

SUBCHAPTER B—GOVERNMENT ETHICS

PART 2634—EXECUTIVE BRANCH FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE, QUALIFIED TRUSTS, AND CERTIFICATES OF DIVESTITURE

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APPENDIX A TO PART 2634—CERTIFICATE OF INDEPENDENCE (FORM APPROVED: OMB CONTROL NO. 3209-0007)

APPENDIX B TO PART 2634—CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE (FORM APPROVED: OMB CONTROL NO. 3209-0007)

APPENDIX C TO PART 2634—PRIVACY ACT AND PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICES FOR APPENDIXES A AND B

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. App. (Ethics in Government Act of 1978); 26 U.S.C. 1043; Pub. L. 101-410, 104 Stat. 890, 28 U.S.C. 2461 note (Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990), as amended by Sec. 31001, Pub. L. 104-134, 110 Stat. 1321 (Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996) and Sec. 701, Pub. L. 114-74 (Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015); E.O. 12674, 54 FR 15159, 3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 215, as modified by E.O. 12731, 55 FR 42547, 3 CFR, 1990 Comp., p. 306.

Subpart A—General Provisions

SOURCE: 57 FR 11804, Apr. 7, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2634.101 Authority.

The regulation in this part is issued pursuant to the authority of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, as amended; 26 U.S.C. 1043; the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 and the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015; and Executive Order 12674 of April 12, 1989, as modified by Executive Order 12731 of October 17, 1990.

[81 FR 41789, June 28, 2016]

§ 2634.102 Purpose and overview.

(a) This regulation supplements and implements title I of the Act and section 201(d) of Executive Order 12674 (as modified by Executive Order 12731) with respect to executive branch employees, by setting forth more specifically the uniform procedures and requirements for financial disclosure and for the certification and use of qualified blind and diversified trusts. Additionally, this regulation implements section 502 of the Reform Act by establishing procedures for executive branch personnel to obtain Certificates of Divestiture, which permit deferred rec-

ognition of capital gain in certain instances.

(b) The rules in this part govern both public and confidential (nonpublic) financial disclosure systems. Subpart I of this part contains the rules applicable to the confidential disclosure system.

[57 FR 11804, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 28233, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.103 Executive agency supplemental regulations.

(a) This regulation is intended to provide uniformity for executive branch financial disclosure systems. However, an agency may, subject to the prior written approval of the Office of Government Ethics, issue supplemental regulations implementing this part, if necessary to address special or unique agency circumstances. Such regulations:

(1) Shall be consistent with the Act, Executive Orders 12674 and 12731, and this part; and

(2) Shall impose no additional reporting requirements on either public or confidential filers, unless specifically authorized by the Office of Government Ethics as supplemental confidential reporting.

NOTE: Supplemental regulations will not be used to satisfy the separate requirement of 5 U.S.C. App. (Ethics in Government Act of 1978, Section 402(d)(1)) that each agency have established written procedures on how to collect, review, evaluate, and, where appropriate, make publicly available, financial disclosure statements filed with it.

(b) Requests for approval of supplemental regulations under paragraph (a) of this section shall be submitted in writing to the Office of Government Ethics, and shall set forth the agency's need for any proposed supplemental reporting requirements. See § 2634.901 (b) and (c).

(c) Agencies should review all of their existing financial disclosure regulations to determine which of those regulations must be modified or revoked in order to conform with the requirements of this part. Any amendatory agency regulations shall be processed in accordance with paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section.

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§ 2634.104 Policies.

(a) Title I of the Act requires that high-level Federal officials disclose publicly their personal financial interests, to ensure confidence in the integrity of the Federal Government by demonstrating that they are able to carry out their duties without compromising the public trust. Title I also authorizes the Office of Government Ethics to establish a confidential (non-public) financial disclosure system for less senior executive branch personnel in certain designated positions, to facilitate internal agency conflict-of-interest review.

(b) Public and confidential financial disclosure serves to prevent conflicts of interest and to identify potential conflicts, by providing for a systematic review of the financial interests of both current and prospective officers and employees. These reports assist agencies in administering their ethics programs and providing counseling to employees.

(c) Financial disclosure reports are not net worth statements. Financial disclosure systems seek only the information that the President, Congress, or OGE as the supervising ethics office for the executive branch has deemed relevant to the administration and application of the criminal conflict of interest laws, other statutes on ethical conduct or financial interests, and Executive orders or regulations on standards of ethical conduct.

(d) Nothing in the Act or this part requiring reporting of information or the filing of any report shall be deemed to authorize receipt of income, honoraria, gifts, or reimbursements; holding of assets, liabilities, or positions; or involvement in transactions that are prohibited by law, Executive order or regulation.

(e) The provisions of title I of the Act and this part requiring the reporting of information shall supersede any general requirement under any other provision of law or regulation on the reporting of information required for purposes of preventing conflicts of interest or apparent conflicts of interest. However, the provisions of title I and this part shall not supersede the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 7342 (the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act).

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(f) This regulation is intended to be gender-neutral; therefore, use of the terms he, his, and him include she, hers, and her, and vice versa.

§ 2634.105 Definitions.

For purposes of this part:

(a) *Act* means the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (Pub. L. 95-521, as amended), as modified by the Ethics Reform Act of 1989 (Pub. L. 101-194, as amended).

(b) *Agency* means any executive agency as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105 (any executive department, Government corporation, or independent establishment in the executive branch), any military department as defined in 5 U.S.C. 102, and the Postal Service and the Postal Rate Commission. It does not include the General Accounting Office.

(c) *Confidential filer*. For the definition of “confidential filer,” see § 2634.904.

(d) *Dependent child* means, when used with respect to any reporting individual, any individual who is a son, daughter, stepson, or stepdaughter and who:

(1) Is unmarried, under age 21, and living in the household of the reporting individual; or

(2) Is a dependent of the reporting individual within the meaning of section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 152.

(e) *Designated agency ethics official* means the primary officer or employee who is designated by the head of an agency to administer the provisions of title I of the Act and this part within an agency, and in his absence the alternate who is designated by the head of the agency. The term also includes a delegate of such an official, unless otherwise indicated. See subpart B of part 2638 of this chapter on the appointment and additional responsibilities of a designated agency ethics official and alternate.

(f) *Executive branch* means any agency as defined in paragraph (b) of this section and any other entity or administrative unit in the executive branch.

(g) *Filer* is used interchangeably with “reporting individual,” and may refer to a “confidential filer” as defined in paragraph (c) of this section, a “public filer” as defined in paragraph (m) of

this section, or a nominee or candidate as described in § 2634.201.

(h) *Gift* means a payment, advance, forbearance, rendering, or deposit of money, or anything of value, unless consideration of equal or greater value is received by the donor, but does not include:

(1) Bequests and other forms of inheritance;

(2) Suitable mementos of a function honoring the reporting individual;

(3) Food, lodging, transportation, and entertainment provided by a foreign government within a foreign country or by the United States Government, the District of Columbia, or a State or local government or political subdivision thereof;

(4) Food and beverages which are not consumed in connection with a gift of overnight lodging;

(5) Communications to the offices of a reporting individual, including subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals;

(6) Consumable products provided by home-State businesses to the offices of the President or Vice President, if those products are intended for consumption by persons other than the President or Vice President; or

(7) Exclusions and exceptions as described at § 2634.304(c) and (d).

