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## FOIA request to CDC re: "monkeypox viron" image #22664

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Christine Massey <cmssyc@gmail.com>  
To: "FOIA Requests (CDC)" <FOIARequests@cdc.gov>  
Bcc: Andrew Kaufman <andrewkaufmanmd@gmail.com>

Thu, May 26, 2022 at 9:58 AM

May 26, 2022

To:  
Roger Andoh  
Freedom of Information Officer  
1600 Clifton Rd NE MS T-01  
Atlanta, Georgia 30333  
Email: [FOIARequests@cdc.gov](mailto:FOIARequests@cdc.gov)  
Phone: 770-488-6277  
Fax: 770-488-6200

Dear Freedom of Information Officer,

I require access to general records, as per the *Freedom of Information Act*.

**Description of Requested Records:**

All records in the possession, custody or control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) that 1) reveal the origin of image #22664 posted on the CDC's website (<https://phil.cdc.gov/Details.aspx?pid=22664>; "Content Providers(s): CDC/ Cynthia S. Goldsmith") that allegedly shows "a monkeypox viron", and/or 2) describe the methodologies used to obtain said image.

If any records match the above description of requested records and are currently available to the public elsewhere, please provide enough information about each record so that I may identify and access each one with certainty (i.e. title, author(s), date, journal, where the public may access it). Please provide URLs where possible.

**Format:**

Pdf documents sent to me via email; I do not wish for anything to be shipped to me.

**Contact Information:**

Last name: Massey  
First name: Christine  
Address: [REDACTED] Peterborough, ON, Canada  
Phone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [cmssyc@gmail.com](mailto:cmssyc@gmail.com)

Thank you in advance and best wishes,  
Christine Massey, M.Sc.



Christine Massey <cmssyc@gmail.com>

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## FOIA request to CDC re: "monkeypox viron" image #22664

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**Christine Massey** <cmssyc@gmail.com>  
To: "FOIA Requests (CDC)" <FOIARequests@cdc.gov>  
Bcc: Andrew Kaufman <andrewkaufmanmd@gmail.com>

Wed, Aug 10, 2022 at 8:09 PM

Dear Roger,

I filed the FOIA below 2.5 months ago and have never received a response. I require the response by Monday morning.

Thanks and best wishes,  
Christine

On Thu, May 26, 2022 at 9:58 AM Christine Massey <cmssyc@gmail.com> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]



Christine Massey &lt;cmssyc@gmail.com&gt;

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**Your CDC FOIA Request #22-01573-FOIA**

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**JADavis2@cdc.gov** <JADavis2@cdc.gov>  
To: cmssyc@gmail.com

Thu, Aug 11, 2022 at 9:05 AM

August 11, 2022

Request Number: 22-01573-FOIA

Dear Ms. Massey:

This is regarding your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request of May 26, 2022, for All records in the possession, custody or control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) that 1) reveal the origin of image #22664 posted on the CDC's website (<https://phil.cdc.gov/Details.aspx?pid=22664>; "Content Providers(s): CDC/ Cynthia S. Goldsmith") that allegedly shows "a monkeypox virion", and/or 2) describe the methodologies used to obtain said image..

Please see the attached letter.

Sincerely,  
CDC/ATSDR FOIA Office  
770-488-6399

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 **Final Response No Records.pdf**  
140K



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
Atlanta GA 30333  
August 11, 2022

Ms. Christine Massey  
[REDACTED]  
Peterborough, ON  
Via email: cmssyc@gmail.com

Dear Ms. Massey:

This letter is in response to your Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (CDC/ATSDR) Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request of May 26, 2022, for All records in the possession, custody or control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) that 1) reveal the origin of image #22664 posted on the CDC's website (<https://phil.cdc.gov/Details.aspx?pid=22664>; "Content Providers(s): CDC/ Cynthia S. Goldsmith") that allegedly shows "a monkeypox virion", and/or 2) describe the methodologies used to obtain said image.

A search of our records failed to reveal any documents pertaining to your request. Records subject to the Freedom of Information Act are maintain in a system of records within the agency control. However, the program has provided information on the photo that is the subject of your request. The program has reported the following:

The electron microscopic image was taken from a skin biopsy (from the roof of a vesicle) obtained during the 2003 US monkeypox outbreak associated with pet prairie dogs. The biopsy came from the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene. This was processed for electron microscopy by standard methods:

Formalin-fixed skin tissue was washed in 0.1 M phosphate buffer, pH 7.3, and fixed in buffered 2.5% glutaraldehyde. Specimens were post-fixed in 1% buffered osmium tetroxide, stained in 4% uranyl acetate, dehydrated through a graded series of alcohols and propylene oxide, and embedded in a mixture of Epon-substitute and Araldite. Thin sections were stained with 4% uranyl acetate and Reynold's lead citrate. Sections were examined in a Philips EM410-LS electron microscope.

