

(b) The Office of Government Ethics intends these provisions to:

- (1) Promote economy and efficiency in its programs and operations;
- (2) Minimize the possibility of involving OGE in controversial issues not related to our functions;
- (3) Maintain OGE's impartiality among private litigants where OGE is not a named party; and
- (4) Protect sensitive, confidential information and the deliberative processes of OGE.

(c) In providing for these requirements, OGE does not waive the sovereign immunity of the United States.

(d) This part provides guidance for the internal operations of OGE. It does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, that a party may rely upon in any legal proceeding against the United States.

**§ 2608.102 Applicability.**

This part applies to demands and requests to employees for factual or expert testimony relating to official information, or for production of official records or information, in legal proceedings in which OGE is not a named party. However, it does not apply to:

- (a) Demands upon or requests for an OGE employee to testify as to facts or events that are unrelated to his or her official duties or that are unrelated to the functions of OGE;
- (b) Demands upon or requests for a former OGE employee to testify as to matters in which the former employee was not directly or materially involved while at the OGE;
- (c) Requests for the release of records under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552, or the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a; and
- (d) Congressional demands and requests for testimony or records.

**§ 2608.103 Definitions.**

The following definitions apply to this part:

*Demand* means a subpoena, or an order or other command of a court or other competent authority, for the production, disclosure, or release of records or for the appearance and testimony of an OGE employee that is issued in a legal proceeding.

*General Counsel* means the General Counsel of OGE or a person to whom the General Counsel has delegated authority under this part.

*Legal proceeding* means any matter before a court of law, administrative board or tribunal, commission, administrative law judge, hearing officer, or other body that conducts a legal or administrative proceeding. Legal proceeding includes all phases of litigation.

*OGE* means the U.S. Office of Government Ethics.

*OGE employee or employee* means:

- (1)(i) Any current or former officer or employee of OGE;
- (ii) Any other individual hired through contractual agreement by or on behalf of OGE or who has performed or is performing services under such an agreement for OGE; and
- (iii) Any individual who served or is serving in any consulting or advisory capacity to OGE, whether formal or informal.

(2) Provided, that this definition does not include persons who are no longer employed by OGE and who are retained or hired as expert witnesses or who agree to testify about general matters, matters available to the public, or matters with which they had no specific involvement or responsibility during their employment with OGE.

*Records or official records and information* mean:

- (1) All documents and materials which are OGE agency records under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552;
- (2) All other documents and materials contained in OGE files; and
- (3) All other information or materials acquired by an OGE employee in the performance of his or her official duties or because of his or her official status.

*Request* means any informal request, by whatever method, for the production of records and information or for testimony which has not been ordered by a court or other competent authority.

*Testimony* means any written or oral statements, including depositions, answers to interrogatories, affidavits,

declarations, interviews, and statements made by an individual in connection with a legal proceeding.

### Subpart B—Requests for Testimony and Production of Documents

#### § 2608.201 General prohibition.

No employee may produce official records and information or provide any testimony relating to official information in response to a demand or request without the prior, written approval of the General Counsel.

#### § 2608.202 Factors OGE will consider.

The General Counsel, in his or her sole discretion, may grant an employee permission to testify on matters relating to official information, or produce official records and information, in response to a demand or request. Among the relevant factors that the General Counsel may consider in making this decision are whether:

- (a) The purposes of this part are met;
- (b) Allowing such testimony or production of records would be necessary to prevent a miscarriage of justice;
- (c) OGE has an interest in the decision that may be rendered in the legal proceeding;
- (d) Allowing such testimony or production of records would assist or hinder OGE in performing its statutory duties or use OGE resources where responding to the demand or request will interfere with the ability of OGE employees to do their work;
- (e) Allowing such testimony or production of records would be in the best interest of OGE or the United States;
- (f) The records or testimony can be obtained from other sources;
- (g) The demand or request is unduly burdensome or otherwise inappropriate under the applicable rules of discovery or the rules of procedure governing the case or matter in which the demand or request arose;
- (h) Disclosure would violate a statute, Executive order or regulation;
- (i) Disclosure would reveal confidential, sensitive, or privileged information, trade secrets or similar, confidential commercial or financial information, otherwise protected information, or information which would otherwise be inappropriate for release;

(j) Disclosure would impede or interfere with an ongoing law enforcement investigation or proceedings, or compromise constitutional rights;

(k) Disclosure would result in OGE appearing to favor one litigant over another;

(l) Disclosure relates to documents that were produced by another agency;

(m) A substantial Government interest is implicated;

(n) The demand or request is within the authority of the party making it; and

(o) The demand or request is sufficiently specific to be answered.

#### § 2608.203 Filing requirements for demands or requests for documents or testimony.

You must comply with the following requirements whenever you issue demands or requests to an OGE employee for official records and information or testimony:

(a) Your request must be in writing and must be submitted to the General Counsel. If you serve a subpoena on OGE or an OGE employee before submitting a written request and receiving a final determination, OGE will oppose the subpoena on grounds that your request was not submitted in accordance with this subpart.

(b) Your written request must contain the following information:

(1) The caption of the legal proceeding, docket number, and name and address of the court or other authority involved;

(2) A copy of the complaint or equivalent document setting forth the assertions in the case and any other pleading or document necessary to show relevance;

(3) A list of categories of records sought, a detailed description of how the information sought is relevant to the issues in the legal proceeding, and a specific description of the substance of the testimony or records sought;

(4) A statement as to how the need for the information outweighs the need to maintain any confidentiality of the information and outweighs the burden on OGE to produce the records or provide testimony;

(5) A statement indicating that the information sought is not available