(i) *Honorarium* means a payment of money or anything of value for an appearance, speech, or article.

(j) *Income* means all income from whatever source derived. It includes but is not limited to the following items: earned income such as compensation for services, fees, commissions, salaries, wages and similar items; gross income derived from business (and net income if the individual elects to include it); gains derived from dealings in property including capital gains; interest; rents; royalties; dividends; annuities; income from the investment portion of life insurance and endowment contracts; pensions; income from discharge of indebtedness; distributive share of partnership income; and income from an interest in an estate or trust. The term includes all income items, regardless of whether they are taxable for Federal income tax purposes, such as interest on municipal bonds. Generally, income

means “gross income” as determined in conformity with the Internal Revenue Service principles at 26 CFR 1.61-1 through 1.61-15 and 1.61-21.

(k) *Personal hospitality of any individual* means hospitality extended for a nonbusiness purpose by an individual, not a corporation or organization, at the personal residence of or on property or facilities owned by that individual or his family.

(l) *Personal residence* means any real property used exclusively as a private dwelling by the reporting individual or his spouse, which is not rented out during any portion of the reporting period. The term is not limited to one’s domicile; there may be more than one personal residence, including a vacation home.

(m) *Public filer*. For the definition of “public filer,” see § 2634.202.

(n) *Reimbursement* means any payment or other thing of value received by the reporting individual (other than gifts, as defined in paragraph (h) of this section) to cover travel-related expenses of such individual, other than those which are:

(1) Provided by the United States Government, the District of Columbia, or a State or local government or political subdivision thereof;

(2) Required to be reported by the reporting individual under 5 U.S.C. 7342 (the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act); or

(3) Required to be reported under section 304 of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 434) (relating to reports of campaign contributions).

NOTE: Payments which are not made to the individual are not reimbursements for purposes of this part. Thus, payments made to the filer’s employing agency to cover official travel-related expenses do not fit this definition of reimbursement. For example, payments being accepted by the agency pursuant to statutory authority such as 31 U.S.C. 1353, as implemented by 41 CFR part 304-1, are not considered reimbursements under this part 2634, because they are not payments received by the reporting individual. On the other hand, travel payments made to the employee by an outside entity for private travel are considered reimbursements for purposes of this part. Likewise, travel payments received from certain nonprofit entities under

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authority of 5 U.S.C. 4111 are considered reimbursements, even though for official travel, since that statute specifies that such payments must be made to the individual directly (with prior approval from the individual's agency).

(o) *Relative* means an individual who is related to the reporting individual, as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, great uncle, great aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, half sister, or who is the grandfather or grandmother of the spouse of the reporting individual, and shall be deemed to include the fiance or fiancée of the reporting individual.

(p) *Reporting individual* is used interchangeably with "filer," and may refer to a "confidential filer" as defined in § 2634.904, a "public filer" as defined in § 2634.202, or a nominee or candidate as described in § 2634.201.

(q) *Reviewing official* means the designated agency ethics official or his delegate, the Secretary concerned, the head of the agency, or the Director of the Office of Government Ethics.

(r) *Secretary concerned* has the meaning set forth in 10 U.S.C. 101(8) (relating to the Secretaries of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and for certain Coast Guard matters, the Secretary of Transportation); and, in addition, means:

(1) The Secretary of Commerce, in matters concerning the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(2) The Secretary of Health and Human Services, with respect to matters concerning the Public Health Service; and

(3) The Secretary of State with respect to matters concerning the Foreign Service.

(s) *Special Government employee* has the meaning given to that term by the first sentence of 18 U.S.C. 202(a): an officer or employee of an agency who is retained, designated, appointed, or employed to perform temporary duties, with or without compensation, for not to exceed 130 days during any period of

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365 consecutive days, either on a full-time or intermittent basis.

(t) *Value* means a good faith estimate of the fair market value if the exact value is neither known nor easily obtainable by the reporting individual without undue hardship or expense. In the case of any interest in property, see the alternative valuation options in § 2634.301(e). For gifts and reimbursements, see § 2634.304(e).

[57 FR 11804, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21854, May 22, 1992; 62 FR 48747, Sept. 17, 1997; 63 FR 69992, Dec. 18, 1998]

Subpart B—Persons Required To File Public Financial Disclosure Reports

SOURCE: 57 FR 11806, Apr. 7, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2634.201 General requirements, filing dates, and extensions.

(a) *Incumbents*. A public filer as defined in § 2634.202 of this subpart who, during any calendar year, performs the duties of his position or office, as described in that section, for a period in excess of 60 days shall file a public financial disclosure report containing the information prescribed in subpart C of this part, on or before May 15 of the succeeding year.

Example 1. An SES official commences performing the duties of his position on November 15. He will not be required to file an incumbent report for that calendar year.

Example 2. An employee, who is classified at GS-15, is assigned to fill an SES position in an acting capacity, from October 15 through December 31. Having performed the duties of a covered position for more than 60 days during the calendar year, he will be required to file an incumbent report. In addition, he must file a new entrant report the first time he serves more than 60 days in a calendar year in the position, in accordance with § 2634.201(b) and § 2634.204(c)(1).

(b) *New entrants*. (1) Within 30 days of assuming a public filer position or office described in § 2634.202 of this subpart, an individual shall file a public financial disclosure report containing the information prescribed in subpart C of this part.

(2) However, no report shall be required if the individual:

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(i) Has, within 30 days prior to assuming such position, left another position or office for which a public financial disclosure report under the Act was required to be filed; or

(ii) Has already filed such a report as a nominee or candidate for the position.

Example: Y, an employee of the Treasury Department who has previously filed reports in accordance with the rules of this section, terminates employment with that Department on January 12, 1991, and begins employment with the Commerce Department on February 10, 1991, in a Senior Executive Service position. Y is not a new entrant since he has assumed a position described in § 2634.202 of this subpart within thirty days of leaving another position so described. Accordingly, he need not file a new report with the Commerce Department.

NOTE: While Y did not have to file a new entrant report with the Commerce Department, that Department should request a copy of the last report which he filed with the Treasury Department, so that Commerce could determine whether or not there would be any conflicts or potential conflicts in connection with Y's new employment. Additionally, Y will have to file an incumbent report covering the 1990 calendar year, in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section, due not later than May 15, 1991, with Commerce, which should provide a copy to Treasury so that both may review it.

(c) *Nominees.* (1) At any time after a public announcement by the President or President-elect of his intention to nominate an individual to an executive branch position, appointment to which requires the advice and consent of the Senate, such individual may, and in any event within five days after the transmittal of the nomination to the Senate shall, file a public financial disclosure report containing the information prescribed in subpart C of this part.

(2) This requirement shall not apply to any individual who is nominated to a position as:

(i) An officer of the uniformed services; or

(ii) A Foreign Service Officer.

NOTE: Although the statute, 5 U.S.C. app. (Ethics in Government Act of 1978, section 101(b)(1)), exempts uniformed service officers only if they are nominated for appointment to a grade or rank for which the pay grade is 0-6 or below, the Senate confirmation committees have adopted a practice of exempt-

ing all uniformed service officers, unless otherwise specified by the committee assigned.

