



Useful Databases and Other Resources for Conducting Oversight¹

The American Association for Budget and Program Analysis's **Departmental and Agency Budgets** web page gathers a number of agencies' "congressional justifications" in one place: <http://www.aabpa.org/budget-justifications>

Better Business Bureau's database of businesses and charities: <http://www.bbb.org/search>

The **Bureau of Labor Statistics** (BLS) provides a variety of information to help you evaluate public policies on healthcare, retirement benefits, the minimum wage, workforce education and training, economic development, workplace safety, monetary policy, consumer spending, and other topics that affect the well-being of American workers, retirees, and their families: <http://www.bls.gov/data/>

The **Bureau of Transportation Statistics** includes national and state transportation statistics, freight data, border crossing data, multimodal transportation indicators, and more: <https://www.bts.gov/browse-statistical-products-and-data>

BRB Publications allows you to search free public records organized primarily by state and county: <http://www.brbspub.com/>

Census Bureau Data includes quick facts, easy stats, mapping tools, and more: <http://www.census.gov/data/data-tools.html>

Center for Responsive Politics' **OpenSecrets.org** offers data on campaign contributions, lobbying, and the revolving door: <http://www.opensecrets.org/>

Civic Impulse's **GovTrack** helps you find the status of federal legislation, voting records for the Senate and House of Representatives, information on Members of Congress, congressional district maps, and the status of state legislation: <http://www.govtrack.us/>

¹ For updates to this list and current links, please visit the Project On Government Oversight's website at <http://www.pogo.org/coi/resources/>.

Congressional Budget Office (CBO) produces independent analyses of budgetary and economic issues to support the Congressional budget process. The agency is strictly nonpartisan and conducts objective, impartial analysis:

<http://www.cbo.gov/>

Congressional Research Service reports address a wide variety of topics and are excellent sources of unbiased information. Congress can request reports directly from the CRS. The public will soon have direct access to CRS report, but until that happens, many are uploaded on a number of websites:

<https://archive-it.org/collections/1078>

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/index.html>

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's (CFPB) **Consumer Complaint Database** contains data on complaints received by the CFPB regarding credit cards, mortgages, student loans, and other financial products and services:

<http://www.consumerfinance.gov/complaintdatabase/>

The Consumer Product Safety Commission's **SaferProducts.gov** has a database of product safety information:

<http://www.saferproducts.gov/Search/default.aspx>

The **Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE)** is an independent entity established within the executive branch that addresses integrity, economy, and effectiveness issues that transcend individual government agencies and aid in the establishment of a professional, well-trained, and highly skilled workforce in the Offices of Inspectors General:

<https://www.ignet.gov/>

CIGIE also maintains **Oversight.gov**, a central repository for reports from most of the 72 Inspectors General. The site allows Congress and the public to search for reports efficiently across the work of multiple government agency Inspectors General, as opposed to going to each individual site.

www.oversight.gov

Data.gov contains thousands of federal agency information databases. Topics include Business, Cities, Consumer, Counties, Developers, Education, Energy, Ethics, Health, Law, Manufacturing, Ocean, Research, Restore the Gulf, Safety, States, and Supply Chain:

<http://www.data.gov/>

Department of Defense historical **budget materials**, including the Green Book:

<http://comptroller.defense.gov/BudgetMaterials.aspx>

The **Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA)** provides audit and financial advisory services to Department of Defense and other federal entities responsible for acquisition and contract administration, including audit manuals and contracting checklists:

http://www.dcaa.mil/about_dcaa.html

Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) and Procedures, Guidance, and Information (PGI):

<http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/dars/dfarspgi/current/index.html>

Department of Defense's **Public Affairs** website presents transcripts of news briefings, speeches, and press releases of the DoD:

<http://www.defense.gov/pubs/almanac/asdpa.aspx>

Department of Defense's **Publications page** lists all recent reports and plans released by the Department:

<http://www.defense.gov/pubs/>

Department of Defense's **Selected Acquisition Reports** records cost data on weapon systems:

<http://www.acq.osd.mil/ara/am/sar/>

Department of Defense's **sites page** is a quick reference listing the top DoD sites that serve as a starting point for finding U.S. military information online. It provides direct access to the databases of all registered DoD sites:

<http://www.defense.gov/Sites>

DuckDuckGo is an Internet search engine that emphasizes protecting searchers' privacy and avoiding the filter bubble of personalized search results:

<https://duckduckgo.com/>

Environmental Protection Agency's **enforcement data**:

<http://www2.epa.gov/enforcement>

Ethics.data.gov brings records and data from across the federal government to one central location:

