interoffice memorandum

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| to: | EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP |
| from: | Your Name |
| subject: | ESSENTIAL NEED FOR SOFTWARE: THE NEED FOR A FOIA SOLUTION AMID cOVID-19/RECESSION and as a COMPONENT of our emergency response plan, as well for long-term recession impacts |
| date: | Enter Date |
| CC: | cc Name |

As part of our emergency response efforts and to prepare for the long-term financial impact related to a potential recession, the need has never been greater for record request software. Just by considering our constituents and our staff's safety, the minimal expense of such a solution represents such a large unquantifiable/potential return on investment. While COVID-19 has created this need for additional contactless safety measures, it has likely sparked a long-term recession. With financial hardship likely comes the need to leverage technology and increase efficiency throughout our organization while also minimizing risk by ensuring we are providing quality responses and maintaining compliance.

* **Safety:** Absent a streamlined technical solution, fulfilling record requests requires an increased level of "Foot-Traffic" by our staff, especially our constituents. Our constituents have grown to expect more of our services to be available online rather than having to come to our offices, and COVID-19 has drastically accelerated that expectation. One of our core purposes as an agency is to serve our constituents. Streamlining our record request process with a contactless software solution improves our ability to serve and showing that we are taking safety seriously; as an agency, we are also responsible for the safety of our community.
* **Service to Constituents:** Our constituents surely do not want to travel to our physical location to pick up records (note that some files are too large for us to email, nor do we have a secure FTP, etc.) and/or pay fees if they are applicable. And we certainly do not want to encourage or require them to do so. With the contactless JustFOIA request service, we can provide constituents the ability to submit, communicate during the process, pay fees, and download response docs, all via an online portal.
* **Efficiency:** Every department can use this type of solution to increase efficiency regarding their role in fulfilling/participated in the record request process. Therefore, technology should assist us in the event of a reduction in headcount in various departments.
* **Compliance:** When faced with a reduction in resources, compliance and the quality/timeliness of our response is further at risk. We desperately need a software solution to increase efficiency and provide internal reporting on who fulfilled a request and communicated to the requester.
* **Need:** Based on a survey of 1,200 government agencies in April, 70% replied that their FOIA requests remained at the same or higher volume in March and April, while an additional 10% expected an increase related to COVID-19

The need for this type of solution has never been greater.

Sincerely,

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*