

Subpart E—Privacy Act Regulations

AUTHORITY: Secs. 4, 303, 49 Stat. as amended, 1066, 1082 (47 U.S.C. 154, 303).

SOURCE: 40 FR 44512, Sept. 26, 1975, unless otherwise noted.

§ 0.551 Purpose and scope; definitions.

(a) The purpose of this subpart is to implement the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552(a), and to protect the rights of the individual in the accuracy and privacy of information concerning him which is contained in Commission records. The regulations contained herein cover any group of records under the Commission's control from which information about individuals is retrievable by the name of an individual or by some other personal identifier.

(b) In this subpart:

(1) *Individual* means a citizen of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence;

(2) *Record* means any item, collection or grouping of information about an individual that is maintained by the Commission, including but not limited to, such individual's education, financial transactions, medical history, and criminal or employment history, and that contains such individual's name, or the identifying number, symbol, or other identifying particular assigned to the individual, such as a finger or voice print or a photograph.

(3) *System of Records* means a group of records under the control of the Commission from which information is retrievable by the name of the individual or by some identifying number, symbol, or other identifying particular assigned to the individual;

(4) *Routine Use* means, with respect to the disclosure of a record, the use of such record for a purpose which is compatible with the purpose for which it was collected;

(5) *System Manager* means the Commission official responsible for the

storage, maintenance, safekeeping, and disposal of a system of records.

(Secs. 4(i) and 303(n), Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i) and 303(n); 47 CFR 0.231(d))

[40 FR 44512, Sept. 26, 1975, as amended at 49 FR 13368, Apr. 4, 1984]

§ 0.552 Notice identifying Commission systems of records.

The Commission publishes in the FEDERAL REGISTER upon establishment or revision a notice of the existence and character of the system of records, including for each system of records:

(a) The name and location of the system;

(b) The categories of individuals on whom records are maintained in the system;

(c) The categories of records maintained in the system;

(d) Each routine use of the records contained in the system, including the categories of users and the purposes of such use;

(e) The policies and practices of the agency regarding storage, retrievability, access controls, retention, and disposal of the records;

(f) The title and business address of the system manager;

(g) The address of the agency office to which inquiries should be addressed and the addresses of locations at which the individual may inquire whether a system contains records pertaining to himself;

(h) The agency procedures whereby an individual can be notified how access can be gained to any record pertaining to that individual contained in a system of records, and the procedure for correcting or contesting its contents; and

(i) The categories of sources of records in the system.

(Secs. 4(i) and 303(n), Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i) and 303(n); 47 CFR 0.231(d))

[40 FR 44512, Sept. 26, 1975, as amended at 49 FR 13368, Apr. 4, 1984]

§ 0.553 New uses of information.

Before establishing a new routine use of a system of records, the Commission will publish a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER of its intention to do so, and

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will provide at least 30 days for public comment on such use. The notice will contain:

- (a) The name of the system of records for which the new routine use is to be established;
- (b) The authority for the system;
- (c) The categories of records maintained;
- (d) The proposed routine use(s); and
- (e) The categories of recipients for each proposed routine use.

§0.554 Procedures for requests pertaining to individual records in a system of records.

(a) Upon request, the Commission will notify individuals as to whether it maintains information about them in a system of records and, subject to the provisions of §0.555(b), will disclose the substance of such information to that individual. In order to properly request notification or access to record information, reference must be made to the Notice described in §0.552. A table of contents, which is alphabetized by bureau or office, precedes the system descriptions and allows members of the public to easily identify record systems of interest to them. An individual may inquire into information contained in any or all systems of records described in the Notice. However, each inquiry shall be limited to information from systems located within a single bureau or office and shall be addressed to that bureau or office.

(b) Reasonable identification is required of all individuals making requests pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section in order to assure that disclosure of any information is made to the proper person.

(1) Individuals who choose to register a request for information in person may verify their identity by showing any two of the following: social security card; drivers license; employee identification card; medicare card; birth certificate; bank credit card; or other positive means of identification. Documents incorporating a picture and/or signature of the individual shall be produced if possible. If an individual cannot provide suitable documentation for identification, that individual will be required to sign an identity statement stipulating that knowingly or

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willfully seeking or obtaining access to records about another person under false pretenses is punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000.

NOTE: An individual's refusal to disclose his social security number shall not constitute cause in and of itself, for denial of a request.

(2) All requests for record information sent by mail shall be signed by the requestor and shall include his printed name, current address and telephone number (if any). Commission officials receiving such requests will attempt to verify the identity of the requestor by comparing his or her signature to those in the record. If the record contains no signatures and if positive identification cannot be made on the basis of other information submitted, the requestor will be required to sign an identity statement and stipulate that knowingly or willfully seeking or obtaining access to records about another person under false pretense is punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000.

(3) If positive identification cannot be made on the basis of the information submitted, and if data in the record is so sensitive that unauthorized access could cause harm or embarrassment to the individual to whom the record pertains, the Commission reserves the right to deny access to the record pending the production of additional more satisfactory evidence of identity.

NOTE: The Commission will require verification of identity only where it has determined that knowledge of the existence of record information or its substance is not subject to the public disclosure requirements of the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552, as amended.

(c) All requests for notification of the existence of record information or for access to such information shall be delivered to the business address of the system manager responsible for the system of records in question, except that requests relating to official personnel records shall be addressed to the Associate Managing Director—Personnel Management. Such addresses can be found in the FEDERAL REGISTER Notice described in §0.552.

(d) A written acknowledgement of receipt of a request for notification and/

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or access will be provided within 10 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) to the individual making the request. Such an acknowledgement may, if necessary, request any additional information needed to locate a record. A search of all systems of records identified in the individual's request will be made to determine if any records pertaining to the individual are contained therein, and the individual will be notified of the search results as soon as the search has been completed. Normally, a request will be processed and the individual notified of the search results within 30 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) from the date the inquiry is received. However, in some cases, as where records have to be recalled from Federal Record Centers, notification may be delayed. If it is determined that a record pertaining to the individual making the request does exist, the notification will state approximately when the record will be available for personal review. No separate acknowledgement is required if the request can be processed and the individual notified of the search results within the ten-day period.

(Secs. 4(i) and 303(n), Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i) and 303(n); 47 CFR 0.231(d))

[40 FR 44512, Sept. 26, 1975, as amended at 49 FR 13368, Apr. 4, 1984]

§ 0.555 Disclosure of record information to individuals.

(a) Individuals having been notified that the Commission maintains a record pertaining to them in a system of records may request access to such record in one of three ways: by in person inspection at the system location; by transfer of the record to a nearer location; or by mail.

(1) Individuals who wish to review their records at the system location must do so during regular Commission business hours (8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday). For personal and administrative convenience, individuals are urged to arrange to review a record by appointment. Preferences as to specific dates and times can be made by writing or calling the system manager responsible for the system of records in question at least two days in

advance of the desired appointment date, and by providing a telephone number where the individual can be reached during the day in case the appointment must be changed. Verification of identity is required as in § 0.554(b)(1) before access will be granted an individual appearing in person. Individuals may be accompanied by a person of his or her own choosing when reviewing a record. However, in such cases, a written statement authorizing discussion of their record in the presence of a Commission representative having physical custody of the records.

(2) Individuals may request that a record be transferred to a Commission field office or installation in the vicinity of his or her home and that access be granted at that location. The addresses of Commission field offices are listed in § 0.121. A request to transfer records must specify the exact location where the records should be sent and a telephone number to call when the information is available for review at the field location. Paragraph (a)(1) of this section regarding personal appointments, verification of identity accompanying persons, and disclosure of original records applies equally to this paragraph.

(3) Individuals may request that copies of records be sent directly to them. In such cases, individuals must verify their identity as § 0.554(b)(2) and provide an accurate return address. Records shall be sent only to that address.

(b) The disclosure of record information under this section is subject to the following limitations:

(1) Records containing medical information pertaining to an individual are subject to individual access under this section unless, in the judgment of the system manager having custody of the records after consultation with a medical doctor, access to such record information could have an adverse impact on the individual. In such cases, a copy of the record will be delivered to a medical doctor named by the individual.

