

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

WHITE COAT WASTE PROJECT
7288 Hanover Green Dr.
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Plaintiff,

v.

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE,
1000 Defense Pentagon, Washington,
DC 20301,

Defendant.

Civ. No.

**Complaint for Declaratory and
Injunctive Relief**

1. This is an action under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, seeking the disclosure of agency records maintained by the Department of Defense (DoD) concerning taxpayer-funded nonhuman primate experiments conducted by or in conjunction with multiple DoD components and laboratories.

Jurisdiction and Venue

2. This Court has jurisdiction over the parties and subject matter pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(B).

3. Venue is proper in this district pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(B).

Parties

4. Plaintiff White Coat Waste Project, Inc. (White Coat Waste) is a bipartisan taxpayer watchdog organization pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, with its registered office located at 7288 Hanover Green

Drive, Mechanicsville, VA, 23111. White Coat Waste's mission is to find, expose, and defund wasteful taxpayer-funded animal experiments. White Coat Waste is the requester of the information at issue here.

5. Defendant Department of Defense is an agency of the United States.

6. The U.S. Army Medical Research & Development Command (USAMRDC) is a component of DoD.

7. The Office of the Secretary of Defense and Joint Staff (OSD/JS) is a component of DoD.

8. The Department of the Navy is a component of DoD.

9. DOD, USAMRDC, and OSD/JS have possession, custody, and control of the records White Coat Waste seeks.

Statement of Facts

FOIA Request 2025-00877-F

10. On June 24, 2025, White Coat Waste submitted a FOIA request to USAMRDC seeking copies “of any active IACUC-approved protocols involving the use of at least one non-human primate, being performed by, or in conjunction with the USAMRICD (U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense) or USAMRIID (U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases).”

11. White Coat Waste submitted the request by email to USArmy.Detrick.MEDCOM-USAMRMC.mbx.FOIA@health.mil.

12. The following day, USAMRDC acknowledged the request and assigned it tracking number 2025-00877-F.

13. On July 28, 2025, the agency informed White Coat Waste the request was “In Process.”

14. To date, White Coat Waste has not received any further response or production, or any denial letter, for this request.

15. As of the filing of this Complaint, White Coat Waste has not received a final determination and response regarding FOIA Request 2025-00877-F.

16. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(C)(i), White Coat Waste is deemed to have exhausted its administrative remedies with regard this request because the agency has failed to comply with the statutory time limit.

FOIA Request 25-F-3554

17. On June 24, 2025, White Coat Waste submitted a FOIA request to OSD/JS seeking “a copy of any active IACUC-approved protocols involving the use of at least one non-human primate, being performed by, or in conjunction with the Uniformed Services University.”

18. The same day, OSD/JS acknowledged the request and assigned it tracking number 25-F-3354.

19. On June 26, 2025, the agency informed White Coat Waste that this request was placed in its complex processing queue along with “approximately 3,895 open requests.”

20. To date, White Coat Waste has not received any further response or production, or any denial letter, for this request.

21. As of the filing of this Complaint, White Coat Waste has not received a final determination and response regarding FOIA Request 25-F-3554.

22. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(C)(i), White Coat Waste is deemed to have exhausted its administrative remedies with regard this request because the agency has failed to comply with the statutory time limit.

FOIA Request Related to Walter Reed Army Institute of Research – Armed Forces Research Institute of Medical Sciences

23. On September 23, 2025, White Coat Waste submitted a FOIA request to USAMRDC seeking a copy of “a copy of the following records relating to Walter Reed Army Institute of Research – Armed Forces Research Institute of Medical Sciences (WRAIR-AFRIMS):

1. All protocols that, as of the date of search, are IACUC-approved and active, and that involve the use of at least one nonhuman primate;
2. All photos or videos created, collected, or maintained by AFRIMS and/or WRAIR depicting nonhuman primates, their housing, handling, or experiments, from January 1, 2022 through time of search;
3. Any bilateral agreements, memoranda of understanding, or similar legal instruments, together with any amendments, that govern the establishment, operation, or funding of WRAIR-AFRIMS and its laboratory facilities,

including any specific reference to animal research or the maintenance of a nonhuman primate colony;

4. All inter-agency agreements, contracts, or memoranda of understanding - between the National Institutes of Health (including any of its institutes or centers), and/or the Department of Defense (including any of its components), and WRAIR-AFRIMS - that involve nonhuman primate research, from January 1, 2022 through the date of search;
5. All IACUC inspection reports for WRAIR-AFRIMS animal facilities from January 1, 2022 through time of search;
6. All annual Animal Welfare Assurance documents submitted to the Department of Defense or the NIH from January 1, 2022 through time of search; and
7. The current Public Health Service (PHS) Animal Welfare Assurance on file with NIH's Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW).”

24. White Coat Waste submitted the request by email to USArmy.Detrick.MEDCOM-USAMRMC.List.FOIA-MRMC@mail.mil.

25. The agency never acknowledged the request or assigned it a tracking number.

26. On December 8, 2025, White Coat Waste sent another email to USArmy.Detrick.MEDCOM-USAMRMC.List.FOIA-MRMC@mail.mil, attaching the request and asking for confirmation. White Coat Waste received no response.