(3) Section 2634.605(c) provides expedited procedures in the case of individuals described in paragraph (c)(1) of this section. Those individuals referred to in paragraph (c)(2) of this section as being exempt from filing nominee reports shall file new entrant reports, if required by paragraph (b) of this section.

(d) *Candidates.* A candidate (as defined in section 301 of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, 2 U.S.C. 431) for nomination or election to the office of President or Vice President (other than an incumbent) shall file a public financial disclosure report containing the information prescribed in subpart C of this part, in accordance with the following:

(1) Within 30 days of becoming a candidate or on or before May 15 of the calendar year in which the individual becomes a candidate, whichever is later, but in no event later than 30 days before the election; and

(2) On or before May 15 of each successive year an individual continues to be a candidate. However, in any calendar year in which an individual continues to be a candidate but all elections relating to such candidacy were held in prior calendar years, the individual need not file a report unless he becomes a candidate for a vacancy during that year.

Example: P became a candidate for President in January 1991. P will be required to file a public financial disclosure report on or before May 15, 1991. If P had become a candidate on June 1, 1991, he would have been required to file a disclosure report within 30 days of that date.

(e) *Termination of employment.* (1) On or before the thirtieth day after termination of employment from a public filer position or office described in § 2634.202 of this subpart, an individual shall file a public financial disclosure report containing the information prescribed in subpart C of this part.

(2) However, if within 30 days of such termination the individual assumes employment in another position or office for which a public report under the Act is required to be filed, no report shall be required by the provisions of

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this paragraph. See the related *Example* in paragraph (b) of this section.

(f) *Extensions.* The reviewing official may, for good cause shown, grant to any public filer or class thereof an extension of time for filing which shall not exceed 45 days. The reviewing official may, for good cause shown, grant an additional extension of time which shall not exceed 45 days. The employee shall set forth in writing specific reasons why such additional extension of time is necessary. The reviewing official must approve or deny such requests in writing. Such records shall be maintained as part of the official report file. (For extensions on confidential financial disclosure reports, see § 2634.903(d).)

[57 FR 11806, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21854, May 22, 1992, as amended at 63 FR 69992, Dec. 18, 1998; 67 FR 49857, Aug. 1, 2002]

§ 2634.202 Public filer defined.

The term *public filer* includes:

- (a) The President;
- (b) The Vice President;
- (c) Each officer or employee in the executive branch, including a special Government employee as defined in 18 U.S.C. 202(a), whose position is classified above GS-15 of the General Schedule prescribed by 5 U.S.C. 5332, or the rate of basic pay for which is fixed, other than under the General Schedule, at a rate equal to or greater than 120% of the minimum rate of basic pay for GS-15 of the General Schedule; each member of a uniformed service whose pay grade is at or in excess of O-7 under 37 U.S.C. 201; and each officer or employee in any other position determined by the Director of the Office of Government Ethics to be of equal classification;
- (d) Each employee who is an administrative law judge appointed pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3105;
- (e) Any employee not otherwise described in paragraph (c) of this section who is in a position in the executive branch which is excepted from the competitive service by reason of being of a confidential or policy-making character, unless excluded by virtue of a determination under § 2634.203 of this subpart;
- (f) The Postmaster General, the Deputy Postmaster General, each Gov-

ernor of the Board of Governors of the United States Postal Service and each officer or employee of the United States Postal Service or Postal Rate Commission whose basic rate of pay is equal to or greater than 120% of the minimum rate of basic pay for GS-15 of the General Schedule;

(g) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics and each agency's primary designated agency ethics official;

(h) Any civilian employee not otherwise described in paragraph (c) of this section who is employed in the Executive Office of the President (other than a special Government employee, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 202(a)) and holds a commission of appointment from the President; and

(i) Anyone whose employment in a position or office described in paragraphs (a) through (h) of this section has terminated, but who has not yet satisfied the filing requirements of § 2634.201(e) of this subpart.

NOTE: References in this section and in §§ 2634.203 and 2634.904 to position classifications have been adjusted to reflect elimination of General Schedule classifications GS-16, GS-17, and GS-18 by the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act of 1990, as incorporated in section 529 of Public Law 101-509.

§ 2634.203 Persons excluded by rule.

(a) *In general.* Any individual or group of individuals described in § 2634.202(e) of this subpart (relating to positions of a confidential or policy-making character) may be excluded by rule from the public reporting requirements of this subpart when the Director of the Office of Government Ethics determines, in his sole discretion, that such exclusion would not affect adversely the integrity of the Government or the public's confidence in the integrity of the Government.

(b) *Exclusion determination.* The determination required by paragraph (a) of this section has been made for the following group of individuals who, therefore, may be excluded from the public reporting requirements of this subpart, pursuant to the procedures in paragraph (c) of this section: Individuals in any position classified at GS-15 of the General Schedule or below, or the rate of basic pay for which is less than 120%

of the minimum rate of basic pay fixed for GS-15, who have no policy-making role with respect to agency programs. Such individuals may include chauffeurs, private secretaries, stenographers, and others holding positions of a similar nature whose exclusion would be consistent with the basic criterion set forth in paragraph (a) of this section. See § 2634.904(a)(4) for possible coverage by confidential disclosure rules.

(c) *Procedure.* (1) The exclusion of any individual from reporting requirements pursuant to this section will be effective as of the time the employing agency files with the Office of Government Ethics a list and description of each position for which exclusion is sought, and the identity of any incumbent employees in those positions. Exclusions should be requested prior to due dates for the reports which such employees would otherwise have to file.

(2) If the Office of Government Ethics finds that one or more positions has been improperly excluded, it will advise the agency and set a date for the filing of the report.

[57 FR 11806, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21854, May 22, 1992, as amended at 58 FR 38912, July 21, 1993; 71 FR 28233, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.204 Employment of sixty days or less.

(a) *In general.* Any public filer or nominee who, as determined by the official specified in this paragraph, is not reasonably expected to perform the duties of an office or position described in § 2634.201(c) or § 2634.202 of this subpart for more than 60 days in any calendar year shall not be subject to the reporting requirements of § 2634.201 (b), (c), or (e) of this subpart. This determination will be made by:

(1) The designated agency ethics official or Secretary concerned, in a case to which the provisions of § 2634.201 (b) or (e) of this subpart (relating to new entrant and termination reports) would otherwise apply; or

(2) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics, in a case to which the provisions of § 2634.201(c) of this subpart (relating to nominee reports) would otherwise apply.

(b) *Alternative reporting.* Any new entrant who is exempted from filing a

public financial report under paragraph (a) of this section and who is a special Government employee is subject to confidential reporting under § 2634.903(b). See § 2634.904(a)(2).

(c) *Exception.* If the public filer or nominee actually performs the duties of an office or position referred to in paragraph (a) of this section for more than 60 days in a calendar year, the public report otherwise required by:

(1) Section 2634.201 (b) or (c) of this subpart (relating to new entrant and nominee reports) shall be filed within 15 calendar days after the sixtieth day of duty; and

(2) Section 2634.201(e) of this subpart (relating to termination reports) shall be filed as provided in that paragraph.

[57 FR 11806, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 28233, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.205 Special waiver of public reporting requirements.