<https://www.data.gov/ethics/browse-datasets/>

The **Federal Acquisition Regulation** is 1,900 pages of contracting administration fun. Enjoy:

<http://www.acquisition.gov/far/>

Federal Advisory Committee Act Database contains every federal advisory committee, the members on that committee, the committee charters, meeting dates, committee reports, committee costs, and a host of other information:

<http://facadatabase.gov/>

The **Federal Audit Clearinghouse** is operated by the Census Bureau on behalf of the Office of Management and Budget, and houses a public database of more than 300,000 audits. Users can search for and download audits of government programs, local governments (cities, counties, etc), school districts, housing authorities, etc.:

<https://harvester.census.gov/facweb/>

Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIS) lists instances of non-responsibility by contractors and grantees:

<https://www.fapiis.gov/fapiis/index.action>

Federal Business Opportunities lists federal government procurement opportunities, award notices, and justifications and approvals for certain awards:

<https://www.fbo.gov/?s=opportunity&mode=list&tab=list>

Federal Election Commission database of campaign finance disclosures by recipient and donor:

<http://www.fec.gov>

Federal Procurement Data System - Next Generation (FPDS-NG) reports contracts whose estimated value is \$3,000 or more. Every modification to that contract, regardless of dollar value, must be reported to FPDS-NG:

<https://www.fpds.gov/fpdsng/cms/index.php/en/>

The **Federal Register** is a daily journal of the federal government's proposed rules, notices, and final rules. The online site provides access to all materials published in issues going back to 1994. Users can search for particular documents or browse by agency, issue, or date:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/>

FedStats provides easy, one-stop public access to statistical information from more than 100 agencies broken down by state and/or agency including links to government databases:

<http://fedstats.sites.usa.gov/>

The Financial Management Service's (FMS) **Payment Information Repository (PIR)** is a multi-year initiative that will create a centralized information repository for federal payment related data. The PIR is aimed at improving and increasing the transparency of government payments, as well as streamlining the reporting of accounting classification information from Non-Treasury Disbursing Offices (NTDOs). With PIR, payments information will be available to view from one source. PIR will provide a single, web-based system from which people can view disbursement information; supply both summary and detail information on payment transactions in a single source; and provide business analytics and government-wide accounting reporting on the payment transactions originating from Federal Program Agencies:

<http://fms.treas.gov/pir/index.html>

FOIA.gov is a Freedom of Information Act portal website run by the Department of Justice. It provides extensive and allows users to generate detailed reports that compare FOIA implementation data for agencies across the government and drill down. The site also allows users to submit FOIA requests to different agencies:

<https://www.foia.gov/>

The Food and Drug Administration's **Adverse Event Reporting System (FAERS)** is a database that contains information on adverse events—including death, disability, and hospitalization—and medication error reports submitted to the FDA. Reports can be submitted by patients, healthcare professionals, and drug manufacturers. The FDA uses the reports to monitor the safety of products approved by the agency. There are limitations to the FAERS data since many reports are submitted voluntarily, and the FDA does not require proof of a causal relationship between a product and an adverse event:

<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/Surveillance/AdverseDrugEffects/>

The Food and Drug Administration’s **Manufacturer and User Facility Device Experience (MAUDE)** contains data that represents reports of adverse events involving medical devices. The data consists of voluntary reports since June 1993, user facility reports since 1991, distributor reports since 1993, and manufacturer reports since August 1996. MAUDE may not include reports made according to exemptions, variances, or alternative reporting requirements granted under 21 CFR 803.19:

<http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfMAUDE/search.CFM>

Free Public Records allows you search free public records organized by category and state:

<http://publicrecords.searchsystems.net/>

General Services Administration’s **Schedule Library** of goods and service contractors provides a centralized online source for the latest contract award information from GSA Federal Supply Schedules, VA Federal Supply Schedules, Government-wide Acquisition Contracts, Technology Contracts, Assisted Acquisition Services, and Strategically Sourced Blanket Purchase Agreements:

<http://www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov/ElibMain/ElibHome>

Geo-location on Twitter allows you to gather Tweets from a discrete geographic area. To use this tool, 1) Drop a pin on the location in Google maps; 2) Copy the coordinates into Twitter, preceded by “geocode:” and followed by a comma and the desired radius in either miles (mi) or kilometers (km). Do not use spaces. For example, “geocode:38.898135,-77.027321,1mi” will return all of the Tweets within a 1-mile radius of POGO’s offices.

