

shall be based on a consideration of all the relevant factors, including those listed in § 2635.502(d), and a determination that the concern that a reasonable person may question the integrity of the agency's decisionmaking process outweighs the Government's interest in the employee's participation in the particular matter.

Example 1: An employee of the Securities and Exchange Commission was relieved of responsibility for an investigation of a broker-dealer while seeking employment with the law firm representing the broker-dealer in that matter. The firm did not offer her the partnership position she sought. Even though she is no longer seeking employment with the firm, she may continue to be disqualified from participating in the investigation based on a determination by the agency designee that the concern that a reasonable person might question whether, in view of the history of the employment negotiations, she could act impartially in the matter outweighs the Government's interest in her participation.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 62 FR 48748, Sept. 17, 1997; 64 FR 13064, Mar. 17, 1999]

Subpart G—Misuse of Position

§ 2635.701 Overview.

This subpart contains provisions relating to the proper use of official time and authority, and of information and resources to which an employee has access because of his Federal employment. This subpart sets forth standards relating to:

- (a) Use of public office for private gain;
- (b) Use of nonpublic information;
- (c) Use of Government property; and
- (d) Use of official time.

§ 2635.702 Use of public office for private gain.

An employee shall not use his public office for his own private gain, for the endorsement of any product, service or enterprise, or for the private gain of friends, relatives, or persons with whom the employee is affiliated in a nongovernmental capacity, including nonprofit organizations of which the employee is an officer or member, and persons with whom the employee has or seeks employment or business relations. The specific prohibitions set

forth in paragraphs (a) through (d) of this section apply this general standard, but are not intended to be exclusive or to limit the application of this section.

(a) *Inducement or coercion of benefits.* An employee shall not use or permit the use of his Government position or title or any authority associated with his public office in a manner that is intended to coerce or induce another person, including a subordinate, to provide any benefit, financial or otherwise, to himself or to friends, relatives, or persons with whom the employee is affiliated in a nongovernmental capacity.

Example 1: Offering to pursue a relative's consumer complaint over a household appliance, an employee of the Securities and Exchange Commission called the general counsel of the manufacturer and, in the course of discussing the problem, stated that he worked at the SEC and was responsible for reviewing the company's filings. The employee violated the prohibition against use of public office for private gain by invoking his official authority in an attempt to influence action to benefit his relative.

Example 2: An employee of the Department of Commerce was asked by a friend to determine why his firm's export license had not yet been granted by another office within the Department of Commerce. At a department-level staff meeting, the employee raised as a matter for official inquiry the delay in approval of the particular license and asked that the particular license be expedited. The official used her public office in an attempt to benefit her friend and, in acting as her friend's agent for the purpose of pursuing the export license with the Department of Commerce, may also have violated 18 U.S.C. 205.

(b) *Appearance of governmental sanction.* Except as otherwise provided in this part, an employee shall not use or permit the use of his Government position or title or any authority associated with his public office in a manner that could reasonably be construed to imply that his agency or the Government sanctions or endorses his personal activities or those of another. When teaching, speaking, or writing in a personal capacity, he may refer to his official title or position only as permitted by § 2635.807(b). He may sign a letter of recommendation using his official title only in response to a request for an employment recommendation or