(a) *General rule.* In unusual circumstances, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics may grant a request for a waiver of the public reporting requirements under this subpart for an individual who is reasonably expected to perform, or has performed, the duties of an office or position for fewer than 130 days in a calendar year, but only if the Director determines that:

(1) The individual is a special Government employee, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 202(a), who performs temporary duties either on a full-time or intermittent basis;

(2) The individual is able to provide services specially needed by the Government;

(3) It is unlikely that the individual's outside employment or financial interests will create a conflict of interest; and

(4) Public financial disclosure by the individual is not necessary under the circumstances.

(b) *Procedure.* (1) Requests for waivers must be submitted to the Office of Government Ethics, via the requester's agency, within 10 days after an employee learns that he will hold a position which requires reporting and that he will serve in that position for more than 60 days in any calendar year, or

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upon serving in such a position for more than 60 days, whichever is earlier.

(2) The request shall consist of:

(i) A cover letter which identifies the individual and his position, states the approximate number of days in a calendar year which he expects to serve in that position, and requests a waiver of public reporting requirements under this section;

(ii) An enclosure which states the reasons for the individual's belief that the conditions of paragraphs (a) (1) through (4) of this section are met in the particular case; and

(iii) The report otherwise required by this subpart B, as a factual basis for the determination required by this section. The report shall bear the legend at the top of page 1: "CONFIDENTIAL: WAIVER REQUEST PENDING PURSUANT TO 5 CFR 2634.205."

(3) The agency in which the individual serves shall advise the Office of Government Ethics as to the justification for a waiver.

(4) In the event a waiver is granted, the report shall not be subject to the public disclosure requirements of § 2634.603; however, the waiver request cover letter shall be subject to those requirements. In the event that a waiver is not granted, the confidential legend shall be removed from the report, and the report shall be subject to public disclosure; however, the waiver request cover letter shall not then be subject to public disclosure.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3209-0004)

[57 FR 11806, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 59 FR 34756, July 7, 1994]

Subpart C—Contents of Public Reports

SOURCE: 57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2634.301 Interests in property.

(a) *In general.* Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall include a brief description of any interest in property held by the filer at the end of the reporting period in a trade or business, or for investment or the production of income, having a fair market value in excess of

\$1,000. The report shall designate the category of value of the property in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section. Each item of real and personal property shall be disclosed separately. Note that for Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA's), brokerage accounts, trusts, mutual or pension funds and other entities with portfolio holdings, each underlying asset must be separately disclosed, unless the entity qualifies for special treatment under § 2634.310 of this subpart.

(b) *Types of property reportable.* Subject to the exceptions in paragraph (c) of this section, examples of the types of property required to be reported include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Real estate;
- (2) Stocks, bonds, securities, and futures contracts;
- (3) Livestock owned for commercial purposes;
- (4) Commercial crops, either standing or held in storage;
- (5) Antiques or art held for resale or investment;
- (6) Beneficial interests in trusts and estates;
- (7) Deposits in banks or other financial institutions;
- (8) Pensions and annuities;
- (9) Mutual funds;
- (10) Accounts or other funds receivable; and
- (11) Capital accounts or other asset ownership in a business.

(c) *Exceptions.* The following property interests are exempt from the reporting requirements under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section:

- (1) Any personal liability owed to the filer, spouse, or dependent child by a spouse, or by a parent, brother, sister, or child of the filer, spouse, or dependent child;
- (2) Personal savings accounts (defined as any form of deposit in a bank, savings and loan association, credit union, or similar financial institution) in a single financial institution or holdings in a single money market mutual fund, aggregating \$5,000 or less in that institution or fund;
- (3) A personal residence of the filer or spouse, as defined in § 2634.105(1); and

(4) Financial interests in any retirement system of the United States (including the Thrift Savings Plan) or under the Social Security Act.

(d) *Valuation categories.* The valuation categories specified for property items are as follows:

- (1) Not more than \$15,000;
- (2) Greater than \$15,000 but not more than \$50,000;
- (3) Greater than \$50,000 but not more than \$100,000;
- (4) Greater than \$100,000 but not more than \$250,000;
- (5) Greater than \$250,000 but not more than \$500,000;
- (6) Greater than \$500,000 but not more than \$1,000,000; and
- (7) Greater than \$1,000,000;
- (8) Provided that, with respect to items held by the filer alone or held jointly by the filer with the filer's spouse and/or dependent children, the following additional categories over \$1,000,000 shall apply:
 - (i) Greater than \$1,000,000 but not more than \$5,000,000;
 - (ii) Greater than \$5,000,000 but not more than \$25,000,000;
 - (iii) Greater than \$25,000,000 but not more than \$50,000,000; and
 - (iv) Greater than \$50,000,000.

(e) *Valuation of interests in property.* A good faith estimate of the fair market value of interests in property may be made in any case in which the exact value cannot be obtained without undue hardship or expense to the filer. Fair market value may also be determined by:

- (1) The purchase price (in which case, the filer should indicate date of purchase);
- (2) Recent appraisal;
- (3) The assessed value for tax purposes (adjusted to reflect the market value of the property used for the assessment if the assessed value is computed at less than 100 percent of that market value);
- (4) The year-end book value of non-publicly traded stock, the year-end exchange value of corporate stock, or the face value of corporate bonds or comparable securities;
- (5) The net worth of a business partnership;
- (6) The equity value of an individually owned business; or

(7) Any other recognized indication of value (such as the last sale on a stock exchange).

Example 1. An official has a \$4,000 savings account in Bank A. His spouse has a \$2,500 certificate of deposit issued by Bank B and his dependent daughter has a \$200 savings account in Bank C. The official does not have to disclose the deposits, as the total value of the deposits in any one bank does not exceed \$5,000. Note, however, that the source and the amount of interest income from any bank is required to be reported under § 2634.302(b) of this subpart if it exceeds the reporting threshold for income. See § 2634.309 of this subpart for disclosure coverage of spouses and dependent children.

Example 2. Public filer R has a collection of post-impressionist paintings which have been carefully selected over the years. From time to time, as new paintings have been acquired to add to the collection, R has made sales of both less desirable works from his collection and paintings of various schools which he acquired through inheritance. Under these circumstances, R must report the value of all the paintings he retains as interests in property pursuant to this section, as well as income from the sales of paintings pursuant to § 2634.302(b) of this subpart. Recurrent sales from a collection indicate that the collection is being held for investment or the production of income.

Example 3. A reporting individual has investments which her broker holds as an IRA and invests in stocks, bonds, and mutual funds. Each such asset having a fair market value in excess of \$1,000 at the close of the reporting period must be separately listed, and the value must be shown. See § 2634.311(c) of this subpart for attachment of brokerage statements in lieu of listing, in the event of extensive holdings. Note that for a mutual fund held in this IRA investment account, its underlying assets must also be separately detailed, unless it qualifies as an excepted investment fund, pursuant to § 2634.310 of this subpart.

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21854, May 22, 1992, as amended at 65 FR 69656, Nov. 20, 2000; 71 FR 28233, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.302 Income.

(a) *Noninvestment income.* Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall disclose the source, type, and the actual amount or value, of earned or other noninvestment income in excess of \$200 from any one source which is received by the filer or has accrued to his benefit during the reporting period, including:

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(1) Salaries, fees, commissions, wages and any other compensation for personal services (other than from United States Government employment);

(2) Retirement benefits (other than from United States Government employment, including the Thrift Savings Plan, or from Social Security);

(3) Any honoraria, and the date services were provided, including payments made or to be made to charitable organizations on behalf of the filer in lieu of honoraria; and

(4) Any other noninvestment income, such as prizes, awards, or discharge of indebtedness.

NOTE: In calculating the amount of an honorarium, subtract any actual and necessary travel expenses incurred by the recipient and one relative. For example, if such expenses are paid or reimbursed by the honorarium source, they shall not be counted as part of the honorarium payment; if the expenses are paid or reimbursed by the individual receiving the honorarium, the amount of honorarium shall be reduced by the amount of such expenses.

Example 1. An official is a participant in a retirement plan of Coastal Airlines. Pursuant to such plan, the official and his spouse receive passage on some Coastal flights without charge, and they receive passage on other flights at a discounted fare. The difference between what Coastal charges members of the public generally and what the official and his spouse are charged for a particular flight is deemed income in-kind and must be disclosed by this reporting individual if it exceeds the \$200 threshold.

Example 2. An official serves on the board of directors at a bank, for which he receives a \$500 fee each calendar quarter. He also receives an annual fee of \$1,500 for service as trustee of a private trust. In both instances, such fees received or earned during the reporting period must be disclosed, and the actual amount must be shown.

(b) Investment income. Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall disclose:

(1) The source and type of investment income, characterized as dividends, rents, interest, capital gains, or income from qualified or excepted trusts or excepted investment funds (see § 2634.310 of this subpart), which is received by the filer or accrued to his benefit during the reporting period, and which exceeds \$200 in amount or value from any one source. Examples include, but are not limited to, income derived from real estate, collectible items, stocks,

bonds, notes, copyrights, pensions, mutual funds, the investment portion of life insurance contracts, loans, and personal savings accounts (as defined in § 2634.301(c)(2) of this subpart). Note that for entities with portfolio holdings, such as Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA's), brokerage accounts, trusts, and mutual or pension funds, each underlying source of income must be separately disclosed, unless the entity qualifies for special treatment under § 2634.310 of this subpart. The amount or value of income from each reported source shall also be disclosed and categorized in accordance with the following table:

- (i) Not more than \$1,000;
- (ii) Greater than \$1,000 but not more than \$2,500;
- (iii) Greater than \$2,500 but not more than \$5,000;
- (iv) Greater than \$5,000 but not more than \$15,000;
- (v) Greater than \$15,000 but not more than \$50,000;
- (vi) Greater than \$50,000 but not more than \$100,000;
- (vii) Greater than \$100,000 but not more than \$1,000,000; and
- (viii) Greater than \$1,000,000;
- (ix) Provided that, with respect to investment income of the filer alone or joint investment income of the filer with the filer's spouse and/or dependent children, the following additional categories over \$1,000,000 shall apply:
 - (A) Greater than \$1,000,000 but not more than \$5,000,000; and
 - (B) Greater than \$5,000,000.

(2) The source, type, and the actual amount or value of gross income from a business, distributive share of a partnership, joint business venture income, payments from an estate or an annuity or endowment contract, or any other items of income not otherwise covered by paragraphs (a) or (b)(1) of this section which are received by the filer or accrued to his benefit during the reporting period and which exceed \$200 from any one source.

Example 1. An official rents out a portion of his residence. He receives rental income of \$600 from one individual for four months and \$1,200 from another individual for the remaining eight months of the year covered by his incumbent financial disclosure report. He must identify the property, specify the type of income (rent), and indicate the category

of the total amount of rent received. (He must also disclose the asset information required by § 2634.301 of this subpart.)

Example 2. A reporting individual has three savings accounts with Bank A. One is in his name and earned \$85 in interest during the reporting period. One is in a joint account with his spouse and earned \$120 in interest. One is in his name and his dependent daughter's name and earned \$35 in interest. Since the aggregate interest income from this source exceeds \$200, the official must disclose the name of the bank, the type of income, and the category of the total amount of interest earned from all three accounts. (He must also disclose the accounts as assets under § 2634.301 of this subpart if, in the aggregate, they total more than \$5,000 in that bank.)

Example 3. An official has an ownership interest in a fast-food restaurant, from which she receives \$10,000 in annual income. She must specify on her financial disclosure report the type of income, such as partnership distributive share or gross business income, and indicate the actual amount of such income. (Additionally, she must describe the business and categorize its asset value, pursuant to § 2634.301 of this subpart.)

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21854, May 22, 1992, as amended at 63 FR 43068, Aug. 12, 1998; 65 FR 69656, Nov. 20, 2000; 71 FR 28233, May 16, 2006; 72 FR 16986, Apr. 6, 2007]

§ 2634.303 Purchases, sales, and exchanges.

(a) *In general.* Except as indicated in § 2634.308(b) of this subpart, each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall include a brief description, the date and value (using the categories of value in § 2634.301(d) of this subpart) of any purchase, sale, or exchange by the filer during the reporting period, in which the amount involved in the transaction exceeds \$1,000:

(1) Of real property, other than a personal residence of the filer or spouse, as defined in § 2634.105(1) of this part; and

(2) Of stocks, bonds, commodity futures, mutual fund shares, and other forms of securities.

(b) *Exceptions.* (1) Any transaction solely by and between the reporting individual, his spouse, and dependent children need not be reported under paragraph (a) of this section.

(2) Transactions involving Treasury bills, notes, and bonds; money market mutual funds or accounts; and personal savings accounts (as defined in

§ 2634.301(c)(2) of this subpart) need not be reported when occurring at rates, terms, and conditions available generally to members of the public. Likewise, transactions involving portfolio holdings of trusts and investment funds described in § 2634.310 (b) and (c) of this subpart need not be reported.

(3) Any transaction which occurred at a time when the reporting individual was not a Federal Government officer or employee need not be reported under paragraph (a) of this section.

Example 1. An official sells her personal residence in Virginia for \$100,000 and purchases a personal residence in the District of Columbia for \$200,000. She need not report the sale of the Virginia residence or the purchase of the D.C. residence.

Example 2. An official sells his beach home in Maryland for \$50,000. Because he has rented it out for one month every summer, it does not qualify as a personal residence. He must disclose the sale under this section and any capital gain over \$200 realized on the sale under § 2634.302 of this subpart.

Example 3. An official sells a ranch to his dependent daughter. The official need not report the sale because it is a transaction between the reporting individual and a dependent child; however, any capital gain, except for that portion attributable to a personal residence, is required to be reported under § 2634.302 of this subpart.

Example 4. An official sells an apartment building and realizes a loss of \$100,000. He must report the sale of the building if the sale price of the property exceeds \$1,000; however, he need not report anything under § 2634.302 of this subpart, as the sale did not result in a capital gain.

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21854, May 22, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 28233, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.304 Gifts and reimbursements.

(a) *Gifts.* Except as indicated in § 2634.308(b), each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall contain the identity of the source, a brief description, and the value of all gifts aggregating more than \$390 in value which are received by the filer during the reporting period from any one source. For in-kind travel-related gifts, include a travel itinerary, dates, and nature of expenses provided.

(b) *Reimbursements.* Except as indicated in § 2634.308(b), each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall contain the identity of

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the source, a brief description (including a travel itinerary, dates, and the nature of expenses provided), and the value of any travel-related reimbursements aggregating more than \$390 in value, which are received by the filer during the reporting period from any one source.

(c) *Exclusions.* Reports need not contain any information about gifts and reimbursements to which the provisions of this section would otherwise apply which are received from relatives (see § 2634.105(o)) or during a period in which the filer was not an officer or employee of the Federal Government. Additionally, any food, lodging, or entertainment received as “personal hospitality of any individual,” as defined in § 2634.105(k), need not be reported. See also exclusions specified in the definitions of gift and reimbursement, at § 2634.105(h) and (n).

(d) *Aggregation exception.* Any gift or reimbursement with a fair market value of \$156 or less need not be aggregated for purposes of the reporting rules of this section. However, the acceptance of gifts, whether or not reportable, is subject to the restrictions imposed by Executive Order 12674, as modified by Executive Order 12731, and the implementing regulations on standards of ethical conduct.

Example 1. An official accepts a print, a pen and pencil set, and a letter opener from a community service organization he has worked with solely in his private capacity. He determines, in accordance with paragraph (e) of this section, that these gifts are valued as follows:

- Gift 1—Print: \$220
- Gift 2—Pen and pencil set: \$185
- Gift 3—Letter opener: \$20

The official must disclose Gifts 1 and 2, since together they aggregate more than \$390 in value from the same source. Gift 3 need not be aggregated, because its value does not exceed \$156.

Example 2. An official receives the following gifts from a single source:

1. Dinner for two at a local restaurant—\$120.
2. Round-trip taxi fare to meet donor at the restaurant—\$25.
3. Dinner at donor’s city residence—(value uncertain).
4. Round-trip airline transportation and hotel accommodations to visit Epcot Center in Florida—\$400.

5. Weekend at donor’s country home, including duck hunting and tennis match—(value uncertain).

The official need only disclose Gift 4. Gift 1 falls within the exclusion in § 2634.105(h)(4) for food and beverages not consumed in connection with a gift of overnight lodging. Gifts 3 and 5 need not be disclosed because they fall within the exception for personal hospitality of an individual. Gift 2 need not be aggregated and reported, because its value does not exceed \$156.

Example 3. An official receives free tickets from an outside source for himself and his spouse to attend an awards banquet at a local club. The value of each ticket is \$200. Even though this is a gift which exceeds the more than \$390 threshold amount for disclosure, the official need not report it, because of the exclusion in § 2634.105(h)(4) for food and beverages not consumed in connection with a gift of overnight lodging.

NOTE: Prior to accepting this gift of tickets, the individual should consult ethics officials at his agency to determine whether standards of conduct rules will permit acceptance, depending on whether or not the donor is a prohibited source and the exact nature of the event.

Example 4. An official is asked to speak at an out-of-town meeting on a matter which is unrelated to her official duties and her agency. The round-trip airfare exceeds \$390. If the official pays for the ticket and is then reimbursed by the organization to which she spoke, she must disclose this reimbursement under paragraph (b) of this section. If the organization simply provided the ticket, that must be disclosed as a gift under paragraph (a) of this section.

(e) *Valuation of gifts and reimbursements.* The value to be assigned to a gift or reimbursement is its fair market value. For most reimbursements, this will be the amount actually received. For gifts, the value should be determined in one of the following manners:

- (1) If the gift has been newly purchased or is readily available in the market, the value shall be its retail price. The filer need not contact the donor, but may contact a retail establishment selling similar items to determine the present cost in the market.
- (2) If the item is not readily available in the market, such as a piece of art, a handmade item, or an antique, the filer may make a good faith estimate of the value of the item.
- (3) The term readily available in the market means that an item generally is available for retail purchase in the

metropolitan area nearest to the official's residence.

Example. Items such as a pen and pencil set, letter opener, leather case or engraved pen are generally available in the market and can be determined by contacting stores which sell like items and ascertaining the retail price of each.

NOTE: The market value of a ticket entitling the holder to attend an event which includes food, refreshments, entertainment or other benefits is the face value of the ticket, which may exceed the actual cost of the food and other benefits. The value of food and beverages may be excludable under § 2634.105(h)(4), if applicable, by making a good faith estimate, or by determining their actual cost from the caterer, restaurant, or similar source.

(f) *Waiver rule in the case of certain gifts—(1) In general.* In unusual cases, the value of a gift as defined in § 2634.105(h) need not be aggregated for reporting threshold purposes under this section, and therefore the gift need not be reported on an SF 278, if the Director of OGE receives a written request for and issues a waiver, after determining that:

(i) Both the basis of the relationship between the grantor and the grantee and the motivation behind the gift are personal; and

(ii) No countervailing public purpose requires public disclosure of the nature, source, and value of the gift.

Example to paragraph (f)(1). i. The Secretary of Education and her spouse receive the following two wedding gifts:

A. Gift 1—A crystal decanter valued at \$385 from the Secretary's former college roommate and lifelong friend, who is a real estate broker in Wyoming.

B. Gift 2—A gift of a print valued at \$400 from a business partner of the spouse, who owns a catering company.

ii. Under these circumstances, the Director of OGE may grant a request for a waiver of the requirement to aggregate and report on an SF 278 each of these gifts.

(2) *Public disclosure of waiver request.* If approved in whole or in part, the cover letter requesting the waiver shall be subject to the public disclosure requirements in § 2634.603 of this part.

(3) *Procedure.* (i) A public filer seeking a waiver under this paragraph (f) shall submit a request to the Office of Government Ethics, through his agency. The request shall be made by a cover letter which identifies the filer

and his position and which states that a waiver is requested under this section.

(ii) On an enclosure to the cover letter, the filer shall set forth:

(A) The identity and occupation of the donor;

(B) A statement that the relationship between the donor and the filer is personal in nature;

(C) A statement that neither the donor nor any person or organization who employs the donor or whom the donor represents, conducts or seeks business with, engages in activities regulated by, or is directly affected by action taken by, the agency employing the filer. If the preceding statement cannot be made without qualification, the filer shall indicate those qualifications, along with a statement demonstrating that he plays no role in any official action which might directly affect the donor or any organization for which the donor works or serves as a representative; and

(D) A brief description of the gift and the value of the gift.

(iii) With respect to the information required in paragraph (f)(3)(ii) of this section, if a gift has more than one donor, the filer shall provide the necessary information for each donor.

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 62605, Dec. 31, 1992, as amended at 63 FR 69992, Dec. 18, 1998; 64 FR 49640, Sept. 14, 1999; 65 FR 69656, Nov. 20, 2000; 67 FR 61762, Oct. 2, 2002; 70 FR 12112, Mar. 11, 2005; 71 FR 28233, May 16, 2006; 73 FR 15388, Mar. 24, 2008; 76 FR 38548, July 1, 2011; 79 FR 28606, May 19, 2014; 82 FR 22736, May 18, 2017]

§ 2634.305 Liabilities.

(a) *In general.* Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall identify and include a brief description of the filer's liabilities over \$10,000 owed to any creditor at any time during the reporting period, and the name of the creditors to whom such liabilities are owed. The report also shall designate the category of value of the liabilities in accordance with § 2634.301(d) of this subpart, using the greatest amount owed to the creditor during the period.