Good Jobs First’s **Subsidy Tracker** is a database of local, state, and federal economic development subsidies and other financial assistance to corporations:

<http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/subsidy-tracker>

Good Jobs First’s **Violation Tracker** provides corporate misconduct information, covering banking, consumer protection, false claims, environmental, wage & hour, unfair labor practice, health, safety, employment discrimination, price-fixing, bribery, and other cases initiated by more than 40 federal regulatory agencies and all divisions of the Justice Department since 2000:

<https://www.goodjobsfirst.org/violation-tracker>

The **Government Accountability Office** is well known as a government watchdog. In addition to the publicly available reports and information, Congressional staff have access to a special, non-public area that lists all reports currently under development. There is a public-facing GAO webpage called “restricted products” which lists all classified or sensitive reports. Congressional staff can request copies of these reports that are not readily available to the public.

<http://www.gao.gov/>

Government Accountability Office’s **Legal Decisions (bid protests)** web page, where GAO’s Office of General Counsel posts legal decisions, opinions, and reports on bid protests, appropriations law, and other issues of federal law:

<http://www.gao.gov/legal/bid-protests/search>

GuideStar collects information on non-profit organizations registered with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). You can find information on each non-profit's mission, finances, programs, and more:

<http://www.guidestar.org/rxg/analyze-nonprofit-data/index.aspx>

Health and Human Services' **Hospital Compare** database, which displays rates for process-of-care measures, information on hospital outcome-of-care measures, surveys of patients' hospital experiences, and more:

<http://www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare/search.html>

The **IT Dashboard** enables federal agencies, industry, the general public, and other stakeholders to view details of federal information technology investments:

<http://www.itdashboard.gov/>

The Department of Justice's **FOIA** resources site:

<http://www.justice.gov/oip>

The **Department of Labor** provides data on the agency's administration and enforcement of federal labor laws that guarantee workers' rights to safe and healthful working conditions, a minimum hourly wage and overtime pay, and freedom from employment discrimination, as well as the integrity of their pensions and health plans. You can find enforcement data for the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Department's Wage and Hour Division (WHD):

http://ogesdw.dol.gov/views/data_catalogs.php

The Library of Congress's **Congress.gov** provides access to federal legislative information. It offers bills and resolutions, activity in Congress, congressional records, schedules and calendars, committee information, presidential nominations, and treaties:

<https://www.congress.gov/>

Million Short allows you to remove the top million (or top 100k, 10k, 1k, 100) sites from the results so you can discover more obscure sources and sites:

<https://millionshort.com/>

National Institute on Money in State Politics' database of state campaign contributions:

<http://www.followthemoney.org/>

Netro Online allows you to search public records related to property and land:

<http://www.netronline.com/>

Occupational Safety and Health Administration's **Fatality and Catastrophe Investigation Summaries** provides access to accident investigation information:

<http://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/accidentsearch.html>

Occupational Safety and Health Administration's **Injury and Illness** data on work-related injuries and illnesses collected from employers within specific industry and employment size specifications:

http://www.osha.gov/pls/odi/establishment_search.html

The **Office of Government Ethics** provides overall leadership and oversight of the executive branch ethics program designed to prevent and resolve conflicts of interest, including certain financial disclosure forms. OGE's mission is part of the very foundation of public service:

<https://oge.gov>

<https://www.oge.gov/web/oge.nsf/Presidential%20Appointee%20&%20Nominee%20Records>

<https://extapps2.oge.gov/201/Presiden.nsf/f54fd322068f23a385257fc40006f88e?OpenForm>

The **Office of Government Information Services (OGIS)** is the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) ombudsman responsible for fielding complaints and questions about FOIA. In addition to serving as a bridge between agencies and the public, OGIS also offers mediation services for FOIA disputes and offers suggestions to Congress for improving FOIA:

<https://ogis.archives.gov/>

The Office of Management and Budget's **Analytical Perspectives volume** provides key data on the national defense budget function and all its components, from 2012 to 2022. It includes both discretionary and mandatory spending:

www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Analytical_Perspectives

Office of Management and Budget's **Appendix** web page provides access to current agency budget appendices:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/appendix/>

Office of Management and Budget's **Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA)** reviews all collections of information by the federal government. OIRA also develops and oversees the implementation of government-wide policies in several areas and maintains information about government meetings and communications with outside entities:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/information-regulatory-affairs/>

Office of Management and Budget's **USAspending.gov**, which includes for each federal award the name of the entity receiving the award; the amount of the award; information on the award including transaction type and funding agency; the location of the entity receiving the award; and a unique identifier of the entity receiving the award:

<http://usaspending.gov/>

PaymentAccuracy.gov contains dedicated information on improper payments, as required by Executive Order 13520. The site provides government-wide improper payment estimates, as well as agency-level and program-specific improper payment information. The charts section reports data on improper payments in both graphic and tabular form:

<http://www.paymentaccuracy.gov/>

Pipl searches for people, including in the deep web. It is very effective, though it will return a lot of results that are subscription based:

<https://pipl.com/>

The **Straus Military Reform Project** at POGO's Center for Defense Information (CDI) seeks to secure far more effective military forces and much more ethical and professional military and civilian leadership at significantly lower budget levels:

<http://www.pogo.org/straus/about/>

POGO's **Federal Contractor Misconduct Database (FCMD)** is a compilation of misconduct and alleged misconduct by the largest federal contractors since 1995. Data can be sorted and viewed many different ways: alphabetical and date order, number of misconduct instances, and dollar amount of penalties. Or search for specific instances of misconduct by contractor name, disposition, court type, misconduct type, contracting party, date, dollar amount, or key words:

<http://www.contractormisconduct.org/>

POGO's **Foreign Influence Database** is based on informational materials filed by lobbying and public relations firms working on behalf of foreign entities in the United States. The Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) requires advocates representing foreign interests to register with the Department of Justice and to file within 48 hours any informational materials disseminated to two or more individuals. This database is comprised of informational materials filed between 2009 and 2012:

<http://www.pogo.org/tools-and-data/foreign-influence-database/>

POGO's **Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Revolving Door Database** contains post-employment disclosure statements filed by former SEC employees. SEC regulations require former employees to file these statements if they intend to represent an employer or client before the agency within two years of their SEC employment. The database covers statements filed between 2001 and 2010:

<http://www.pogo.org/tools-and-data/sec-revolving-door-database/>

POGO's **"Where Are All the Watchdogs?"** tracks how long Inspector General positions across the federal government have been vacant:

<http://www.pogo.org/tools-and-data/ig-watchdogs/go-igi-20120208-where-are-all-the-watchdogs-inspector-general-vacancies1.html>

The **Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER)** provides online access to court records for U.S. district courts, U.S. courts of appeals, and U.S. bankruptcy courts. The site charges a per page access fee for that apply to the results of any search regardless if the pages are or are not viewed, downloaded or printed:

<https://www.pacer.gov/>

Regulations.gov provides access to agency proposed and final rules as well as comments from the public:

<http://www.regulations.gov/#!home>

Securities and Exchange Commission's **Electronic Data Gathering, Analysis, and Retrieval (EDGAR)** system contains the financial filings of publicly traded companies:

<http://www.sec.gov/edgar/searchedgar/companysearch.html>

The U.S. Senate's **Lobbying Disclosure Act Search Site** provides access to all documents filed under the Lobbying Disclosure Act. It allows researchers to use a query system, download the Secretary's lobbying documents database, and access both registrations (LD-1) and reports (LD-2):

<http://soprweb.senate.gov/index.cfm?event=selectfields>

Snap Bird allows you to search individual Twitter feeds for words or phrases:

<http://snapbird.org>

System for Award Management (SAM) combines federal procurement systems and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one system. This consolidation is being done in phases, the first of which includes the functionality from the Central Contractor Registry (CCR), Federal Agency Registration (FedReg), Online Representations and Certifications Application, and Excluded Parties List System (EPLS). The overarching benefits of SAM include streamlined and integrated processes, elimination of data redundancies, and reduced costs while providing improved capability:

<https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>

Taxpayers for Common Sense, a nonpartisan budget watchdog, lists budget information and other federal spending data, including earmarks:

<https://www.taxpayer.net/library/data-documents/>

<https://www.taxpayer.net/national-security/cyberspending-database/>

<https://www.taxpayer.net/earmarks/>

Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC) provides comprehensive information about staffing, spending, and enforcement activities of the federal government:

<http://trac.syr.edu/>

The **Wayback Machine** is an archive of tons of different websites from all over the Internet.

<https://archive.org/web/>

USA Facts provides data on the flow of money through the country's government (federal, state and local) providing multi-year data on revenue collected and money spent, as well as context data on hundreds of metrics such as population, crime, education, etc:

<https://usafacts.org/>

Who is John Doe is a collection of tools to access public records, including those on lobbyists, current and past military personnel, and politicians:

<http://www.reporter.org/desktop/tips/johndoe.htm>

World Bank's listing of ineligible firms and individuals:

<http://web.worldbank.org/external/default/main?theSitePK=84266&contentMDK=64069844&menuPK=116730&pagePK=64148989&piPK=64148984>