

charge the actual costs of operating any machinery, plus actual cost of any materials used, plus charges for the time of our employees, at the rates given in paragraph (a) of this section.

(h) *Billing exceeds cost of service.* Generally we will not charge you a fee when the cost of the service is less than the cost of sending you a bill. However, where an individual, organization, or governmental unit makes multiple separate requests, we will total the costs incurred and periodically bill the requester for the services rendered.

(i) *Fee for copies of printed materials.* When extra copies of printed material are available, the charge is generally 1 cent per page. If the material may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, the charge is that set by the Superintendent. The Superintendent's address is in § 402.40.

(j) *When not applicable.* This fee schedule does not apply to requests for records of Social Security number holders, wage earners, employers, and claimants when the requests are governed by section 1106 of the Social Security Act and by §§ Sections 402.170 and 402.175.

**§ 402.170 Fees for providing records and related services for program purposes pursuant to section 1106 of the Social Security Act.**

(a) *Program purposes described.* (1) We consider a request to be program related if the information must be disclosed under the Social Security Act. For example, section 205(c)(2)(A) of the Act (42 U.S.C. 405(c)(2)(A)) requires that we provide certain information upon request to a worker, her or his legal representative, her or his survivor, or the legal representative of the worker's estate. That information is the amounts of the worker's wages and self-employment income and the periods during which they were paid or derived, as shown by our records.

(2) We also consider a request to be program related if the requester indicates the needed information will be used for a purpose which is directly related to the administration of a program under the Social Security Act.

(i) The major criteria we consider in deciding whether a proposed use is so related are:

(A) Is the information needed to pursue some benefit under the Act?

(B) Is the information needed solely to verify the accuracy of information obtained in connection with a program administered under the Act?

(C) Is the information needed in connection with an activity which has been authorized under the Act?

(D) Is the information needed by an employer to carry out her or his tax-paying responsibilities under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act or section 218 of the Act?

(ii) We will consider on a case by case basis those requests which do not meet these criteria but are claimed to be program related.

(b) *When we charge.* If we determine the request for information is program related, we may or may not charge for the information. For example, as stated in paragraph (a) of this section, we generally will not charge you for information needed to assure the accuracy of our records on which your present or future Social Security benefits depend. In addition, we generally will not charge for furnishing information under section 205(c)(2)(A) of the Act. However, if we do charge for a program related request (for example, if more detailed information or special services are requested) we will use the fee schedule in § 402.165 if information is being disclosed under the FOIA and the fee schedule in 20 CFR 401.95 if access to the information is being granted under the Privacy Act. (Exception: If the request is for purposes of administering employee benefits covered by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), even if the request is covered by section 205(c)(2)(A) of the Act, we will charge under § 402.175.)

**§ 402.175 Fees for providing information and related services for non-program purposes.**

(a) *General.* Section 1106(c) of the Social Security Act permits the Commissioner to require requesters of information to pay the full cost of supplying the information where the information is requested to comply with the

ERISA, or “\*\*\*\* for any other purpose not directly related to the administration of the program or programs under \*\*\*\*” the Social Security Act. This may be done notwithstanding the fee provisions of the FOIA and the Privacy Act or any other provision of law. As used in this section—

(1) Full cost includes the direct and indirect costs to SSA (including costs of duplication) of providing information and related services under section 1106(c) of the Act; and

(2) Full cost of an employee’s time includes fringe benefits and overhead costs such as rent and utilities.

(b) *Non-program related requests.* We consider a request for information which does not meet or equal any of the criteria in § 402.170 to be non-program related. (Whether a request for information about an individual is made by that individual or by someone else is not a factor.) In responding to these requests, or requests for ERISA purposes, we will charge the full cost of our services as described in paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) *Fee schedule.* Our fee schedule for non-program related requests is:

(1) *Manual searching for records.* Full cost of the employee’s time.

(2) *Photocopying, or reproducing records such as magnetic tapes or punch cards.* Full cost of the operator’s time plus the full cost of the machine time and the materials used.

(3) *Use of electronic data processing equipment to obtain records.* Our full cost for the service, including computer search time, computer runs and print-outs, and the time of computer programmers and operators and other employees.

(4) *Certification or authentication of records.* Full cost of certification or authentication.

(5) *Forwarding materials to destination.* If you request special arrangements for forwarding the material, we will charge you the full cost of this service (e.g., you request express mail or a commercial delivery service). If no special forwarding arrangements are requested, we will charge you the full cost of the service, including the U.S. Postal Service cost.

(6) *Performing other special services.* If we agree to provide any special serv-

ices you request, we will charge you the full cost of the time of the employee who performs the service, plus the full cost of any machine time and materials that the employee uses.

(7) *Billing exceeds cost of service.* Generally we will not charge you a fee when the cost of the service is less than the cost of sending you a bill. However, where an individual, organization, or governmental unit makes multiple separate requests, we will total the costs incurred and bill the requester for the services rendered.

(d) *Fee for copies of printed materials.* When extra copies of printed material are available, the charge is generally 1 cent per page. If the material may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, the charge is that set by the Superintendent. The Superintendent’s address is in § 402.40.

(e) *Charging when requested record not found.* We may charge you for search time, even though we fail to find the records. We may also charge you for search time if the records we locate are exempt from disclosure.

**§ 402.180 Procedure on assessing and collecting fees for providing records.**

(a) We will generally assume that when you send us a request, you agree to pay for the services needed to locate and send that record to you. You may specify in your request a limit on the amount you are willing to spend. If you do that or include with your request a payment that does not cover our fee, we will notify you if it appears that the fee will exceed that amount and ask whether you want us to continue to process your request. Also, before we start work on your request under § 402.140, we will generally notify you of our exact or estimated charge for the information, unless it is clear that you have a reasonable idea of the cost.

(b) If you have failed to pay previous bills in a timely fashion, or if our initial review of your request indicates that we will charge you fees exceeding \$250, we will require you to pay your past due fees and/or the estimated fees, or a deposit, before we start searching for the records you want. If so, we will let you know promptly upon receiving