(b) *Exceptions.* The following are not required to be reported under paragraph (a) of this section:

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(1) Personal liabilities owed to a spouse or to the parent, brother, sister, or child of the filer, spouse, or dependent child;

(2) Any mortgage secured by a personal residence of the filer or his spouse;

(3) Any loan secured by a personal motor vehicle, household furniture, or appliances, provided that the loan does not exceed the purchase price of the item which secures it; and

(4) Any revolving charge account with an outstanding liability which does not exceed \$10,000 at the close of the reporting period.

Example: An incumbent official has the following debts outstanding at the end of the calendar year:

1. Mortgage on personal residence—\$80,000.
2. Mortgage on rental property—\$50,000.
3. VISA Card—\$1,000.
4. Master Card—\$11,000.
5. Loan balance of \$15,000, secured by family automobile purchased for \$16,200.
6. Loan balance of \$10,500, secured by antique furniture purchased for \$8,000.
7. Loan from parents—\$20,000.

The loans indicated in items 2, 4, and 6 must be disclosed. Loan 1 is exempt from disclosure under paragraph (b)(2) of this section because it is secured by the personal residence. Loan 3 need not be disclosed under paragraph (b)(4) of this section because it is considered to be a revolving charge account with an outstanding liability that does not exceed \$10,000 at the end of the reporting period. Loan 5 need not be disclosed under paragraph (b)(3) of this section because it is secured by a personal motor vehicle which was purchased for more than the value of the loan. Loan 7 need not be disclosed because the creditors are persons specified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section.

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 28233, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.306 Agreements and arrangements.

Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall identify the parties to and the date of, and shall briefly describe the terms of, any agreement or arrangement of the filer in existence at any time during the reporting period with respect to:

- (a) Future employment;
- (b) A leave of absence from employment during the period of the reporting individual's Government service;

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(c) Continuation of payments by a former employer other than the United States Government; and

(d) Continuing participation in an employee welfare or benefit plan maintained by a former employer.

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 28234, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.307 Outside positions.

(a) *In general.* Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall identify all positions held at any time by the filer during the reporting period, as an officer, director, trustee, general partner, proprietor, representative, executor, employee, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, trust, or other business enterprise, any nonprofit organization, any labor organization, or any educational or other institution other than the United States.

(b) *Exceptions.* The following need not be reported under paragraph (a) of this section:

- (1) Positions held in any religious, social, fraternal, or political entity; and
- (2) Positions solely of an honorary nature, such as those with an emeritus designation.

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21854, May 22, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 28234, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.308 Reporting periods and contents of public financial disclosure reports.

(a) *Incumbents.* Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to § 2634.201(a) shall include on the standard form prescribed by the Office of Government Ethics consistent with subpart F of this part and in accordance with instructions issued by that Office, a full and complete statement of the information required to be reported according to the provisions of subpart C of this part, for the preceding calendar year (except for §§ 2634.303 and 2634.304, relating to transactions and gifts/reimbursements, for which the reporting period does not include any portion of the previous calendar year during which the filer was not a Federal employee), and in the case of §§ 2634.306 and 2634.307, to include the additional period up to the date of filing.

(b) *New entrants, nominees, and candidates.* Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to § 2634.201(b), (c), or (d) shall include, on the standard form prescribed by the Office of Government Ethics consistent with subpart F of this part and in accordance with instructions issued by that Office, a full and complete statement of the information required to be reported according to the provisions of subpart C of this part, except for § 2634.303 (relating to purchases, sales, and exchanges of certain property) and § 2634.304 (relating to gifts and reimbursements). The following special rules apply:

(1) *Interests in property.* For purposes of § 2634.301 of this subpart, the report shall include all interests in property specified by that section which are held on or after a date which is fewer than thirty-one days before the date on which the report is filed.

(2) *Income.* For purposes of § 2634.302 of this subpart, the report shall include all income items specified by that section which are received or accrued during the period beginning on January 1 of the preceding calendar year and ending on the date on which the report is filed, except as otherwise provided by § 2634.606 relating to updated disclosure for nominees.

(3) *Liabilities.* For purposes of § 2634.305 of this subpart, the report shall include all liabilities specified by that section which are owed during the period beginning on January 1 of the preceding calendar year and ending fewer than thirty-one days before the date on which the report is filed.

(4) *Agreements and arrangements.* For purposes of § 2634.306 of this subpart, the report shall include only those agreements and arrangements which still exist at the time of filing.

(5) *Outside positions.* For purposes of § 2634.307 of this subpart, the report shall include all such positions held during the preceding two calendar years and the current calendar year up to the date of filing.

(6) *Certain sources of compensation.* Except in the case of the President, the Vice President, or a candidate referred to in § 2634.201(d), the report shall also identify the filer's sources of compensation which exceed \$5,000 during either of the preceding two calendar

years or during the current calendar year up to the date of filing, and shall briefly describe the nature of the duties performed or services rendered by the reporting individual for each such source of compensation. Information need not be reported, however, which is considered confidential as a result of a privileged relationship, established by law, between the reporting individual and any person. The report also need not contain any information with respect to any person for whom services were provided by any firm or association of which the reporting individual was a member, partner, or employee, unless such individual was directly involved in the provision of such services.

Example: A nominee who is a partner or employee of a law firm and who has worked on a matter involving a client from which the firm received over \$5,000 in fees during a calendar year must report the name of the client only if the value of the services rendered by the nominee exceeded \$5,000. The name of the client would not normally be considered confidential.

(c) *Termination reports.* Each financial disclosure report filed under § 2634.201(e) shall include, on the standard form prescribed by the Office of Government Ethics consistent with subpart F of this part and in accordance with instructions issued by that Office, a full and complete statement of the information required to be reported according to the provisions of subpart C of this part, for the period beginning on the last date covered by the most recent financial disclosure report filed by the reporting individual under this part, or on January 1 of the preceding calendar year, whichever is later, and ending on the date on which the filer's employment terminates.

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 67 FR 57938, Sept. 13, 2002; 71 FR 28234, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.309 Spouses and dependent children.

(a) *Special disclosure rules.* Each report required by the provisions of subpart B of this part shall also include the following information with respect to the spouse or dependent children of the reporting individual:

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(1) *Income.* For purposes of § 2634.302 of this subpart:

(i) With respect to a spouse, the source but not the amount of items of earned income (other than honoraria) which exceed \$1,000 from any one source; and if items of earned income are derived from a spouse's self-employment in a business or profession, the nature of the business or profession but not the amount of the earned income;

(ii) With respect to a spouse, the source and the actual amount or value of any honoraria received by or accrued to the spouse (or payments made or to be made to charity on the spouse's behalf in lieu of honoraria) which exceed \$200 from any one source, and the date on which the services were provided; and

(iii) With respect to a spouse or dependent child, the type and source, and the amount or value (category or actual amount, in accordance with § 2634.302 of this subpart), of all other income exceeding \$200 from any one source, such as investment income from interests in property (if the property itself is reportable according to § 2634.301 of this subpart).

Example 1. The spouse of a filer is employed as a teller at Bank X and earns \$23,000 per year. The report must disclose that the spouse is employed by Bank X. The amount of the spouse's earnings need not be disclosed.

Example 2. The spouse of a reporting individual is self-employed as a pediatrician. The report must disclose that he is a physician, but need not disclose the amount of income.

(2) *Gifts and reimbursements.* For purposes of § 2634.304 of this subpart, gifts and reimbursements received by a spouse or dependent child which are not received totally independent of their relationship to the filer.