As a side note, the description in PHIL was slightly in error and the first line should have read "This electron microscopic (EM) image depicted monkeypox virus particles...", not just a single virion. The remainder of the description identifies the mature and immature particles.

You may contact our FOIA Public Liaison at 770-488-6246 for any further assistance and to discuss any aspect of your request. Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov); telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

If you are not satisfied with the response to this request, you may administratively appeal to the Deputy Agency Chief FOIA Officer, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, via the online portal at <https://requests.publiclink.hhs.gov/App/Index.aspx>. Please mark both your appeal letter and envelope "FOIA Appeal." Your appeal must be electronically transmitted by November 9, 2022.

Sincerely,

Roger Andoh  
CDC/ATSDR FOIA Officer  
Office of the Chief Operating Officer  
(770) 488-6399  
Fax: (404) 235-1852

#22-01573-FOIA



Christine Massey &lt;cmssyc@gmail.com&gt;

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## Your CDC FOIA Request #22-01573-FOIA

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**Christine Massey** <cmssyc@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 11, 2022 at 12:01 PM

To: JADavis2@cdc.gov, "FOIA Requests (CDC)" &lt;FOIARequests@cdc.gov&gt;

Bcc: Andrew Kaufman &lt;andrewkaufmanmd@gmail.com&gt;

Hi Roger,

Thank you for your letter. I require some clarification.

1. Your letter states:

*A search of our records failed to reveal any documents pertaining to your request.*

This tells me that the image is not part of any scientific study held by the CDC, is that correct? Or is it associated with this study: [https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/13/9/07-0175\\_article?](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/13/9/07-0175_article?)

2. Your letter states:

*However, the program has provided information on the photo that is the subject of your request...*

What program do you refer to, who provided the information, and how did they provide this information when there are no records regarding the image?

Thanks and best wishes,  
Christine

[Quoted text hidden]



Christine Massey &lt;cmssyc@gmail.com&gt;

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**Your CDC FOIA Request #22-01573-FOIA**

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**Davis, Jonesa A. (CDC/OCOO/OD)** <ycg5@cdc.gov>  
To: Christine Massey <cmssyc@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 11, 2022 at 2:18 PM

Good Afternoon Ms. Massey,

You requested the origin of the "image" and the methodologies used to obtain the "image" and the National Center for Emerging Zoonotic and Infectious Diseases (NCEZID) responded to your request. If you wanted information on the 2003 prairie dog outbreak, the outbreak would be the subject of your request and you will have to submit a new FOIA request for that information.

Best,

Jonesa Davis

Government Information Specialist

OD/OCOO/FOIA

770-488-6067

[JADavis2@cdc.gov](mailto:JADavis2@cdc.gov)

[ycg5@cdc.gov](mailto:ycg5@cdc.gov)

[Quoted text hidden]



Christine Massey &lt;cmssyc@gmail.com&gt;

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## Your CDC FOIA Request #22-01573-FOIA

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**Christine Massey** <cmssyc@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 11, 2022 at 6:10 PM

To: "Davis, Jonesa A. (CDC/OCOO/OD)" &lt;ycg5@cdc.gov&gt;, "FOIA Requests (CDC)" &lt;FOIARequests@cdc.gov&gt;

Bcc: Andrew Kaufman &lt;andrewkaufmanmd@gmail.com&gt;

Hi Jonesa and Roger,

I do not want information about an alleged 2003 prairie dog outbreak;  
I want what I indicated in the FOIA.

Your responses have made clear that the CDC has no study and no  
science whatsoever connected to the alleged "monkeypox virus" image.  
Thank you.

Rogers's letter suggests that some sort of record (i.e. email)  
containing the EM methodology was created and provided by an  
unidentified contact in the National Center for Emerging Zoonotic and  
Infectious Diseases. Please provide that record or explain on what  
basis have you withheld it from me. Otherwise I will have to tell the  
public that the CDC has no record whatsoever regarding the EM  
methodology.

Please have your unidentified contact in the National Center for  
Emerging Zoonotic and Infectious Diseases create another record  
disclosing the source of their claims regarding the EM methodology,  
and stating whether or not the skin tissue was stored in "virus  
transport medium" (or any other medium) prior to imaging, and if so  
the contents of that medium. Please also have them state whether or  
not the skin tissue had been "cultured" prior to imaging and where the  
imaging was performed and by who. And please provide me with this  
record, otherwise I will have to tell the public that the CDC has no  
record whatsoever regarding the source for your unidentified contact's  
claims, etc.

Roger did not cite the National Center for Emerging Zoonotic and  
Infectious Diseases in his letter, he only made a vague reference to  
"the program". So I will have to release all of these emails in  
order for the identity of "the program" to be known to the public.

Thanks and best wishes,  
Christine

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