

§ 73.735–805

§ 73.735–805 Advice and guidance on conflicts matters.

(a) Whenever an employee has a question about the appropriate course of conduct to be followed in a matter that may involve an actual or apparent conflict of interest, he or she should immediately consult with his or her supervisor or a deputy ethics counselor, or both. If a supervisor who is consulted determines that the matter warrants further consideration, he or she may, in conjunction with the employee, submit the details of the matter, in writing, to the appropriate deputy ethics counselor. These details should include a description of:

(1) The activity, relationship, or interest giving rise to the question posed by the employee;

(2) The duties or official responsibilities of the employee(s) involved;

(3) The nature of the actual or apparent conflict of interest; and

(4) Any other information that may be helpful in reviewing the problem.

(b) Upon receiving the submission of an employee or a supervisor, the deputy ethics counselor will develop any additional information about the matter as necessary, and will confer with the Department Ethics Counselor as appropriate. The Department Ethics Counselor and the head of the principal operating component or his or her designee will be informed of any serious violation of the standards of this subpart or any other conflict of interest law. Questions of first impression or other unusual matters shall be brought to the attention of the Department Ethics Counselor and the head of the principal operating component or his or her designee.

(c) On the basis of all information gathered including, where appropriate, the advice of the Department Ethics Counselor, the deputy ethics counselor will:

(1) Decide that there is no violation or potential violation of the standards of this subpart or any other law and so notify the employee and his or her supervisor in writing; or

(2) Decide that a violation or potential violation of the standards of this subpart or other law has occurred or may occur, and that the employee involved shall take one or more of the

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steps set forth in § 731.735–904 to resolve the problem and notify the employee and his or her supervisor in writing; or

(3) Decide that, although no violation of this subpart or other law has occurred, the nature of the matter is such that the employee should periodically report any additional information that would require reconsideration of the initial submission.

§ 73.735–806 Documentation and publication of opinions.

(a) The Department Ethics Counselor, deputy ethics counselors, and any other individuals required to be involved in the review and resolution of violations or potential violations of this subpart shall maintain full and accurate documentation of the formal advice and guidance given.

(b) From time to time, the Department Ethics Counselor shall publish summaries of advisory opinions issued by his or her office, deleting, as necessary, any personal identifiers or other information which may give rise to an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. These summaries shall be distributed to all deputy ethics counselors, heads of principal operating components, and principal regional officials.

(c) From time to time, the Department Ethics Counselor shall publish an index of all summaries issued in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section, and shall distribute these indexes to all deputy ethics counselors and heads of principal operating components who shall in turn make them available for review by supervisors and interested employees.

Subpart I—Reporting Financial Interests

§ 73.735–901 Reporting requirement of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978.

(a) *Applicability.* The following employees and special Government employees shall submit public financial disclosure reports in accordance with the provisions of Title II of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, Pub. L. 95–521, as amended:

(1) Officers and employees (including consultants who will work more than

60 days in a calendar year) whose positions are classified at GS-16 or above of the General Schedule, or whose basic rate of pay (excluding "step" increases) under other pay schedules is equal to, or greater than, the rate for GS-16 (step 1);

(2) Members of the uniformed services whose pay grade is 0-7 or above;

(3) Officers and employees in any other positions determined by the Director of the Office of Government Ethics to be of equal classification to GS-16;

(4) Administrative Law Judges;

(5) Employees in the excepted service in positions which are of a confidential or policy-making character, unless their position has been excluded by the Director of the Office of Government Ethics;

(6) Department Ethics Counselor; and
(7) Deputy Ethics Counselors.

An employee who thinks that his or her position has been improperly included under the reporting requirements of this part may obtain a review of that determination by writing to the Department Ethics Counselor.

(b) *Filing Dates.* Employees listed in § 73.735-901 (a) of this subpart shall file a financial disclosure report:

(1) Within 5 days after the transmittal by the President to the Senate of their nomination to a position requiring Senate confirmation, or

(2) Within 30 days after assuming a covered position not requiring Senate confirmation unless the employee has left another covered position listed in § 73.735-901 (a) of this subpart, or

(3) Within 30 days after terminating Federal employment or assuming a position which is not listed in § 73.735-901 (a) of this subpart; and

(4) By May 15 of each calendar year, unless the employee has in that calendar year already submitted a financial disclosure report covering the preceding calendar year.

(c) *Submission of reports.* (1) Executive level officers, non-career executives, deputy ethics counselors and Schedule C employees in the Office of the Secretary who are required to report in accordance with § 73.735-901 (a) of this subpart shall submit their reports to the Department Ethics Counselor.

(2) All other employees required to report in accordance with § 73.735-901 (a) of this subpart shall submit their reports to the reviewing official for their organizational component under procedures described in the Department's Personnel Manual. Personnel offices will keep a list of reviewing officials and will give each covered employee the name of the official to whom his or her report should be sent.

(d) *Review and certification of reports.*

(1) Each report submitted in accordance with this section shall be reviewed by the appropriate reviewing official within 60 days of its receipt. Upon reviewing a report and finding that the information contained therein reveals no conflict of interest or other violation of any provision of this part or applicable law, the reviewing officer shall certify the report with his or her signature.

(2) The certification of a report filed in accordance with this section shall have the concurrence of the Office of the General Counsel.

(3) Action to be taken by the reviewing official if the individual is not in compliance with applicable laws and regulations is discussed in § 73.735-903 and § 73.735-904.

§ 73.735-902 Reporting requirements for certain employees not covered by the Ethics in Government Act of 1978.

(a) *Applicability.* The following employees and special Government employees shall submit confidential statements of employment and financial interests in accordance with the provisions of this subpart, provided they are not required to submit financial disclosure reports under § 73.735-901. A list of the positions in this Department whose incumbents are required to file financial interest statements as prescribed by this subpart is available for review in all of the Departments servicing personnel offices.

(1) Officers and employees in positions classified at GS-13 or above (or comparable pay level) who have decision-making responsibility for the following matters:

- (i) Contracting or procurement,
- (ii) Administering or monitoring grants or subsidies,