

§9.5

Legal proceeding between private litigants means any legal proceeding in which neither the Department of Transportation nor the United States (including any federal agency or officer of the United States in his or her official capacity) is a party.

Employee of the Department or Employee means any current or former officer or employee of the Department; any active duty, retired, or former officer or enlisted member of the Coast Guard; or any current or former contractor (including any corporation or other entity and any employee or subcontractor).

Agency counsel means the General Counsel of the Department or the Chief Counsel of any operating administration of the Department concerned, any person to whom the General Counsel or Chief Counsel has delegated authority, or any person who is authorized to represent the Department in a specific legal proceeding.

Testimony means any written or oral statement by a witness, including depositions, answers to interrogatories, affidavits, declarations, and statements at a hearing or trial.

§9.5 General prohibition of production or disclosure in legal proceedings.

No employee of the Department may provide testimony or produce any material contained in the files of the Department, or disclose any information relating to, or based upon, material contained in the files of the Department, or disclose any information or produce any material acquired as part of the performance of that employee's official duties or because of that employee's official status unless authorized in accordance with this part, or by other applicable law.

§9.7 Testimony by employees before the Department or in other legal proceedings in which the United States is a party.

In any legal proceeding before the Department or in which the United States (including any federal agency or officer of the United States) is a party:

(a) Agency counsel shall arrange for an employee to testify as a witness for the United States whenever the attor-

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ney representing the United States requests it.

(b) An employee may testify for the United States both as to facts within the employee's personal knowledge and as an expert or opinion witness. Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, an employee may not testify as an expert or opinion witness, with regard to any matter arising out of the employee's official duties or the functions of the Department, for any party other than the United States in any legal proceeding in which the United States is a party. An employee who receives a demand to testify on behalf of a party other than the United States may testify as to facts within the employee's personal knowledge, provided that the testimony be subject to the prior approval of agency counsel and to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and any applicable claims of privilege.

(c) An employee may testify as an expert or opinion witness on behalf of an officer or enlisted member of the Coast Guard in any legal proceeding conducted by the Coast Guard.

§9.9 Legal proceedings between private litigants: General rules.

In legal proceedings between private litigants:

(a) The proper method for obtaining testimony or records from an employee is to submit a request to agency counsel as provided in §§9.13 and 9.15 of this part, not to serve a demand on the employee. Whenever, in a legal proceeding between private litigants, an employee is served with a demand, or receives a request, to testify in that employee's official capacity or produce records, the employee shall immediately notify agency counsel.

(b) If authorized to testify pursuant to these rules, an employee may testify only as to facts within that employee's personal knowledge with regard to matters arising out of his or her official duties.

(1) When the proceeding arises from an accident, an employee may testify only as to personally known facts, not reasonably available from other sources, observed by the employee or uncovered during the employee's investigation of the accident or observed by the employee even if he or she did not

investigate the accident. The employee shall decline to testify regarding facts beyond the scope of his or her official duties.

(2) The employee shall not testify to facts that are contained in a report, or any part of a report, unless the employee has obtained permission from agency counsel to disclose the information.

(3) The employee shall not disclose confidential or privileged information unless the employee has obtained permission from agency counsel to disclose the information.

(4) The employee shall not testify as to facts when agency counsel determines that the testimony would not be in the best interest of the Department or the United States if disclosed.

(c) An employee shall not testify as an expert or opinion witness with regard to any matter arising out of the employee's official duties or the functions of the Department. An employee who is asked questions that call for expert or opinion testimony shall decline to answer on the grounds that it is forbidden by this part. Agency counsel shall advise the employee on how to proceed if the presiding officer directs the employee to provide expert or opinion testimony.

(d) An employee shall not provide testimony at a trial or hearing. An employee's testimony shall be limited to a single deposition, affidavit, or set of interrogatories, concerning the circumstances (e.g. an accident) from which the proceeding arose. Where multiple legal proceedings concerning those circumstances are pending, or can occur, it shall be the duty of the private litigant seeking the testimony to ascertain, to the extent feasible, the identities of all parties, or potential parties, to those proceedings and notify them that a deposition has been granted and that they have the opportunity to participate. The private litigant shall submit an affidavit or certification describing the extent of the search for parties and potential parties and listing the names of the parties and potential parties notified.

(e) Where an employee has already provided testimony, any party wishing to obtain further testimony from that employee concerning the same matter

or occurrence, whether in the same or a different private legal proceeding, may submit a request to agency counsel to waive the restrictions of paragraph (d) of this section. The request shall, in addition to meeting the requirements of §9.15 of this part, state why the requester should be permitted to gather additional information despite not having previously requested the information when it had an opportunity to do so, and why the additional testimony is now required and the prior testimony or previously supplied documents are insufficient.

§9.11 Legal proceedings between private litigants: Demands.

(a) If an employee receives a demand that has not been validly issued or served, agency counsel may instruct the employee not to comply with the demand.

(b) If an employee receives a demand (validly issued and served) to testify or produce records, agency counsel, in his or her discretion, may grant the employee permission to testify or produce records only if the purposes of this part are met or agency counsel determines that an exception is appropriate.

(c) If a demand is issued to an employee, agency counsel shall contact the requester of the demand, inform that person of the requirements of this part, and may, in agency counsel's discretion, ask that the demand be withdrawn.

(d) If the requester of the demand refuses to have it withdrawn or fails to comply with this part, the Department may seek to quash the demand.

(e) If the court or other competent authority declines to grant the Department's motion to quash, agency counsel shall instruct the employee whether to testify or produce documents pursuant to the demand. Agency counsel may permit the testimony under §9.1(c) of this part. If response to a demand is required before the court or other competent authority rules on the motion to quash and the court fails to stay the demand, the employee must appear at the stated time and place, produce a copy of this part, and respectfully refuse to provide any testimony or produce any documents. Agency counsel shall take steps to arrange for legal