

<b>SNOPES</b>	
<b>This Has To Be a first!</b>	

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*For once, fact-checkers have been useful.*

- 1 A story is going viral online. The original social media post states that the Food and Drug Administration [FDA] asked a judge for a time extension before it disclosed the information it relied upon to licence Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine in the USA.
  - 2 The post says the FDA wants to make the public wait for this information until the year 2076. But that's incorrect. So, the reputation of the FDA – the US approver of vaccines, on whom the public rely, to know vaccines are safe - is restored? Not at all. The *real* story makes the FDA look EVEN WORSE.
  - 3 The original post, [FDA Asks Federal Judge to Grant it Until the Year 2076 to Fully Release Pfizer's COVID-19 Vaccine Data](#) begins by saying that the FDA has asked a federal judge to make the public wait until the year 2076 to disclose all of the data and information it relied upon to licence Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine.
- The post said that the FDA wanted 55 years to produce this information to the public; that the FDA had repeatedly promised “full transparency” with regard to Covid-19 vaccines; and that more than 30 academics, professors, and scientists from the US's most prestigious universities had requested the data and information submitted to the FDA by Pfizer, which enabled the FDA to decide to license its Covid-19 vaccine.
- After the FDA did not provide the information, a lawsuit was filed against them, demanding the information. Three months later the FDA had still not released a single page of data.
- Instead, the FDA asked a federal judge to give it until 2076 to produce all the information.
- Pfizer provided more than 329,000 pages of documents to the FDA to license its vaccine.
- The FDA asked the judge to let it produce the documents from Pfizer at the rate of 500 pages per month. This would mean it would take until 2076 to produce them all!
- The post also states the FDA took 108 days from when Pfizer started producing the documents - on 7 May 2021 - to licencing the Pfizer vaccine on

23 August 2021.

The FDA apparently stated that it had conducted an intense, robust, thorough, and complete review and analysis of those documents to be sure that the Pfizer vaccine was safe and effective. It did that in 108 days.

But it is asking for over 20,000 days to make these documents available to the public.

4 Is this really true?

Of course not. The FDA does *not* want to keep people waiting for 55 years for this information. It has not *asked* for more time and furthermore, it is ready to start producing documents right away.

So people don't need to wait for 55 years before getting vaccinated? Well, yes, they do if they want to have all the documents.

I never thought I'd say this, but the version of the story published by Snopes under the heading [Does FDA Want Until 2076 To Release Vaccine Data?](#) is far, far better than the original version. I say better – but not for the FDA, I'm afraid.

Snopes is one of the older versions of that Internet virus known as *fact checkers*, which should rightly be called propaganda. It makes the lofty claim of being "the internet's go-to source for discerning what is true and what is total nonsense." It's hard to imagine how we ever managed without them.

I recommend reading the Snopes article, which made me giggle. This story is what I call an own goal for the FDA and Pfizer. It doesn't enhance my confidence in any other vaccine maker, either – or any other regulator. Far from it. Anyway, what follows is what Snopes have to say about this social media post and the story to which it relates:

5 Snopes:  
There has been a Freedom of Information Act request for more than 329,000 pages of Covid-19 vaccine data.  
So, that tallies with the social media post.

Snopes:  
The FDA are prepared to start releasing the data immediately.  
This contradicts the social media post.

Snopes:  
The FDA has not requested a delay in the release of its Covid-19 data until 2076.  
This also contradicts the social media post.

So, all the information will be released in the next couple of weeks, yes?  
NO.

The full set of documents would not be processed until the year 2076.  
That's what the social media post said!  
But – Snopes says that the FDA has not asked for more time?  
So - what's going on?

Snopes explains that a scheduling dispute is in progress.

The FDA has proposed a processing schedule that would enable the release of 500 pages every month.

This, according to the FDA, is "a rather standard processing schedule."

Their reasoning for this schedule is that:

*"reviewing and redacting records for exempt information is a time-consuming process that often requires government information specialists to review each page line-by-line."*

500 pages a month means that it will take the FDA 55 years, or until 2076, to completely fulfil the FOIA request.

The plaintiff in the lawsuit has made an alternative suggestion, of 5,000 pages a month.

But that would still be more than five years!

In response to the plaintiff's - entirely reasonable, to my mind - argument that the FDA took 108 days to go through Pfizer's papers and so they can release them to vaccine recipients in the same time, the FDA said:

*"The Court should flatly reject Plaintiff's specious argument that because the scientists reviewing Pfizer's Biologics License Application could do so on an expedited timeframe, the government information specialists should be able to do so in the same period of time."*

I say: so, the FDA say that it *seems* right and true that they [the FDA] can turn the papers around again in 108 days but it is *really* wrong and false. They don't, however, explain why it is a specious argument.

The FDA continue:

*"As should be apparent, the review conducted by FDA scientists when considering to approve a product is entirely different from the review conducted by FDA government information specialists when considering whether FDA must keep certain information confidential."*

I ask – why should it be apparent? Again, they don't explain.  
Clearly, however, the FDA believes that it is entirely reasonable to take far greater care over protecting Pfizer's commercial information than over protecting people who have Pfizer's product injected into them.

It is entirely possible, in any event, that the papers would be so heavily

redacted that they would be of no use. But it's good to hear it directly from the FDA themselves.

*"Moreover, FDA's FOIA office does not have nearly the same level of personnel or resources dedicated to process [sic] FOIA requests as FDA has marshaled to review license applications for live-saving [sic] products in the middle of a pandemic."*

The typos are not mine, by the way.

I say, and why would they have the same level of personnel or resources to turn around requests from the public as they have to grant requests from Big Pharma?

It is clear now, if it was not before, who the FDA serves.

It is *not* the People.

I will report the next episode of this story when I know it.

Again – thank you, Snopes.

### CONNECT'S Maxim and Oath

Connect is only interested in finding and sharing the TRUTH.  
In search of that TRUTH, we only pose questions – we have no answers.

By: Helen King

Source: Tetbury CONNECT: [Magazine](#)

3 [LINK](#): Original post: FDA Asks Federal Judge to Grant it Until the Year 2076 to Fully Release Pfizer's COVID-19 Vaccine Data

4 [LINK](#): Snopes: Does FDA Want Until 2076 To Release Vaccine Data?

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