(2) Classified material, investigative material compiled for law enforcement purposes, investigatory material compiled solely for determining suitability

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for Federal employment or access to classified information, and certain testing or examination material shall be removed from the records to the extent permitted in the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552(a). Section 0.561 of this subpart sets forth the systems of records maintained by the Commission which are either totally or partially exempt from disclosure under this subparagraph.

(c) No fee will be imposed if the number of pages of records requested is 25 or less. Requests involving more than 25 pages shall be submitted to the duplicating contractor (see §0.456(a)).

(d) The provisions of this section in no way give an individual the right to access any information compiled in reasonable anticipation of a civil action or proceeding.

(e) In the event that a determination is made denying an individual access to records pertaining to that individual for any reason, such individual may either:

(1) Seek administrative review of the adverse determination. Such a request shall be in writing and should be addressed to the system manager who made the initial decision. In addition, the request for review shall state specifically why the initial decision should be reversed.

(2) Seek judicial relief in the district courts of the United States pursuant to paragraph (g)(1)(B) of the Act.

(Secs. 4(i) and 303(n), Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i) and 303(n); 47 CFR 0.231(d))

[40 FR 44512, Sept. 26, 1975, as amended at 40 FR 58858, Dec. 19, 1975; 49 FR 13369, Apr. 4, 1984]

§0.556 Request to correct or amend records.

(a) An individual may request the amendment of information contained in their record. Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, the request to amend should be submitted in writing to the system manager responsible for the records. Requests to amend the official personnel records of active FCC employees should be submitted to the Associate Managing Director—Human Resources Management, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, D.C. 20554. Requests to amend official personnel

records of former FCC employees should be sent to the Assistant Director for Work Force Information, Compliance and Investigations Group, Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW., Washington, D.C. 20415. Any request to amend should contain as a minimum:

(1) The identity verification information required by §0.554(b)(2) and the information needed to locate the record as required by §0.554(a).

(2) A brief description of the item or items of information to be amended; and

(3) The reason for the requested change.

(b) A written acknowledgement of the receipt of a request to amend a record will be provided within 10 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) to the individual requesting the amendment. Such an acknowledgement may, if necessary, request any additional information needed to make a determination. There will be no acknowledgement if the request can be reviewed, processed, and the individual notified of compliance or denial within the 10 day period.

(c) The responsible system manager, or in the case of official personnel records of active FCC employees, the Associate Managing Director—Personnel Management, shall (normally within 30 days) take one of the following actions regarding a request to amend:

(1) If the system manager agrees that an amendment to the record is warranted, the system manager shall:

(i) So advise the individual in writing;

(ii) Correct the record in compliance with the individual's request; and

(iii) If an accounting of disclosures has been made, advise all previous recipients of the fact that the record has been corrected and of the substance of the correction.

(2) If the system manager, after an initial review, does not agree that all or any portion of the record merits amendment, the system manager shall:

(i) Notify the individual in writing of such refusal to amend and the reasons therefore;

(ii) Advise the individual that further administrative review of the initial decision by the full Commission may be sought pursuant to the procedures set forth in §0.557. (In cases where the request to amend involves official personnel records, review is available exclusively from the Assistant Director for Work Force Information, Compliance and Investigations Group, Office of Personnel Management, Washington, DC 20415; and

(iii) Inform the individual of the procedures for requesting Commission review pursuant to §0.557.

(d) In reviewing a record in response to a request to amend, the system manager shall assess the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of the record in light of each data element placed into controversy and the use of the record in making decisions that could possibly affect the individual. Moreover, the system manager shall adjudicate the merits of any request to delete information based on whether or not the information in controversy is both relevant and necessary to accomplish a statutory purpose required of the Commission by law or executive order of the President.

(Secs. 4(i) and 303(n), Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i) and 303(n); 47 CFR 0.231(d))

[40 FR 44512, Sept. 26, 1975, as amended at 45 FR 39850, June 12, 1980; 49 FR 13369, Apr. 4, 1984; 65 FR 58466, Sept. 29, 2000]

§0.557 Administrative review of an initial decision not to amend a record.

