

## § 66.4

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address shown in paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) General information may be obtained from the Public Affairs Office of NED at the address shown in paragraph (a) of this section.

[51 FR 40162, Nov. 5, 1986. Redesignated and amended at 64 FR 54540, Oct. 7, 1999]

### § 66.4 Availability of final opinions, orders, policies, interpretations, manuals and instructions.

NED is not an adjudicatory organization and therefore does not issue final opinions and orders made in the adjudication of cases. NED will, however, in accordance with the rules in this section and § 526.7, make available for public inspection and copying those statements of policy and interpretation that have been adopted by NED and are not published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, and administrative staff manuals and instructions to staff that affect any member of the public.

(a) *Deletion to protect privacy.* To the extent required to prevent a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, NED may delete identifying details when it makes available or publishes a statement of policy, interpretation, or staff manual or instruction. Whenever NED finds any such deletion necessary, the responsible officer or employee must fully explain the justification therefor in writing.

(b) *Current index.* NED will maintain and make available on its premises for public inspection and copying a current index providing identifying information for the public as to any matter issued, adopted or promulgated after July 4, 1967, and required by this section to be made available or published. NED will provide copies on request at a cost of \$0.15 per page.

### § 66.5 Availability of NED records.

Except with respect to the records made available under § 526.4, NED will, upon request that reasonably describes records in accordance with the requirements of this section, and subject to the exemptions listed in 5 U.S.C. 552(b), make such records promptly available to any person.

(a) Requests for records—How made and addressed. (1) Requesters seeking access to NED records under FOIA

should direct all requests in writing to: Freedom of Information Act Officer, National Endowment for Democracy, 1101 15th St., NW; Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20005–5000.

Although requesters are encouraged to make their requests for access to NED records directly to NED, requests for access to NED records also may be submitted to Department of State's Office of General Counsel and Congressional Liaison at the following address: Freedom of Information/Privacy Acts Coordinator, U.S. Information Agency, Room M–04, 301 Fourth Street SW., Washington, DC 20547.

(2) Appeals of denials of initial requests must be addressed to NED in the same manner or to the Department of State pursuant to the procedures set forth at part 171 of this Title, with the addition of the word “APPEAL” preceding the address on the envelope. Appeals addressed directly to the Department of State will not be deemed to have been received by NED for purposes of the time period set forth in 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(6)(A)(1) until actually received by NED. The Department of State shall forward any appeal received by it to NED within 2 working days from the actual day of receipt by the Department of State.

(3) The request letter should contain all available data concerning the desired records, including a description of the material, dates, titles, authors, and other information that may help identify the records. The first paragraph of a request letter should state whether it is an initial request or an appeal.

(b) *Administrative time limits.* (1) Within 10 working days after NED's receipt of any request for access to NED records in compliance with paragraph (a) of this section, NED shall make an initial determination whether to provide the requested information and NED shall notify the requester in writing of its initial determination. In the event of an adverse determination, notification shall include the reasons for the adverse determination, the officials responsible for such determination, the right of the requester to appeal within NED, and that the final determination by NED to deny a request for records in whole or in part shall be submitted to the Secretary of State of Department

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of State for review. NED shall also provide Department of State a copy of its response as soon as practicable after it responds to the requester.

(2) When a request for records has been denied in whole or in part, the requester may, within 30 days of the date of receipt by the requester of the adverse determination from NED, appeal the denial to the President of NED or his designee, who will make a determination whether to grant or deny such appeal within 20 working days of receipt thereof. All appeals should be addressed in compliance with paragraph (a) of this section. If on appeal, the denial of the request for records is upheld, in whole or in part, NED shall notify the requester in writing of such determination, the reasons therefor, the officials responsible for such determination, the right of the requester to judicial review, and that the final determination by NED whether to deny a request for records in whole or in part shall be submitted to the Secretary of State of Department of State for review.

(3) If the requester elects not to appeal to the President of NED or his designee within the appeal period specified above, NED's initial determination will become the final NED determination upon expiration of said appeal period or receipt by NED of notice from the requester that he does not elect to appeal, whichever is earlier. If the requester chooses to appeal NED's initial determination within NED, the decision on appeal will become NED's final determination.

