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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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AGENCY TRANSPARENCY PLAN UPDATE FEBRUARY 2024

DELIVERABLES ACHIEVED SINCE 2021:

- A. The Department of State is now posting the link to the State Register to DOS social media channels each Wednesday morning when the weekly Register is live.
- B. The Department of State is ensuring that agendas are posted at least 24 hours in advance for all DOS board meetings, and that DOS is also ensuring that all meeting minutes are posted within two weeks following board meetings with all such information available on a searchable one-stop pressroom webpage posted on the DOS press page at the following link, [Pressroom | Department of State \(ny.gov\)](#).
- C. To improve self-help access for the public interested grant opportunities through the Office of Planning, Development and Community Infrastructure, the Department of State is updating the DOS webpage to include informational training videos on the Community Infrastructure page to help grantees fill out required forms (implemented in 2022). [OPDCI Contract Resources Webpage](#)
- D. The Department of State Division of Local Government Services posted updated guidance regarding its grant programs and initiatives on its public website and has engaged in outreach to local government leaders and stakeholder associations regarding available funding opportunities. [Division of Local Government - Services and Support](#)
- E. The Department of State engaged in recruitment efforts and expanded its staffing to ensure appropriate handling of transparency-related responsibilities. Such efforts included retaining counsel within its Office of General Counsel with a primary job focus on agency-wide facilitation and compliance with the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) and Open Meetings Law (OML). The Department also recruited and filled an administrative item to support FOIL compliance and response agency wide. DOS has also backfilled several positions within various program units throughout the agency with duties related to FOIL response document gathering, initial review, and processing, to ensure the timely and accurate handling of FOIL requests. For those Divisions with the largest public information requests on average, such as the Division of Licensing Services, DOS has recruited several staff members with clerical and record access related duties. Moreover, the Department successfully migrated to a new online, electronic FOIL system for facilitating the timely management and organization of FOIL requests and responses.



**Department
of State**

INITIATIVES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN 2024

The Department of State intends to implement the following initiatives in 2024:

- A. The Department of State is pursuing a communications initiative to create and/or update Department stock of print and digital outreach materials to better inform the public of the agency's current programs, services, and new initiatives across all divisions within the Department; and to identify and develop new content for utilization on social media to promote the Department's programs, services, and messages.
- B. The Department of State is engaging in an initiative to refine its public website content to enable more intuitive and convenient access, including on mobile platforms, to the most frequently sought public/customer information, with the intent of easing the search process, increasing overall accessibility of information, and reducing the time it takes for members of the public to find the information they need on the Department's official website.
- C. Efficient internal processes and IT infrastructure enable the Department to provide essential services, disseminate knowledge, facilitate productivity, decrease risk, inform decision making, and reduce costs. Most importantly, the Department must have user-friendly, accessible, high-quality software applications, built with an emphasis on privacy protections to build public trust and best serve the people of the State. To reduce unnecessary complexity and improve service delivery quality, transparency, and turnaround time, the Department is replacing legacy technology to enhance operations, employ cybersecurity advances, and leverage best practices for its online, public-facing portals and platforms. New technological solutions will also support the dissemination and usability of key programs and services on a multi-divisional basis, which is intended to improve the delivery and accessibility of training programs, enhance the ease of submission and timeliness of processing for filings and applications, and modernize the examination and engagement experience for the public.