaborates with other agencies and citizens to help solve national problems. We strive to engage and reach out to the public through various methods including, among others, focus groups, twitter chats, town hall style events, and education. Some of this activity can be seen in our Education Arm: *Division of Consumer & Business Education;* the FTC's Consumer Response Center: *Consumer Response and Operations*; our Competition Policy Guidance: *Competition Policy Guidance and Educational Resources*; and the Bureau of Competition Contact Page: *Antitrust Questions or Complaints*.

1. Public Private Partnerships

One example of our successful public and private partnerships is our Every Community Initiative, launched in 2014. In recent years, the FTC has brought a significant number of cases to stop scam artists, shut down their operations, and put money back in consumers' pockets. While fraud touches people of all ages, backgrounds, incomes, and locations, certain groups are targeted more frequently.

The FTC is making a concerted effort to ensure that our fraud prevention efforts – both law enforcement and education – are reaching every community, including groups that may have been under-served in the past. The Every Community Initiative is about examining the marketplace experiences of people in different communities – older Americans, African Americans, Latinos, military families, financially distressed consumers, among others – and identifying areas of concern, and then finding opportunities to address fraud through law enforcement, research, and community outreach and education.

The FTC has talked with experts, advocates, and industry, and we are listening to the voices of consumers around the country. Whether it is service members for Military Consumer Protection Day, Native Americans in Albuquerque, Latinos facing real or bogus debts, or African

Americans in Atlanta – we are expanding our outreach to hear about what matters to all American consumers.

For example, in the past few years, we have held 31 outreach events around the country, called *Common Ground* conferences, to bring together law enforcers, advocates, and community leaders to discuss issues affecting their communities. These conferences explore how our work overlaps with other enforcement agencies, such as state attorneys general offices, and how together we and other groups, such as Better Business Bureaus (BBBs) and legal aid lawyers, can work together more effectively.

We have also held events focusing specifically on issues affecting African Americans and Latinos. In May 2015, the FTC and the NAACP co-hosted "Obstacles to Economic Opportunity: Examining Frauds that Affect the African American Community" in Atlanta. We also worked with the NAACP to create a page on our website at www.FTC.gov/NAACP with information about scams targeting the African American community. And, in October 2014, we held a conference in southern California exploring debt collection and the Latino community.

We have also retained the services of New America Media to assist us in hosting a series of roundtable discussions with ethnic media outlets. We have held about a half dozen discussions so far, and they have been great for introducing the FTC and its consumer protection mission to journalists who may not have heard of us. The hope is that those journalists, in turn, will inform their communities, about how to avoid fraud, and report it at www.FTC.gov.

The FTC also engages with technical experts, academics, and others through industry groups such as the Messaging, Malware and Mobile Anti-Abuse Working Group (M^3AAWG). After discussions with the FTC and others, M^3AAWG leadership formed the Voice and Telephony Abuse Special Interest Group (VTA SIG) in 2014, a subgroup that could leverage M^3AAWG's expertise on messaging abuse and apply it to voice spam such as robocalls. The FTC serves in a leadership role in VTA SIG, which currently works to support various initiatives that tackle voice spam.

Examples of collaboration with the public and other government agencies also include our policy workshops. In an effort to create a public record regarding issues with important competition and consumer protection facets, all of these policy workshops coincided with a public comment period. The events themselves were open to the public and livestreamed from our website. Each workshop webpage contains videos, a transcript, and PowerPoint presentations from the event. Examples of some of our past and future workshops include:

- June 2014, Conditional Pricing Practices: Economic Analysis and Legal Policy Implications
- September 2014, Big Data: A Tool for Inclusion or Exclusion?
- February 2015, Examining Health Care Competition
- June 2015, The "Sharing" Economy: Issues Facing Platforms, Participants, and Regulators
- January 2016, Auto Distribution: Current Issues & Future Trends
- June 2016, Something New Under the Sun: Competition & Consumer Protection Issues in Solar Energy

- January 2016, PrivacyCon, and
- the upcoming second PrivacyCon in January 2017.

        2.   Public Partnerships

The FTC regularly coordinates with other federal agencies, as well as state attorneys general, in common areas of authority on law enforcement, policy matters, and education and outreach.

FTC staff has engaged in ongoing collaboration and consultation with the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC). FTC staff reviewed drafts of the Shared Nationwide Interoperability Roadmap and the Federal Health IT Strategic Plan, which were issued in September 2015. The FTC also participates regularly as a member of the Federal Health IT Coordinating Council, an interagency working group.

We have worked for years with the Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). For example, on the law enforcement front, we coordinated two major settlements with AT&T and T-Mobile, along with the FCC and all state attorneys general, to provide for hundreds of millions of dollars in consumer redress for unauthorized third party charges on mobile phones – also known as mobile cramming. Additionally, in 2015, the FTC and local, state, federal, and international partners announced Operation Collection Protection, the first coordinated federal-state enforcement initiative targeting deceptive and abusive debt collection practices. This nationwide crackdown encompassed 115 law enforcement actions by the FTC, Department of Justice, CFPB, 47 state attorneys general, 17 state regulators, local authorities and one Canadian agency. All of us worked together to target a broad range of illegal conduct – abusive collection calls, bogus threats of arrest or lawsuit, deceptive debt buying practices, phantom debt scams, and other violations the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act.

We have also worked closely with other agencies to provide business education tools, particularly for small companies. For example, in 2016 we worked with HHS and the FDA to develop an interactive tool showing health app developers which laws apply to them, whether it be HIPAA, the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, the FTC Act, or the FTC's Health Breach Notification Rule.

In competition matters, the FTC seeks to collaborate with the state attorneys general to obtain the best results and maximize the use of limited resources in the enforcement of the U.S. antitrust laws. FTC and state attorneys general joint investigations have resulted in joint enforcement actions, including the successful litigation with the Idaho Attorney General against St. Luke's Health System and the case with the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania blocking the merger of Staples, Inc. and Office Depot, Inc.

Our goal is always to use our authority and expertise to protect consumers and competition as effectively as possible, to avoid duplication, and promote consistency across the government.