

available under FOIA, and directions on how to locate and obtain them.

[44 FR 33368, June 8, 1979, as amended at 45 FR 31291, May 13, 1980; 65 FR 9206, Feb. 24, 2000]

**§ 4.5 Categories of exemptions.**

(a) No requests under 5 U.S.C. 552 shall be denied release unless the record contains, or its disclosure would reveal, matters that are:

(1) Specifically authorized under criteria established by an executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and are in fact properly classified pursuant to such Executive order;

(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of the Commission;

(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute, provided that such statute (A) requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue, or (B) establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;

(4) Trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person which are privileged or confidential. Such information includes confidential business information which concerns or relates to the trade secrets, processes, operations, style of works, or apparatus, or to the production, sales, shipments, purchases, transfers, identification of customers, inventories, or amount of source of income, profits, losses, or expenditures of any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other organization, if the disclosure is likely to have the effect of either impairing the Commission's ability to obtain such information as is necessary to perform its statutory functions, or causing substantial harm to the competitive position of the person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other organization from which the information was obtained, unless the Commission is required by law to disclose such information. These procedures shall be used for submitting business information in confidence:

(i) A request for confidential treatment shall be addressed to the FOIA officer, Federal Election Commission, 999 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20463,

and shall indicate clearly on the envelope that it is a request for confidential treatment.

(ii) With each submission of, or offer to submit, business information which a submitter desires to be treated as confidential under paragraph (a)(4) of this section, the submitter shall provide the following, which may be disclosed to the public: (A) A written description of the nature of the subject information, and a justification for the request for its confidential treatment, and (B) a certification in writing under oath that substantially identical information is not available to the public.

(iii) Approval or denial of requests shall be made only by the FOIA officer or his or her designees. A denial shall be in writing, shall specify the reason therefore, and shall advise the submitter of the right to appeal to the Commission.

(iv) For good cause shown, the Commission may grant an appeal from a denial by the FOIA Officer or his or her designee if the appeal is filed within fifteen (15) days after receipt of the denial. An appeal shall be addressed to the FOIA Officer, Federal Election Commission, 999 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20463 and shall clearly indicate that it is a confidential submission appeal. An appeal will be decided within twenty (20) days after its receipt (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) unless an extension, stated in writing with the reasons therefore, has been provided the person making the appeal.

(v) Any business information submitted in confidence and determined to be entitled to confidential treatment shall be maintained in confidence by the Commission and not disclosed except as required by law. In the event that any business information submitted to the Commission is not entitled to confidential treatment, the submitter will be permitted to withdraw the tender unless it is the subject of a request under the Freedom of Information Act or of judicial discovery proceedings.

(vi) Since enforcement actions under 2 U.S.C. 437g are confidential by statute, the procedures outlined in § 4.5(a)(4) (i) thru (v) are not applicable.

(5) Inter-agency or intra-agency memoranda or letters which would not be available by law to a party in litigation with the Commission.

(6) Personnel and medical files and similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

(7) Records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information:

(i) Could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings;

(ii) Would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication;

(iii) Could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

(iv) Could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, including a State, local, or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a confidential basis, and, in the case of a record or information compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source;

(v) Would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law; or

(vi) Could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual.

(b) Whenever a request is made which involves access to records described in 11 CFR 4.5(a)(7): and

(1) The investigation or proceeding involves a possible violation of criminal law; and

(2) There is reason to believe that—

(i) The subject of the investigation or proceeding is not aware of its pendency, and

(ii) Disclosure of the existence of the records could reasonably be expected to

interfere with enforcement proceedings;

The agency may, during only such time as that circumstance continues, treat the records as not subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.

(c) Any reasonably segregable portion of a record shall be provided to any person requesting such record after deletion of the portions which are exempt. The amount of information deleted shall be indicated on the released portion of the record, unless including that indication would harm an interest protected by an exemption in paragraph (a) of this section under which the deletion is made. If technically feasible, the amount of the information deleted shall be indicated at the place in the record where such deletion is made.

(d) If a requested record is one of another government agency or deals with subject matter to which a government agency other than the Commission has exclusive or primary responsibility, the request for such a record shall be promptly referred by the Commission to that agency for disposition or guidance as to disposition.

(e) Nothing in this part authorizes withholding of information or limiting the availability of records to the public, except as specifically provided in this part; nor is this part authority to withhold information from Congress.

[44 FR 33368, June 8, 1979, as amended at 50 FR 50778, Dec. 12, 1985; 52 FR 23638, June 24, 1987; 52 FR 39212, Oct. 21, 1987; 65 FR 9206, Feb. 24, 2000]

#### **§ 4.6 Discretionary release of exempt records.**

The Commission may, in its discretion, release requested records despite the applicability of the exemptions in § 4.5(a), if it determines that it is in the public interest and that the rights of third parties would not be prejudiced.

#### **§ 4.7 Requests for records.**

(a) [Reserved]

(b)(1) Requests for copies of records pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act shall be addressed to FOIA officer, Federal Election Commission, 999 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20463. The request shall reasonably describe