(4)(i) Once NED's determination to deny a request in whole or in part becomes final, NED shall submit a report to the Secretary of State of Department of State explaining the reasons for such denial no later than 5 working days thereafter.

(ii) The Secretary of State of Department of State shall review NED's final determination within 20 working days. If the Secretary of State of Department of State or his designee approves NED's denial in whole or in part, Department of State shall inform the requester and NED in writing of such determination, the reasons therefor, the officials responsible for such determination, and the right of the re-

quester to judicial review of NED's determination. In the event of such a determination, Department of State shall assume full responsibility, including financial responsibility, for defending NED in any litigation relating to such request.

(iii) If the Secretary of State of Department of State or his designee disapproves NED's denial in whole or in part, Department of State shall promptly notify NED and thereafter NED shall promptly comply with the request for the pertinent records.

(iv) Because review by the Secretary of State of Department of State may resolve any dispute over access to NED records in the requester's favor, the requester is encouraged (but not required) to wait for the determination on review by the Secretary of State of Department of State before seeking judicial review of NED's final determination.

(5) In unusual circumstances as defined in 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(6)(B), the time limit provisions noted in paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this section may be extended by written notice to the requester setting forth the reasons for such extension and the date on which a determination can be expected. Such extensions of the time limits may not exceed 10 working days in the aggregate.

(6) Any person making a request for records pursuant to § 526.5 may consider administrative remedies exhausted if NED fails to comply within the applicable time limit provisions of this section. When no determination can be dispatched within the applicable time limits set forth in this section, NED shall nevertheless continue to process the request. On the expiration of the time limit, NED shall inform the requester of the reason for the delay, of the date on which a determination may be expected to be dispatched, and of the requester's right to treat the delay as a denial and of the requester's right to appeal. NED may ask the requester to forego appeal until a determination is made. A copy of any such notice of delay will be sent to the Secretary of State of Department of State or to his designee no later than 2 working days after it has been sent to the requester. A court may retain jurisdiction and

allow NED additional time to complete its review of the records, if it can be determined that exceptional circumstances exist and that NED is exercising due diligence in responding to the request.

(c) *Definitions governing schedule of standard fees and fee waivers.* For purposes of these regulations governing fees and fee waivers:

(1) All of the terms defined in FOIA apply;

(2) A *statute specifically providing for setting the level of fees for particular types of records* means any statute that specifically requires the NED to set the level of fees for particular types of records;

(3) The term *direct costs* means those expenditures that NED actually incurs in searching for and duplicating (and in the case of commercial requesters, reviewing) documents, photographs, drawings or any other material to respond to a FOIA request. [Direct costs include the salary of the employee performing the work (the basic rate of pay for the employee plus 16% of that rate to cover benefits) and the cost of operating duplicating machinery. Not included in direct costs are overhead expenses such as costs of space, any heating or lighting, the facility in which the records are stored];

(4) The term *search* includes all time spent looking for material that is responsive to a request, including page by page or line by line identification of material within documents. Searches shall be conducted to ensure that they are undertaken in the most efficient and least expensive manner so as to minimize costs for both NED and the requester. “Search” is distinguished from “review” of material in order to determine whether the material is exempt from disclosure (*see* subparagraph (c)(6) below);

(5) The term *duplication* refers to the process of making a copy of a document, drawing, photograph, or any other material necessary to respond to a FOIA request. The copy provided by NED will be in a form that is reasonably usable by requesters;

(6) The term *review* refers to the process of examining documents that are located in response to a request that is for a commercial use (*see* subparagraph

(c)(7) below) to determine whether any portion of any document located is permitted to be withheld. It also includes processing any documents for disclosure, *e.g.*, doing all that is necessary to excise them and otherwise prepare them for release. Review does not include time spent resolving general legal or policy issues regarding the application of exemptions;

(7) The term *‘commercial use’ requests* refers to a request from or on behalf of one who seeks information for 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. In determining whether a requester properly belongs in this category, NED will determine the use to which a requester will put the documents requested. Where NED has reasonable cause to doubt the use to which a requester will put the records sought, or where that use is not clear from the request itself, NED will seek additional clarification before assigning the request to a specific category;

(8) The term *educational institution* refers to a preschool, a public or private elementary or secondary school, an institution of graduate higher education, an institution of undergraduate higher education, an institution of professional education, and an institution of vocational education, that operates a program or programs of scholarly study and/or research;

(9) The term *non-commercial scientific institution* refers to an institution that is not operated on a “commercial” basis as that term is referenced in paragraph (c)(7) of this section and that is operated solely for the purpose of conducting scientific research, the results of which are not intended to promote any particular product or industry;

(10) The term *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. Examples of news media entities include television or radio stations that broadcast to the public at large,

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and publishers of periodicals (but only in those instances when they can qualify as disseminators of "news") who make their products available for purchase or subscription by the general public. These examples are not intended to be all-inclusive. In the case of "free-lance" journalists, such journalists may be regarded as working for a news organization if they can demonstrate a solid basis for expecting publication through that organization even though they are not actually employed by a news organization. A publication contract would be the clearest proof, but NED will also look to the past publication record of a requester in making this determination.

(d) *Fees to be charged—general.* NED shall charge fees that recoup the full allowable direct costs it incurs. NED shall use the most efficient and least costly methods to comply with requests for documents, drawings, photographs, and any other materials made under the FOIA.

(e) *Specific fees.* The specific fees for which NED shall charge the requester when so required by the FOIA are as follows:

(1) Manual searches for records—\$8.00 per hour for clerical personnel; \$15.00 per hour for supervisory personnel;

(2) Computer searches for records—In any case where a computer search is possible and the most efficient means by which to conduct a search, NED will charge the cost of operating the central processing unit for that portion of operating time that is directly attributable to searching for records responsive to a FOIA request and the operator-programmer salary apportionable to the search. The charge for the cost of the operator-programmer time shall be based on the salary of the operator-programmer plus 16 percent;

(3) Review of records—Requesters who seek documents for commercial use shall be charged for the time NED spends reviewing records to determine whether such records are exempt from mandatory disclosure. These charges shall be assessed only for the initial review; *i.e.*, the review undertaken the first time NED analyzes the applicability of a specific exemption to a particular record or portion of a record. Neither NED nor the Department of

State will charge for review at the administrative appeal level for an exemption already applied. However, NED will charge for review of records or portions of records withheld in full under an exemption that is subsequently determined not to apply. The fee for review as that term is used in these regulations shall be \$15.00 per hour;

(4) Duplication of records—(i) making photocopies—15¢ per page; (ii) for copies prepared by computer, such as tapes or printouts, NED shall charge the actual cost, including operator time, of production of the tape or printout; (iii) for other methods of reproduction or duplication, NED shall charge the actual direct costs of producing the document(s);

(5) Other charges—(i) there shall be no fee for a signed statement of non-availability of a record; (ii) NED will not incur expenses arising out of sending records by special methods such as express mail;

(6) Restrictions on assessing fees—With the exception of requesters seeking documents for a commercial use, section (a)(4)(A)(iv) of the Freedom of Information Act, as amended, requires NED to provide the first 100 pages of duplication and the first two hours of search time without charge. NED shall not charge fees to any requester, including commercial use requesters, if the cost of collecting a fee would be equal to or greater than the fee itself. NED will not begin to assess fees until it has first provided the above-referenced free search and reproduction. The elements to be considered in determining the "cost of collecting a fee" are the administrative costs to NED of receiving and recording a requester's remittance and processing the fee for deposit in NED's account. For purposes of these restrictions on assessment of fees, the word "pages" refers to paper copies of a standard size, which will normally be 8½×11 or 11×14. Thus, for example, requesters shall not be entitled to 100 microfiche or 100 computer disks without charge.

(f) *Fees to be charged—categories of requesters.* There are four categories of FOIA requesters: commercial use requesters; educational and non-commercial scientific institutions; representatives of the news media; and all other

requesters. The fees to be charged each of these categories of requesters are as follows:

(1) Commercial use requesters—when NED receives a request for documents for commercial use, it shall assess charges that recover the full direct costs of searching for, reviewing for release, and duplicating the records sought. Commercial use requesters are entitled to neither two hours of free search time nor 100 free pages of reproduction of documents. NED shall recover the cost of searching for and reviewing records even if there is ultimately no disclosure of records. Requesters must reasonably describe the records sought;

