The Requestors

- Advocate: 5%
- Attorney: 6%
- Business/Agency: 4%
- Media: 15%
- Inmate: 24%
- Individual: 45%

The Agents

130 unique agencies participated in mediation matters with the PIA Ombudsman in 2019. Agency jurisdictions include state level, 15 different counties, and Baltimore City, and 12 municipalities.

The Big Picture: Mediation saves money

Early resolution of disputes saves time and resources and increases public knowledge and awareness of the PIA process. For example, mediation is entirely voluntary, confidential, and in many cases doesn’t require an attorney.

The Agencies

- State Agencies
- County Government
- Municipal Government
- Police/Fire Depts.; & State’s Attorney’s Offices
- Public School Systems

What are the PIA disputes?

Range: 1 – 141 days. 44% of the cases are resolved within 3 weeks and 73% by 6 weeks.

- MIA: No Response – 24%
- Misapplication of exemption – 18%
- Partial, nonresponsive, or incomplete response – 27%
- Fees excessive – 6%
- Fee waiver request denied or ignored – 3%
- Does not believe response – 6%
- Asked for explanation of response – 6%
- Redaction inappropriate – 4%
- Other – 6%

Disputes are presented as framed by the requestor. Characterizations are based on how the requestors describe the issues. These are not findings.

How Long does Mediation Take?

- 3 Weeks: 44%
- 6 Weeks: 29%
- 9 Weeks: 16%
- 12 Weeks: 7%
- 15 Weeks: 2%
- 18 Weeks: 0%
- 21 Weeks: 2%

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http://piaombuds.maryland.gov
Outreach 2019

Presentations, Workshops, Trainings, and Other Outreach
2019

- PIA Compliance Board, Discussion of PIA Research Report, December 17
- PIA Compliance Board, Discussion of Preliminary Findings for PIA Research Report, November 5
- Maryland Association of Counties, County Attorneys, November 13
- Maryland Association of Counties, Winter Conference, November 20
- Wicomico County Public Schools, October 17
- Maryland State Bar Association, October 25
- Local Government Insurance Trust, October 31
- Veterans of Jessup Correctional Institution, September 25
- Maryland Municipal Clerks Association, September 19
- Open Government Advocacy Network meeting hosted by the ACLU, September 19
- PIACB Annual Meeting Presentation on PIA Research Report, August 19
- Maryland Association of Counties, Summer Conference, August 14
- Veterans of Jessup Correctional Institution, July 10
- Bowie Police Department, June 11
- Harford Co. State’s Attorney’s Office, June 7
- MDDC Press Association, May 10
- Prince George’s County Law Office. April 25
- Wicomico County State’s Attorney’s Office, April 5
- Stakeholder Survey, Online and via Post, February –March 2019
- Town of Boonsboro. February 7

Select Publications

- Where Are My Records? Office of the Public Defender, Post Conviction Newsletter, Summer 2019
- Public Access Ombudsman’s Interpretive Regulations: https://tinyurl.com/y2cuqp55, June 2019
- Ombudsman comments, included as an Appendix to the 2019 Annual Report of the PIA Compliance Board. September 2019

Resources/Links

- MD State Archives: http://msa.maryland.gov is a resource for custodians’ record management and retention practices.
- Public Access Ombudsman
  - Request for Mediation Form: https://news.maryland.gov/mpiaombs/ request-mediation
  - Interpretive Regulations: https://tinyurl.com/y2cuqp55