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under § 2634.203, is covered by the criteria of paragraph (a) of this section.

[57 FR 11826, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 63 FR 69992, Dec. 18, 1998; 64 FR 2422, Jan. 14, 1999]

§ 2634.905 Exclusions from filing requirements.

Any individual or class of individuals described in § 2634.904 of this subpart, including special Government employees unless otherwise noted, may be excluded from all or a portion of the confidential reporting requirements of this subpart, when the agency head or designee determines that:

(a) The duties of a position make remote the possibility that the incumbent will be involved in a real or apparent conflict of interest;

(b) The duties of a position involve such a low level of responsibility that the submission of a confidential financial disclosure report is unnecessary because of:

(1) The substantial degree of supervision and review over the position; or

(2) The inconsequential effect of any potential conflict on the integrity of the Government;

(c) The use of an alternative procedure approved in writing by the Office of Government Ethics is adequate to prevent possible conflicts of interest; or

(d) The use of OGE Optional Form 450-A (Confidential Certificate of No New Interests) is adequate to prevent possible conflicts of interest. This form may be used by eligible filers, as described in this paragraph, who can certify, after reexamining their most recent previous OGE Form 450, that they (and their spouse and dependent children) have acquired no new interests required to be reported on OGE Form 450, and that they have not changed jobs (no new position description or other significant change in duties) at their agency since filing that previous report. OGE Optional Form 450-A will be used under the following conditions:

(1) OGE Optional Form 450-A will only be made available for use by current employees who are not special Government employees.

(2) OGE Optional Form 450-A will only be used by incumbent filers, as described in § 2634.903(a) of this subpart,

in lieu of filing an annual OGE Form 450, who have a previous OGE Form 450 on file with their agency for the position they currently hold. Its due date is as specified in § 2634.903(a), unless extended under § 2634.903(d).

(3) As indicated on the OGE Optional Form 450-A, eligible filers may use OGE Optional Form 450-A, if applicable to their circumstances, or they may file a new OGE Form 450, at their option. Therefore, a blank OGE Form 450 and its accompanying written instructions should ordinarily be distributed to them, along with the blank OGE Optional Form 450-A. The instructions to OGE Form 450 will also provide guidance on what is meant by “reportable” interests on OGE Optional Form 450-A. In lieu of distributing a blank OGE Form 450 and its instructions, agencies may choose to develop separate guidance on the meaning of “reportable” interests, or they may refer certificate users to guidance contained in any available source, such as the Office of Government Ethics’ Web site on the Internet or agency-approved electronic software for OGE Form 450. Filers would then also have to be advised of where to obtain a blank OGE Form 450, if needed.

(4) OGE Optional Form 450-A may be used by eligible filers for a maximum of three consecutive years before they are required to complete a new OGE Form 450 every fourth year, on a uniform basis for all incumbent (annual) filers, as provided in paragraph (d)(5) of this section. Agencies may, however, elect to permit use of the OGE Optional Form 450-A for only one year (or two years), and to require a new OGE Form 450 every second (or third) year, on a uniform basis for all incumbent filers, as provided in paragraph (d)(5) of this section.

(5) In each year divisible by four, beginning in 2000 (or divisible by two or three, beginning in 1998, for agencies that choose one of the more frequent options described in the second sentence of paragraph (d)(4) of this section), all incumbent filers, as described in § 2634.903(a) of this subpart, must file a new OGE Form 450 rather than OGE Optional Form 450-A, regardless of how recently they may have filed an OGE Form 450 (either as a new entrant or as

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an annual filer who was not eligible to use, or chose not to use, the optional certificate).

(6) When submitting OGE Optional Form 450-A, filers are not required to attach a copy of their previous OGE Form 450, unless their agency determines that it is necessary. Filers should be encouraged, however, to retain a copy of their previous OGE Form 450, so that it will be readily available for their examination prior to completing an OGE Optional Form 450-A.

Example 1. An agency special Government employee who is a draftsman prepares the drawings to be used by an agency in soliciting bids for construction work on a bridge. Because he is not involved in the contracting process associated with the construction, the likelihood that his actions will create a conflict of interest is remote. The draftsman need not be required by the agency to file a confidential financial disclosure report.

Example 2. An investigator is principally assigned as the field agent to investigate alleged violations of conflict of interest laws. The investigator works under the direct supervision of an agent-in-charge. The agent-in-charge reviews all of the investigator's work product and then uses those materials to prepare the agency's report which is submitted under his own name. The agency may decide not to require the investigator to file a confidential disclosure report.

Example 3. A nonsupervisory auditor at an agency is regularly assigned to cases involving possible loan improprieties by financial institutions. Prior to undertaking each enforcement review, the auditor reviews the file to determine if she, her spouse, minor or dependent child, or any general partner, organization in which she serves as an officer, director, trustee, employee, or general partner, or organization with which she is negotiating or has an agreement or an arrangement for future employment, or a close friend or relative is a subject of the investigation, or will be in any way affected by the investigation. Once she determines that there is no such relationship, she signs and dates a certification which verifies that she has reviewed the file and has determined that no conflict of interest exists. She then files the certification with the head of her auditing division at the agency. On the other hand, if she cannot execute the certification, she informs the head of her auditing division. In response, the division will either reassign the case or review the conflicting interest to determine whether a waiver would be appropriate. This alternate procedure, if approved by the Office of Government Ethics in writing, will suffice for a conflict of interest review. Therefore, the agency may ex-

clude the auditor from filing a confidential disclosure report under this subpart.

[57 FR 11826, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21855, May 22, 1992; 62 FR 33976, June 24, 1997]

§ 2634.906 Review of confidential filer status.

The head of each agency, or an officer designated by the head of the agency for that purpose, shall review any complaint by an individual that his position has been improperly determined by the agency to be one which requires the submission of a confidential financial disclosure report pursuant to this subpart. A decision by the agency head or designee regarding the complaint shall be final and conclusive for all purposes, notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation. This procedure is the sole and exclusive means of seeking review of an agency's decision to designate positions and the employees therein for filing confidential financial disclosure reports.

NOTE: The provision in this section for a final decision by the agency head or designee is intended to preclude administrative or negotiated grievances, arbitration procedures, and any other review or appeal, either within or outside the agency. This finality of the agency head's (or designee's) decision is necessary in order to maintain the prompt and orderly administration of the executive branch confidential financial disclosure system.

[57 FR 11826, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 63 FR 15274, Mar. 31, 1998]

§ 2634.907 Report contents.

(a) Other than the reports of confidential filers described in § 2634.904(c), each confidential financial disclosure report filed pursuant to § 2634.903 of this subpart shall include on the standard form prescribed by the Office of Government Ethics (see § 2634.601 of subpart F of this part) and in accordance with instructions issued by the Office, a full and complete statement of information about himself, his spouse and his dependent children, required to be reported according to the provisions of subpart C of this part, (except for those provisions in subpart C requiring the reporting of the amounts or values of any item), with respect to the following: