

§ 502.14

45 CFR Ch. V (10–1–07 Edition)

conducting a lawful security intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source;

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

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

§ 502.14 Fees for services.

The following provisions shall apply in the assessment and collection of fees for services rendered in processing requests for disclosure of Commission records under this part.

(a) *Fee for duplication of records:* \$0.15 per page.

(b) *Search and review fees:*

(1) Searches for records by clerical personnel—\$3.00 per quarter hour, including time spent searching for and copying any record.

(2) Search for and review of records by professional and supervisory personnel—\$6.00 per quarter hour spent searching for any record or reviewing a record to determine whether it may be disclosed, including time spent in copying any record.

(c) *Certification and validation fee:* \$1.00 for each certification, validation or authentication of a copy of any record.

(d) *Imposition of fees:*

(1) Commercial use requests—Where a request appears to seek disclosure of records for a commercial use, the requester shall be charged for the time spent by Commission personnel in searching for the requested record and in reviewing the record to determine whether it should be disclosed, and for the cost of each page of duplication. *Commercial use* is defined as a use or purpose that furthers the commercial, trade or profit interests of the requester or the person on whose behalf the request is made. The request also must reasonably identify the records sought.

(2) Requests from representatives of news media—Where a request seeks disclosure of records to a representative of the news media, the requester shall be charged only for the actual duplication cost of the records and only to the

extent that the number of duplications exceeds 100 pages; provided, however, that the request must reasonably describe the records sought, and it must appear that the records are for use by the requester in such person's capacity as a news media representative. "Representative of the news media" refers to any person actively gathering news for an entity that is organized and operated to publish or broadcast news to the public. The term *news* means information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public. A "freelance" journalist not actually employed by a news organization shall be eligible for inclusion under this category if the person can demonstrate a solid basis for expecting publication by a news organization.

(3) Requests from educational and non-commercial scientific institutions—Where a request seeks disclosure of records to an educational or non-commercial scientific institution, the requester shall be charged only for the actual duplication cost of the records and only to the extent that the number of duplications exceeds 100 pages; provided, however, that the request must reasonably describe the records sought and it must appear that the records are to be used by the requester in furtherance of its educational or non-commercial scientific research programs. "Educational institution" refers to a preschool, a public or private elementary or secondary school, or an institution of undergraduate, graduate, professional or vocational education, which operates a program or programs of scholarly research. "Non-commercial scientific institution" refers to an institution that is not operated on a "commercial" basis, within the meaning of paragraph (d)(1) of this section and which is operated solely for the purpose of conducting scientific research, the results of which are not intended to promote any particular product or industry.

(4) All other requests—Where a request seeks disclosure of records to a person or entity other than one coming within paragraphs (d) (1), (2) and (3) of this section, the requester shall be charged the full cost of search and duplication. However, the first two hours of search time and the first 100 pages of

duplication shall be furnished without charge.

(e) *Aggregating of requests.* If there exists a solid basis for concluding that a requester or group of requesters has submitted a series of partial requests for disclosure of records in an attempt to evade assessment of fees, the requests may be aggregated so as to constitute a single request, with fees charged accordingly.

(f) *Unsuccessful searches.* Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, the cost of searching for a requested record shall be charged even if the search fails to locate the record or it is determined that the record is exempt from disclosure.

(g) *Interest.* In the event a requester fails to remit payment of fees charged for processing a request under this part within 30 days from the date those fees were billed, interest on the fees may be assessed beginning on the 31st day after the billing date, to be calculated at the rate prescribed in 31 U.S.C. 3717.

(h) *Advance payments.* (1) If, but only if, it is estimated or determined that processing of a request for disclosure of records will result in a charge of fees of more than \$250.00, the requester may be required to pay the fees in advance in order to obtain completion of the processing.

(2) If a requester has previously failed to make timely payment (i.e., within 30 days of billing date) of fees charged under this part, the requester may be required to pay those fees and interest accrued thereon, and to make an advance payment of the full amount of estimated fees chargeable in connection with any pending or new request, in order to obtain processing of the pending or new request.

(3) With regard to any request coming within paragraphs (h) (1) and (2) of this section, the administrative time limits set forth in §§502.11 and 502.12 of this part will begin to run only after the requisite fee payments have been received.

(i) *Non-payment.* In the event of non-payment of billed charges for disclosure of records, the provisions of the Debt Collection Act of 1982 (Pub. L. 97-365), including disclosure to consumer credit reporting agencies and referral

to collection agencies, may be utilized to obtain payment.

(j) *Waiver or reduction of charges.* Fees otherwise chargeable in connection with a request for disclosure of a record shall be waived or reduced where—

(1) It is determined that disclosure is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester; or

(2) It is determined that the cost of collection would be equal to or exceed the amount of those fees. No charges shall be assessed if the fees amount to \$8.00 or less.

PART 503—PRIVACY ACT AND GOVERNMENT IN THE SUNSHINE REGULATIONS

Subpart A—Privacy Act Regulations

- Sec.
- 503.1 Definitions—Privacy Act.
 - 503.2 General policies—Privacy Act.
 - 503.3 Conditions of disclosure.
 - 503.4 Accounting of certain disclosures.
 - 503.5 Access to records or information.
 - 503.6 Determination of requests for access to records.
 - 503.7 Amendment of a record.
 - 503.8 Appeals from denial of requests for amendment to records.
 - 503.9 Fees.
 - 503.10 Exemptions.
 - 503.11 Reports.
 - 503.12 Notices.

Subpart B—Government in the Sunshine Regulations

- 503.20 Definitions.
- 503.21 Notice of public observation.
- 503.22 Scope of application.
- 503.23 Open meetings.
- 503.24 Grounds for closing a meeting.
- 503.25 Announcement of meetings.
- 503.26 Procedures for closing of meetings.
- 503.27 Reconsideration of opening or closing, or rescheduling a meeting.
- 503.28 Record of closed meetings, or closed portion of a meeting.
- 503.29 Requests for information.

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