

§ 297.207

5 CFR Ch. I (1-1-06 Edition)

§ 297.207 Denials of access and appeals with respect to such denials.

(a) If an access request is denied, the Office or agency response will be in writing and will include a statement of the reasons for the denial and the procedures available to appeal the denial, including the name, position title, and address of the Office official responsible for the review.

(b) Nothing in this part should be construed to entitle a data subject the right to access any information compiled in reasonable anticipation of a civil action or proceeding.

(c) For denials of access made under this subpart, the following procedures apply:

(1) For initial denials made by an agency, when the record is maintained in an Office Governmentwide system of records, a request for administrative review should be made only to the Assistant Director for Workforce Information, Personnel Systems and Oversight Group, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street NW., Washington, DC 20415.

(2) For denials initially made by an Office official, when a record is maintained in an internal or central system of records, a request for administrative review should be made to the Information and Privacy Appeals Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street NW., Washington, DC 20415.

(3) Any administrative review decision that either partially or fully supports the initial decision and denies access to the material the individual originally sought should state the requester's right to seek judicial review of the final administrative decision.

§ 297.208 Judicial review.

Upon receipt of notification that the denial of access has been upheld on administrative review, the requester has the right to judicial review of the decision for up to 2 years from the date on which the cause of action arose. Judicial review may be sought in the district court of the United States in the district in which—

- (a) The requester resides;
- (b) The requester has his or her principal place of business; or

(c) The agency records are situated; or it may be sought in the district court of the District of Columbia.

Subpart C—Amendment of Records

§ 297.301 General provisions.

(a) Individuals may request, in writing, the amendment of their records maintained in an Office system of records by contacting the appropriate system manager. The Office or agency will require proof of identity from a requester. The Office or agency reserves the right to determine the adequacy of any such proof. The general identifying items the Office will require a requester to provide when a request is made to the Office are—

(1) Full name, signature, and home address;

(2) Social security number (for systems of records that include this identifier);

(3) Current or last place and dates of Federal employment, when appropriate; and

(4) Date and place of birth.

(b) An individual may be represented by another party when requesting amendment of records.

(c) A request for amendment should include the following:

(1) The precise identification of the records to be amended;

(2) The identification of the specific material to be deleted, added, or changed; and

(3) A statement of the reasons for the request, including all available material substantiating the request.

(d) Requests for amendment of records should include the words "PRIVACY ACT AMENDMENT REQUEST" in capital letters on both the envelope and at the top of the request letter.

(e) A request for administrative review of an agency denial to amend a record in the Office's systems of records should be addressed to the Assistant Director for Workforce Information, Personnel Systems and Oversight Group, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street NW., Washington, DC 20415.

(f) A request for administrative review of a denial to amend a record by

Office of Personnel Management

§ 297.306

an Office official should be addressed to the Information and Privacy Appeals Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street NW., Washington, DC 20415.

(g) The burden of proof demonstrating the appropriateness of the requested amendment rests with the requester; and, the requester must provide relevant and convincing evidence in support of the request.

§ 297.302 Time limits.

The system manager should acknowledge receipt of an amendment request within 10 working days and issue a determination as soon as practicable. This timeframe begins when the request is received by the proper Office or agency official.

§ 297.303 Applicability of amendment provisions.

(a) The amendment procedures are not intended to allow a challenge to material that records an event that actually occurred nor are they designed to permit a collateral attack upon that which has been or could have been the subject of a judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative proceeding. The amendment procedures are also not designed to change opinions in records pertaining to the individual.

(b) The amendment procedures apply to situations when an occurrence that is documented was challenged through an established judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative procedure and found to be inaccurately described; when the document is not identical to the individual's copy; or when the document is not created in accordance with the applicable recordkeeping requirements. (For example, the amendment provisions are not designed to allow a challenge to the merits of an agency adverse action that is documented in an individual's Official Personnel Folder.)

§ 297.304 Approval of requests to amend records.

(a) If the system manager determines that amendment of a record is appropriate, the system manager will take the necessary steps to have the necessary changes made and will see that

the individual receives a copy of the amended record.

(b) When practicable and appropriate, the system manager will advise all prior recipients of the fact that an amendment of a record has been made.

§ 297.305 Denial of requests to amend records.

(a) If the Office or agency system manager decides not to amend the record in the manner sought, the requester should be notified in writing of the reasons for the denial.

(b) The decision letter should also include the requester's right to appeal the denial and the procedures for appealing the denial to the appropriate official.

§ 297.306 Appeal of a denial of a request to amend a record.

(a) An individual who disagrees with an initial denial to amend a record may file a written appeal of that denial to the appropriate official. In submitting an appeal, the individual should provide a copy of the original request for amendment, a copy of the initial denial decision, and a statement of the specific reasons why the initial denial is believed to be in error. Any appeal should be submitted to the official designated in the initial decision letter. The appeal should include the words "PRIVACY ACT APPEAL" in capital letters on the envelope and at the top of the letter of appeal.

(b) The reviewing official should complete the review and make a final determination in writing no later than 30 working days from the date on which the appeal is received. When circumstances warrant, this timeframe may be extended.

(c) If the Office grants the appeal, it will take the necessary steps either to amend the record itself or to require the originating agency to amend the record. When appropriate and possible, prior recipients of the record should be notified of the Office's action.

(d) The Office reserves the right to hold in abeyance any Privacy Act appeal concerning a record when an individual is involved in challenging an action involving that record in another administrative, judicial, or quasi-judicial forum. At the conclusion of such a