(a) Individuals have 30 days from the date of the determination not to amend a record consistent with their request to seek further administrative review by the full Commission. Such a request shall be in writing and should be addressed to either the system manager who made the initial adverse decision, or, in the case of official personnel records of active FCC employees, to the Assistant Director for Work Force Information, Compliance and Investigations Group, Office of Personnel Management, Washington, DC 20415. Any request for administrative review must:

(1) Clearly identify the questions presented for review (e.g., whether the record information in question is, in

fact, accurate; whether information subject to a request to delete is relevant and necessary to the purpose for which it is maintained);

(2) Specify with particularity why the decision reached by the system manager is erroneous or inequitable; and

(3) Clearly state how the record should be amended or corrected.

(b) The Commission shall conduct an independent review of the record in controversy using the standards of review set out in §0.556(d). It may seek such additional information as is necessary to make its determination. Final administrative review shall be completed not later than 30 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal public holidays) from the date on which the individual requests such review unless the Chairman determines that a fair and equitable review cannot be made within the 30 day period. In such event, the individual will be informed in writing of the reasons for the delay and the approximate date on which the review is expected to be completed.

(c) If upon review of the record in controversy the Commission agrees with the individual that the requested amendment is warranted, the Commission will proceed in accordance with §0.556(c)(1) (i) through (iii).

(d) If after the review, the Commission also refuses to amend the record as requested, it shall:

(1) Notify the individual in writing of its refusal and the reasons therefore;

(2) Advise the individual that a concise statement of the reasons for disagreeing with the decision of the Commission may be filed;

(3) Inform the individual:

(i) That such a statement should be signed and addressed to the system manager having custody of the record in question;

(ii) That the statement will be made available to any one to whom the record is subsequently disclosed together with, at the Commission's discretion, a summary of its reasons for refusing to amend the record; and

(iii) That prior recipients of the record will be provided a copy of the statement of dispute to the extent that

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an accounting of such disclosures is maintained; and

(4) Advise the individual that judicial review of the Commission's decision not to amend the record in any district court of the United States is available.

(Secs. 4(i) and 303(n), Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i) and 303(n); 47 CFR 0.231(d))

[40 FR 44512, Sept. 26, 1975, as amended at 45 FR 39850, June 12, 1980; 49 FR 13369, Apr. 4, 1984]

§ 0.558 Advice and assistance.

Individuals who have questions regarding the procedures contained in this subpart for gaining access to a particular system of records or for contesting the contents of a record, either administratively or judicially, should write or call the Privacy Liaison Officer at the following address:

Federal Communications Commission, Office of General Counsel, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554.

Individuals who request clarification of the Notice described in §0.552 or who have questions concerning the characterization of specific systems of records as set forth therein, should write or call the Privacy Liaison Officer at the following address:

Federal Communications Commission, Performance Evaluation and Records Management, Office of the Managing Director, 445 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20554

(Secs. 4(i) and 303(n), Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i) and 303(n); 47 CFR 0.231(d))

[40 FR 44512, Sept. 26, 1975, as amended at 49 FR 13369, Apr. 4, 1984; 65 FR 58466, Sept. 29, 2000]

§ 0.559 Disclosure of disputed information to persons other than the individual to whom it pertains.

If the Commission determines not to amend a record consistent with an individual's request, and if the individual files a statement of disagreement pursuant to §0.557(d)(2), the Commission shall clearly annotate the record so that the disputed portion becomes apparent to anyone who may subsequently have access to, use or disclose the record. A copy of the individual's statement of disagreement shall accompany any subsequent disclosure of

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the record. In addition, the Commission may include a brief summary of its reasons for not amending the record when disclosing the record. Such statements become part of the individual's record for granting access, but are not subject to the amendment procedures of §0.556.

§ 0.560 Penalty for false representation of identity.

Any individual who knowingly and willfully requests or obtains under false pretenses any record concerning an individual from any system of records maintained by the Commission shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine of not more than \$5,000.

§ 0.561 Exemptions.

The following systems of records are totally or partially exempt from subsections (c)(3), (d), (e)(1), (e)(4) (G), (H), and (I), and (f) of the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552(a), and from §§0.554 through 0.557 of this subpart:

(a) *System name.* Radio Operator Records—FCC/FOB-1. Parts of this system of records are exempt pursuant to Section (k)(2) of the Act because they contain investigatory material compiled solely for law enforcement purposes.