(2) Educational and non-commercial scientific institution requesters—NED shall provide documents to educational and non-commercial scientific institution requesters for the cost of reproduction alone, excluding charges for the first 100 pages of duplication. To be eligible for inclusion in this category, requesters must show that the request is being made as authorized by and under the auspices of a qualifying institution and that the records are not sought for a commercial use, but are sought in furtherance of scholarly (if the request is from an educational institution) or scientific (if the request is from a non-commercial scientific institution) research. Requesters must reasonably describe the records sought;

(3) Requesters who are representatives of the news media—NED shall provide documents to requesters who are representatives of the news media for the cost of reproduction alone, excluding charges for the first 100 pages. To be eligible for inclusion in this category, a requester must meet the criteria in subsection (c)(10) above, and the request must not be made for a commercial use. A request for records supporting the news-dissemination function of the requester shall not be considered to be a request that is for a commercial use. Requesters must reasonably describe the records sought;

(4) All other requesters—NED shall charge requesters who do not fit into any of the above categories those fees that recover the full reasonable direct costs of searching for and reproducing records that are responsive to the re-

quest, except that the first 100 pages of reproduction and the first two hours of search time shall be furnished without charge. Requesters must reasonably describe the records sought.

(g) *Assessment and collection of fees.* (1) NED shall assess interest charges on an unpaid bill starting on the 31st day following the day on which the billing was sent. The fact that the fee has been received by NED, even if not processed, will suffice to stay the accrual of interest. Interest will be at the rate prescribed in section 3717 of title 31 of the United States Code and will accrue from the date of the billing.

(2) Charges for unsuccessful searches—If NED estimates that search charges are likely to exceed \$25.00, it shall notify the requester of the estimated amount of fees unless the requester has indicated in advance a willingness to pay fees as high as those anticipated. Such notice shall offer the requester the opportunity to confer with agency personnel with the object of reformulating the request to meet the requester's needs at a lower cost. Dispatch of such a notice of request shall suspend the running of the period for response by NED until a reply is received from the requester.

(3) Aggregating requests—Except for requests that are for a commercial use, NED shall not charge for the first two hours of search time or for the first 100 pages of reproduction. However, a requester may not file multiple requests at the same time, each seeking portions of a document or documents, solely in order to avoid payment of fees. When NED reasonably believes that a requester or a group of requesters acting in concert are attempting to divide a request into a series of requests for the purpose of evading the assessment of fees, NED shall aggregate any such requests and charge accordingly. One element to be considered in determining whether a belief would be reasonable is the time period in which the requests have been made. Before aggregating requests from more than one requester, NED must have a concrete basis on which to conclude that the requesters are acting in concert and are acting specifically to avoid payment of fees. In no case shall

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NED aggregate multiple requests on unrelated subjects from one requester.

(4) Advance payments—NED shall not require payment for fees before work has commenced or continued on a request unless:

(i) NED estimates or determines that allowable charges that a requester may be required to pay are likely to exceed \$250.00. In this event, NED shall notify the requester of the likely cost and may require an advance payment of an amount up to the full amount of estimated charges; or

(ii) A requester has previously failed to pay a fee charged within 30 days of the date of billing.

In this event, NED shall require the requester to pay the full amount owed plus any applicable interest as provided above or demonstrate that he or she has, in fact, paid the fee, and to make an advance payment of the full amount of the estimated fee before NED begins to process a new request or a pending request from that requester.

(iii) When NED acts under paragraphs (g)(4)(i) or (ii) above, the administrative time limits prescribed in subsection (a)(6) of the FOIA will begin only after NED has received fee payments described above.

(5) Form of payment—Remittances shall be in the form of a personal check or bank draft drawn on any bank in the United States, a postal money order, or cash. Remittances shall be made payable to the order of: National Endowment for Democracy. NED will assume no responsibility for cash lost in the mail.

(h) *Fee waiver or reduction.* NED shall furnish documents without charge or at a charge reduced below the fees established by these regulations if disclosure of the information is in the public interest because the disclosure of the information is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. In making a determination under this subsection, NED shall consider these factors in the following order:

(1) Whether the subject of the request for documents concerns the operations or activities of the government. For

purposes of determining whether this factor is met:

(i) Records generated by a non-government entity are less likely to respond to a request for documents concerning the operations or activities of the government;

(ii) Records that are sought for their intrinsic informational content apart from their informative value with respect to specific activities or operations of government are less likely to meet this factor.

