Case Study
Government of the District of Columbia (DC)

Organization
The Government of the District of Columbia is led by Mayor Muriel Bowser and a thirteen-member Council. The District is committed to a transparent, open form of government.

Challenge
The DC Government needed a standardized process for responding to and tracking FOIA requests across all Departments. Adopting a forward-thinking approach, DC Government sought to improve transparency and openness with its citizens, prioritizing citizen engagement to deliver greater levels of transparency. One part of the process was to improve the response rate of processing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and developing a way to post frequently requested documents online. The government sought out a system that:

• Centralized processing
• Increased efficiency
• Controlled cost
• Integrated with external public facing website

Solution
After studying the successful implementation of FOIAXpress® at US Federal agencies such as Department of Justice (DOJ) and Homeland Security (DHS), the DC Government selected FOIAXpress, built on AINS eCase adaptive case management platform, to automate the FOIA lifecycle. DC Government became the first major metropolitan city in the US to deploy comprehensive, agency-wide FOIA technology to all of its city government departments and agencies.

To encourage interaction with citizens, the client added FOIAXpress’ Public Access Link (PAL). PAL is a public-facing, web portal seamlessly integrated within the DC Government’s website. PAL allows citizens to submit and receive requests online, check status and access an electronic reading room. PAL provided DC Government with a digital way to promote openness and transparency.

To aid collaboration, the client chose a SaaS hosted model which allowed agencies to log on via the web. By utilizing the AINS FedRAMP-certified cloud, the DC Government now have a secure, convenient, and cost-effective means of hosting and maintaining their FOIAXpress solution.

FOIAXpress was deployed across 57 different DC Government agencies, each configured to support the unique processing and reporting needs of the individual offices.