

MuckRock / DocumentCloud — Initial Verification Denial

Zendesk ticket #147334 · From: Miranda (DocumentCloud) · Date: March 14, 2026 · Received at: newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org · Investigation: Platform Gatekeeping: Press Freedom

Provenance Note

This email was sent to newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org but routed through the Zendesk ticketing system associated with the February 7, 2026 verification request submitted by Torie Cortez. It was located in a separate Gmail inbox from the threads retrieved during the initial investigation records search. Zendesk ticket: #147334. This is the definitive record of DocumentCloud's denial — the document referenced in all subsequent DFP press inquiries as the 'March 14 denial.'

EMAIL RECORD 1 OF 2 — DENIAL

From: Miranda (DocumentCloud) <support@documentcloud.zendesk.com>
Reply-To: DocumentCloud <support+idP0MMPM-XJXVD@documentcloud.zendesk.com>
To: Torie Cortez <newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org>
Date: Saturday, March 14, 2026 — 8:59 PM EDT (5:59 PM PT)
Subject: [MuckRock] Re: Account Verification Request: Torie Cortez (Dismal Freedom Press)
Ticket: #147334

Your request (147334) has been updated.

Hi,

Thank you for your application to use DocumentCloud. At this time, based on the information you provided, we've determined that your project is not a fit for verified membership. You can still use your DocumentCloud account to save interesting documents into projects, add private annotations to them, and generally browse DocumentCloud's public corpus.

If you work with an organization with a verified DocumentCloud account, they can add you to it and you will gain full permissions.

You can search our public repository here: <https://www.documentcloud.org/app?q=>

If you're interested in continuing to hear about interesting document sets and future functionality, I'd also suggest registering for our newsletter.

I hope this is useful,

Miranda

[System footer: "If you're still experiencing issues or need additional support with your DocumentCloud account, please send a new email to info@documentcloud.org, so our team can assist you. This thread will no longer be monitored."]

EMAIL RECORD 2 OF 2 — ORIGINAL VERIFICATION APPLICATION (quoted in denial thread)

From: Torie Cortez <newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org>
To: DocumentCloud / MuckRock verification system
Date: February 7, 2026 — 9:24 PM EST
Subject: Account Verification Request: Torie Cortez (Dismal Freedom Press)
Ticket: #147334 (generated upon submission)

MuckRock Foundation has received a new DocumentCloud verification request from Torie Cortez at Dismal Freedom Press (<https://dismalfreedom.press>)

Application Tags:

Category: Newsroom (Digital), Independent Journalist, Journalistic Newsletter

TOS: True

I just created our organization's account

Alternative Emails:

torie.cortez@dismalfreedompress.org · newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org

Plans to Use DocumentCloud:

Dismal Freedom Press plans to use DocumentCloud to publish, organize, and annotate primary source materials obtained through public records requests and investigative reporting.

Our reporting relies heavily on original documents such as public-agency correspondence, settlement agreements, contracts, policies, training records, and compliance documentation obtained under the California Public Records Act (CPRA).

We publish source documents alongside reporting to support transparency, allow readers to verify findings, and preserve public-interest records in an accessible format. DocumentCloud will be used strictly for hosting and contextualizing primary source materials — not for press releases, advocacy, marketing, or original narrative articles.

We follow journalistic best practices, including verification, redaction of sensitive information where required by law, and ethical publication standards consistent with the SPJ Code of Ethics.

Source documents hosted on DocumentCloud will be linked directly within our reporting and newsletter distribution, including our Substack publication.

Article / Site Links:

<https://www.dismalfreedom.press>

<https://dismalfreedompress.substack.com>

Memberships / Ethics Standards:

Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) Code of Ethics · Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press (RCFP) legal and FOI guidance · Independent investigative newsroom focused on public-interest reporting.

Additional Application Metadata (Internal Use):

MuckRock org profile: <https://accounts.muckrock.com/organizations/dismal-freedom-press/>

MuckRock user profile: <https://accounts.muckrock.com/users/dismalfreedompress/>

Account created: 2026-02-08T02:24:40Z

Newsletter: True · Previously verified: No · URL: <https://dismalfreedom.press>

Editorial note: This denial — 35 days after the Feb 7 application, with no criteria cited, no explanation offered, and the thread immediately declared permanently closed — is the originating event of DFP's MuckRock/DocumentCloud press inquiry filed April 15, 2026. The application text above demonstrates DFP met every published DocumentCloud eligibility criterion at the time of submission.

Dismal Freedom Press · Platform Gatekeeping Investigation · dismalfreedom.press · newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org ·
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