27. On December 16, 2025, White Coat Waste sent an email to the Army FOIA Public Liaison (USArmy.Belvoir.HQDA-OAA-AHS.mbx.RMDA-FOIA@mail.mil) noting White Coat Waste had not received any acknowledgement of the request and asking for assistance with either confirming the request was received or by beginning to process the request. White Coat Waste received no response.

28. To date, White Coat Waste has not received any acknowledgement, tracking number, production, or denial letter for this request.

29. As of the filing of this Complaint, White Coat Waste has not received a final determination and response regarding this request.

30. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(C)(i), White Coat Waste is deemed to have exhausted its administrative remedies with regard this request because the agency has failed to comply with the statutory time limit.

FOIA Request 2026-NavyFOIA-000211

31. On October 6, 2025, White Coat Waste submitted a FOIA request to the Department of the Navy seeking “a copy of the following records relating to U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit SOUTH (NAMRU-S):

1. All protocols that, as of the date of search, are IACUC-approved and active, and that involve the use of at least one nonhuman primate;
2. All photos or videos created, collected, or maintained by NAMRU-S depicting nonhuman primates, their housing, handling, or experiments, from January 1, 2022 through time of search;

3. All inter-agency agreements, contracts, or memoranda of understanding - between the National Institutes of Health (including any of its institutes or centers), the Department of Defense (DOD) (including any of its components), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and/or United States Agency for International Development and NAMRU-S - that involve nonhuman primate research, from January 1, 2022 through the date of search;
4. Any agreement or contract to between NAMRU-S and the Peruvian Navy from January 1, 2022 through the date of search;
5. Any grants, contracts, and/or agreements related to the procurement of or experimentation on nonhuman primates from January 1, 2023 through the date of search, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. N6264523D5016, 'AOTUS NANCYMAAE NHPS'
 - b. N6264520D5005, 'NAMRU-6 RESEARCH SUPPORT SERVICES – CPFF'
 - c. CDMRP-22-PR221005, 'A Non-Human Primate Platform to Assess Novel Plasmodium falciparum Interventions'
6. All IACUC inspection reports for NAMRU-S animal facilities from January 1, 2022 through time of search;
7. All annual Animal Welfare Assurance documents submitted to the Department of Defense or the NIH from January 1, 2022 through time of search; and

8. The current Public Health Service (PHS) Animal Welfare Assurance on file with NIH's Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW).”

32. The same day, the Department of the Navy acknowledged the request and assigned it tracking number 2026-NavyFOIA-000211.

33. To date, White Coat Waste has not received any further response or production, or any denial letter, for this request.

34. As of the filing of this Complaint, White Coat Waste has not received a final determination and response regarding FOIA Request 2026-NavyFOIA-00021.

35. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(C)(i), White Coat Waste is deemed to have exhausted its administrative remedies with regard this request because the agency has failed to comply with the statutory time limit.

FOIA Request re: Walter Reed Army Institute of Research Nonhuman

Primate Contracts

36. On December 8, 2025, White Coat Waste submitted a FOIA request to USAMRDC seeking “a copy of the following records relating to Purchase Order HT942525P0037 and separate IDV contract W81XWH22D0012 with Envigo Global Services:

1. Contracts and Statements of Work;
2. Procurement and shipping records for all animals obtained and/or transported under the contract or purchase order (including but not limited to invoices, certificates of veterinary inspection, other health certificates, shipping

manifests, routing and contact sheets, import/export permits, and CDC notifications);

3. Acquisition and disposition records for the animals obtained under the contract; and

4. Any photos or videos created, collected, maintained, or submitted to WRAIR depicting the nonhuman primates under the contract or purchase order, their housing, handling, transportation, or experiments.”

37. White Coat Waste submitted the request by email to USArmy.Belvoir.HQDA-OAA-AHS.mbx.RMDA-FOIA@mail.mil.

38. To date, White Coat Waste has not received any acknowledgement, tracking number, production, or denial letter for this request.

39. As of the filing of this Complaint, White Coat Waste has not received a final determination and response regarding this request.

40. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(C)(i), White Coat Waste is deemed to have exhausted its administrative remedies with regard this request because the agency has failed to comply with the statutory time limit.

Count I: Violation of FOIA

41. White Coat Waste realleges and incorporates by reference the allegations in each of the preceding paragraphs of this Complaint.

42. DoD has wrongfully withheld agency records requested by White Coat Waste.

43. White Coat Waste has exhausted applicable administrative remedies with respect to DoD’s wrongful withholding of the requested records.

44. White Coat Waste and the public have been and will continue to be irreparably harmed until DoD is ordered to comply with White Coat Waste's FOIA requests.

45. White Coat Waste is entitled to injunctive relief with respect to the release and disclosure of the requested documents.

Request for Relief

WHEREFORE, White Coat Waste respectfully requests that this Court:

- (1) Declare DoD's failure to comply with FOIA to be unlawful;
- (2) Enjoin DoD from continuing to withhold the public records responsive to White Coat Waste's FOIA requests and otherwise order DoD to produce the requested public records without further delay;
- (3) Grant White Coat Waste an award of attorney fees and other litigation costs reasonably incurred in this action, to the extent permitted by law; and
- (4) Grant White Coat Waste such other and further relief which the Court deems proper.

Date: March 26, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Matthew Strugar
Matthew Strugar (D.C. Bar No. 1010198)
Law Office of Matthew Strugar
3435 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 2910
Los Angeles, CA 90010
323-696-2299
matthew@matthewstrugar.com