(2) Whether the information requested is likely to contribute to an understanding of government operations or activities. For purposes of determining whether the request meets this factor:

(i) NED will consider the extent to which the information requested already exists in the public domain;

(ii) NED will consider the extent to which the value of the information relates to an understanding of government operations or activities as opposed to the extent to which the information relates to other subjects.

(3) Whether the information requested will contribute to public understanding of government operations or activities. For purposes of determining whether the request meets this factor:

(i) NED will consider whether the disclosure will contribute to a public understanding as opposed to a primarily personal understanding of the requester;

(ii) NED will consider the identity of the requester to determine whether such requester is in a position to contribute to public understanding through disclosure of the information. Requesters shall describe their qualifications to satisfy this consideration;

(iii) NED will consider the expertise of the requester and the extent to which the expertise will enable the requester to extract, synthesize and convey the information to the public. Requesters shall describe their qualifications to satisfy this consideration;

(4) Whether the contribution to public understanding will be significant. In determining whether this factor has been met:

(i) NED will consider whether the public's understanding of the subject

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matter in question is likely to be enhanced by the disclosure of information by a significant extent;

(ii) NED will compare the likely level of public understanding of the subject matter of the request before and after disclosure.

(5) After NED is satisfied that factors (h)(1) through (4) have been met, it will consider whether the requested disclosure is primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.

(i) For purposes of this subsection, *commercial interest* is one that furthers a commercial, trade, or profit interest as those terms are commonly understood. Under this subsection, a “commercial interest” shall not be an interest served by a request for records supporting the news dissemination function of the requester. All requesters who seek a fee waiver under section (h) of these regulations must disclose any and all commercial interests that would be furthered by the requested disclosure. NED shall use this information, information in its possession, reasonable inferences drawn from the requester’s identity, and the circumstances surrounding the request to determine whether the requester has any commercial interest that would be furthered by the disclosure. If information that NED obtains from a source other than the requester or reasonable inferences or other circumstances are used in making a determination under this paragraph (h)(5), NED shall inform the requester of the information, inferences or circumstances that were used in its initial determination. The requester may, prior to filing an appeal of the initial determination with the President of NED or his designee under paragraph (a)(2) of this section, provide further information to rebut such reasonable inferences, or to clarify the circumstances of the request to the person responsible for the initial determination. Such action by the requester must occur within 20 days of the initial determination by NED. Within 10 days of receipt of such further information, clarification, or rebuttal, NED shall respond to the additional information, reverse or affirm its original position and state the reasons for the reversal or affirmation. Receipt of an affirmation by the requester shall constitute

an initial denial of a request for purposes of the appeal process described in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section.

(ii) NED shall consider the magnitude of the requester’s commercial interest. In making a determination under this factor, NED shall consider the role that the disclosed information plays with respect to the requester’s commercial interests and the extent to which the disclosed information serves the range of commercial interests of the requester.

(iii) NED shall weigh the magnitude of the identified commercial interest of the requester against the public interest in disclosure in order to determine whether the disclosure is primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. If the magnitude of the public interest in disclosure is greater than the magnitude of the requester’s commercial interest, NED shall grant a full or partial fee waiver.

(6) In determining whether to grant a full or partial fee waiver, NED shall, to the extent possible, identify the portion of the information sought by the requester that satisfies the standard governing fee waivers set forth in FOIA, as amended, 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4)(A)(iii), and in paragraphs (h)(1) through (6) of this section, and grant a fee waiver with respect to those documents. Fees for reproduction of documents that do not satisfy these standards shall be assessed as provided in paragraphs (c) through (g) of this section.

(i) Except as provided in paragraph (h)(5)(i) of this section, a requester may appeal a determination of the fees to be charged or waived under these regulations as he or she would appeal an initial determination of documents to be disclosed under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section.

[51 FR 40162, Nov. 5, 1986, as amended at 52 FR 37766, Oct. 9, 1987. Redesignated and amended at 64 FR 54540, Oct. 7, 1999]

### § 66.6 Exemptions.

NED reserves the right to withhold records and information that are exempt from disclosure under FOIA. See 5 U.S.C. 552(b).