

**§ 700.26**

**28 CFR Ch. VII (7-1-08 Edition)**

revise the system to avoid future collection and use of the Social Security numbers.

(b) The Office shall take such measures as are necessary to ensure that employees authorized to collect information from individuals are advised that individuals may not be required to furnish Social Security numbers without statutory or regulatory authorization and that individuals who are requested to provide Social Security numbers voluntarily must be advised that furnishing the number is not required and that no penalty or denial of benefits will flow from the refusal to provide it.

**§ 700.26 Employee standards of conduct.**

(a) The Office shall inform its employees of the provisions of the Privacy Act, including the Act's civil liability and criminal penalty provisions. The Office also shall notify its employees that they have a duty to—

- (1) Protect the security of records,
- (2) Assure the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, and completeness of records,
- (3) Avoid the unauthorized disclosure, either verbal or written, of records, and
- (4) Ensure that the Office maintains no system of records without public notice.

(b) Except to the extent that the Privacy Act permits such activities, an employee of the Office of Independent Counsel shall:

- (1) Not collect information of a personal nature from individuals unless the employee is authorized to collect such information to perform a function or discharge a responsibility of the Office;
- (2) Collect from individuals only that information that is necessary to the performance of the functions or to the discharge of the responsibilities of the Office;
- (3) Collect information about an individual directly from that individual, whenever practicable;
- (4) Inform each individual from whom information is collected of—

(i) The legal authority that authorizes the Office to collect such information,

(ii) The principal purposes for which the Office intends to use the information,

(iii) The routine uses the Office may make of the information, and

(iv) The effects upon the individual of not furnishing the information;

(5) Maintain all records that are used by the agency in making any determination about any individual with such accuracy, relevance, timeliness, and completeness as to assure fairness to the individual in the determination;

(6) Except as to disclosures to an agency or pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(2), make reasonable efforts, prior to disseminating any record about an individual, to assure that such records are accurate, relevant, timely, and complete;

(7) Maintain no record concerning an individual's religious or political beliefs or activities, or his membership in associations or organizations, unless—

(i) The individual has volunteered such information for his own benefit,

(ii) A statute expressly authorizes the Office to collect, maintain, use or disseminate the information, or

(iii) The individual's beliefs, activities, or membership are pertinent to and within the scope of an authorized law-enforcement or correctional activity;

(8) Notify the head of the Office of the existence or development of any system of records that has not been disclosed to the public;

(9) When required by the Act, maintain an accounting in the prescribed form of all disclosures of records by the Office to agencies or individuals whether verbally or in writing;

(10) Disclose no record to anyone, except within the Office, for any use, unless authorized by the Act;

(11) Maintain and use records with care to prevent the inadvertent disclosure of a record to anyone; and

(12) Notify the head of the Office of any record that contains information that the Act or the foregoing provisions of this paragraph do not permit the Office to maintain.

(c) Not less than once a year, the head of each Office shall review the systems of records maintained by that Office to ensure that the Office is in

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compliance with the provisions of the Privacy Act.

### § 700.27 Other rights and services.

Nothing in this subpart shall be construed to entitle any person, as of right, to any service or to the disclosure of any record to which such person is not entitled under 5 U.S.C. 552a.

## Subpart B—Exemption of the Office of Independent Counsel's Systems of Records Under the Privacy Act

### § 700.31 Exemption of the Office of Independent Counsel's systems of records—limited access.

(a) The following system of records is exempt from 5 U.S.C. 552a(c) (3) and (4); (d); (e)(1), (2) and (3); (e)(4) (G), (H) and (I); (e) (5) and (8); (f); and (g):

(1) General Files System of the Office of Independent Counsel (OIC/001).

These exemptions apply only to the extent that information in the system is subject to exemption pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a (j)(2), (k)(1), (k)(2), and (k)(5).

(b) Exemptions from the particular subsections are justified for the following reasons:

(1) From subsection (c)(3) because making available to a record subject the accounting of disclosures from records concerning him/her would reveal investigative interest on the part of the Office of Independent Counsel as well as the recipient agency. This would permit record subjects to impede the investigation, e.g., destroy evidence, intimidate potential witnesses, or flee the area to avoid inquiries or apprehension by law-enforcement personnel. Moreover, the release of the accounting of disclosures made under subsection (b) of the Act, including those disclosures permitted under the routine uses published for these systems would permit the subject of an investigation of an actual or potential criminal, civil or regulatory violation to determine whether he is the subject of an investigation or to obtain valuable information concerning the nature of the investigation, material compiled during the investigation, and the identity of witnesses and informants. Dis-

closure of the accounting would, therefore, present a serious impediment to law enforcement. In addition, disclosure of the accounting would amount to notice to the individual of the existence of a record; such notice requirement under subsection (f)(1) of the Act is specifically exempted for this system of records.

(2) From subsection (c)(4) because an exemption is being claimed under subsection (d) of the Act. This system is exempt from the access provisions of subsection (d) pursuant to subsections (j) and (k) of the Privacy Act. Subsection (c)(4), therefore, is inapplicable to this system of records.

(3) From subsection (d) because the records contained in this system relate to official federal investigations. Individual access to these records contained in this system would inform the subject of an investigation of an actual or potential criminal, civil, or regulatory violation, of the existence of that investigation, of the nature and scope of the information and evidence obtained as to his activities, of the identities of witnesses and informants, or would provide information that could enable the subject to avoid detection or apprehension. These factors would present a serious impediment to effective law enforcement because they could prevent the successful completion of the investigation, reveal confidential informants, endanger the physical safety of witnesses or informants, and lead to the improper influencing of witnesses, the destruction of evidence, or the fabrication of testimony. Individual access also could constitute an unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of third parties who are involved in an investigation. Amendment of the records would interfere with ongoing criminal-law enforcement proceedings and impose an impossible administrative burden.

(4) From subsections (e) (1) and (5) because, in the course of criminal or other law-enforcement investigation, cases and matters, the Office of Independent Counsel may occasionally obtain information concerning actual or potential violations of law that are not strictly within its authority or jurisdiction, or may compile information, the accuracy of which is unclear or