(b) *System name.* Violators File (records kept on individuals who have been subjects of FCC field enforcement actions)—FCC/FOB-2. Parts of this system of records are EXEMPT because they are maintained as a protective service for individuals described in section 3056 of title 18, and because they are necessary for Commission employees to perform their duties, pursuant to sections (k) (1), (2), and (3) of the Act.

(c) *System name.* Attorney Misconduct Files—FCC/OGC-2. This system of records is exempt pursuant to section 3(k)(2) of the Act because it is maintained for law enforcement purposes.

(d) *System name.* Licensees or Unlicensed Persons Operating Radio Equipment Improperly—FCC. Parts of this system of records are exempt pursuant to section 3(k)(2) of the Act because they embody investigatory material compiled solely for law enforcement purposes.

(e) *System name.* Personnel Investigation Records—FCC/Central-6. Parts of these systems of records are exempt because they embody investigatory material pursuant to sections 3(k)(2) and 3(k)(5) of the Act as applicable.

(f) *System name.* Criminal Investigative Files—FCC/OIG-1. Compiled for the purpose of criminal investigations. This system of records is exempt pursuant to section (j)(2) of the Act because the records contain investigatory material compiled for criminal law enforcement purposes.

(g) *System name.* General Investigative Files—FCC/OIG-2. Compiled for law enforcement purposes. This system of records is exempt pursuant to section (k)(2) of the Act because the records contain investigatory material compiled for law enforcement purposes.

(Secs. 4(i) and 303(n), Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. 154(i) and 303(n); 47 CFR 0.231(d))

[40 FR 44512, Sept. 26, 1975, as amended at 49 FR 13369, Apr. 4, 1984; 58 FR 11549, Feb. 26, 1993]

Subpart F—Meeting Procedures

AUTHORITY: Secs. 4, 303, 48 Stat., as amended, 1066, 1082; (47 U.S.C. 154, 303).

SOURCE: 42 FR 12867, Mar. 7, 1977, unless otherwise noted.

§ 0.601 Definitions.

For purposes of this section:

(a) The term *agency* means:

(1) The Commission,

(2) A board of Commissioners (see § 0.212),

(3) The Telecommunications Committee (see § 0.215), and

(4) Any other group of Commissioners hereafter established by the Commission on a continuing or *ad hoc* basis and authorized to act on behalf of the Commission.

(b) The term *meeting* means the deliberations among a quorum of the Commission, a Board of Commissioners, or a quorum of a committee of Commissioners, where such deliberations determine or result in the joint conduct or disposition of official agency business, except that the term does not include deliberations to decide whether to announce a meeting with less than seven

days notice, or whether a meeting should be open or closed. (The term includes conference telephone calls, but does not include the separate consideration of Commission business by Commissioners.) For purposes of this subpart each item on the agenda of a meeting is considered a meeting or a portion of a meeting.

[42 FR 12867, Mar. 7, 1977, as amended at 48 FR 56391, Dec. 21, 1983; 64 FR 2149, Jan. 13, 1999]

§ 0.602 Open meetings.

(a) All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this subpart.

(b) Except as provided in § 0.603, every portion of every meeting shall be open to public observation. Observation does not include participation or disruptive conduct by observers, and persons engaging in such conduct will be removed from the meeting.

(c) The right of the public to observe open meetings does not alter those rules in this chapter which relate to the filing of motions, pleadings, or other documents. Unless such pleadings conform to the other procedural requirements of this chapter, pleadings based upon comments or discussions at open meetings, as a general rule, will not become part of the official record, will receive no consideration, and no further action by the Commission will be taken thereon.

(d) Deliberations, discussions, comments or observations made during the course of open meetings do not themselves constitute action of the Commission. Comments made by Commissioners may be advanced for purposes of discussion and may not reflect the ultimate position of a Commissioner.

[42 FR 12867, Mar. 7, 1977, as amended at 45 FR 63491, Sept. 25, 1980]

§ 0.603 Bases for closing a meeting to the public.

Except where the agency finds that the public interest requires otherwise, an agency or advisory committee meeting may be closed to the public, and information pertaining to such meetings which would otherwise be disclosed to the public under § 0.605 may be withheld, if the agency determines