(3) *Interests in property, transactions, and liabilities.* For purposes of §§ 2634.301, 2634.303, and 2634.305 of this subpart, all information concerning property interests, transactions, or liabilities referred to by those sections of a spouse or dependent child, unless the following three conditions are satisfied:

(i) The filer certifies that the item represents the spouse's or dependent child's sole financial interest or re-

sponsibility, and that the filer has no specific knowledge regarding that item;

(ii) The item is not in any way, past or present, derived from the income, assets or activities of the filer; and

(iii) The filer neither derives, nor expects to derive, any financial or economic benefit from the item.

NOTE: One who prepares a joint tax return with his spouse will normally derive a financial or economic benefit from assets held by the spouse, and will also be charged with knowledge of such items; therefore he could not avail himself of this exception. Likewise, a trust for the education of one's minor child normally will convey a financial benefit to the parent. If so, the assets of the trust would be reportable on a financial disclosure statement.

(b) *Exception.* For reports filed as a new entrant, nominee, or candidate under § 2634.201(b), (c), or (d), no information regarding gifts and reimbursements or transactions is required for a spouse or dependent child.

(c) *Divorce and separation.* A reporting individual need not report any information about:

(1) A spouse living separate and apart from the reporting individual with the intention of terminating the marriage or providing for permanent separation;

(2) A former spouse or a spouse from whom the reporting individual is permanently separated; or

(3) Any income or obligations of the reporting individual arising from dissolution of the reporting individual's marriage or permanent separation from a spouse.

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 28234, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.310 Trusts, estates, and investment funds.

(a) *In general.* (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, each financial disclosure report shall include the information required by this subpart about the holdings of and income from the holdings of any trust, estate, investment fund or other financial arrangement from which income is received by, or with respect to which a beneficial interest in principal or income is held by, the filer, his spouse, or dependent child.

(2) No information, however, is required about a nonvested beneficial interest in the principal or income of an estate or trust. A vested interest is a present right or title to property, which carries with it an existing right of alienation, even though the right to possession or enjoyment may be postponed to some uncertain time in the future. This includes a future interest when one has a right, defeasible or indefeasible, to the immediate possession or enjoyment of the property, upon the ceasing of another's interest. Accordingly, it is not the uncertainty of the time of enjoyment in the future, but the uncertainty of the right of enjoyment (title and alienation), which differentiates a "vested" and a "non-vested" interest.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (a): Nothing in this section requires the reporting of the holdings or income of a revocable inter vivos trust (also known as a "living trust") with respect to which the filer, his spouse or dependent child has only a remainder interest, whether or not vested, provided that the grantor of the trust is neither the filer, the filer's spouse, nor the filer's dependent child. Furthermore, nothing in this section requires the reporting of the holdings or income of a revocable inter vivos trust from which the filer, his spouse or dependent child receives any discretionary distribution, provided that the grantor of the trust is neither the filer, the filer's spouse, nor the filer's dependent child.

(b) *Qualified trusts and excepted trusts.* (1) A filer should not report information about the holdings of or income from holdings of, any qualified blind trust (as defined in § 2634.402) or any qualified diversified trust (as defined in § 2634.402). For a qualified blind trust, a public financial disclosure report shall disclose the category of the aggregate amount of the trust's income attributable to the beneficial interest of the filer, his spouse, or dependent child in the trust. For a qualified diversified trust, a public financial disclosure report shall disclose the category of the aggregate amount of income with respect to such a trust which is actually received by the filer, his spouse, or dependent child, or applied for the benefit of any of them.

(2) In the case of an excepted trust, a filer should indicate the general nature of its holdings, to the extent known,

but will not otherwise need to report information about the trust's holdings or income from holdings. The category of the aggregate amount of income from an excepted trust which is received by or accrued to the benefit of the filer, his spouse, or dependent child shall be reported on public financial disclosure reports. For purposes of this part, the term "excepted trust" means a trust:

(i) Which was not created directly by the filer, spouse, or dependent child; and

(ii) The holdings or sources of income of which the filer, spouse, or dependent child have no specific knowledge through a report, disclosure, or constructive receipt, whether intended or inadvertent.

(c) *Excepted investment funds.* (1) No information is required under paragraph (a) of this section about the underlying holdings of or income from underlying holdings of an *excepted investment fund* as defined in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, except that the fund itself shall be identified as an interest in property and/or a source of income. Filers must also disclose the category of value of the fund interest held; aggregate amount of income from the fund which is received by or accrued to the benefit of the filer, his spouse, or dependent child; and value of any transactions involving shares or units of the fund.

(2) For purposes of financial disclosure reports filed under the provisions of this part, an "excepted investment fund" means a widely held investment fund (whether a mutual fund, regulated investment company, common trust fund maintained by a bank or similar financial institution, pension or deferred compensation plan, or any other investment fund), if:

(i)(A) The fund is publicly traded or available; or

(B) The assets of the fund are widely diversified; and

(ii) The filer neither exercises control over nor has the ability to exercise control over the financial interests held by the fund.

(3) A fund is widely diversified if it holds no more than 5% of the value of its portfolio in the securities of any one issuer (other than the United

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States Government) and no more than 20% in any particular economic or geographic sector.

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21854, May 22, 1992, as amended at 67 FR 37967, May 31, 2002; 71 FR 28234, May 16, 2006; 77 FR 39144, July 2, 2012]

§ 2634.311 Special rules.

(a) *Political campaign funds.* Political campaign funds, including campaign receipts and expenditures, need not be included in any report filed under this part. However, if the individual has authority to exercise control over the fund's assets for personal use rather than campaign or political purposes, that portion of the fund over which such authority exists must be reported.

(b) *Certificates of Divestiture.* Each report required by the provisions of this subpart shall identify those sales which have occurred pursuant to a Certificate of Divestiture during the period covered by such report. See subpart J of this part for the rules relating to the issuance of such Certificates.

(c) *Reporting standards.* (1) In lieu of entering data on a schedule of the report form designated by the Office of Government Ethics, a filer may attach to the reporting form a copy of a brokerage report, bank statement, or other material, which, in a clear and concise fashion, readily discloses all information which the filer would otherwise have been required to enter on the schedule.

(2) In lieu of reporting the category of amount or value of any item listed in any report filed pursuant to this subpart, a filer may report the actual dollar amount of such item.

[57 FR 11808, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 28234, May 16, 2006]

Subpart D—Qualified Trusts

SOURCE: 77 FR 39144, July 2, 2012, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2634.401 Overview.

(a) *Purpose.* The Ethics in Government Act of 1978 created two types of qualified trusts, the qualified blind trust and the qualified diversified trust, that may be used by employees to reduce real or apparent conflicts of

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interest. The primary purpose of an executive branch qualified trust is to confer on an independent trustee and any other designated fiduciary the sole responsibility to administer the trust and to manage trust assets without participation by, or the knowledge of, any interested party or any representative of an interested party. This responsibility includes the duty to decide when and to what extent the original assets of the trust are to be sold or disposed of, and in what investments the proceeds of sale are to be reinvested. Because the requirements set forth in the Ethics in Government Act and this regulation assure true “blindness,” employees who have a qualified trust cannot be influenced in the performance of their official duties by their financial interests in the trust assets. Their official actions, under these circumstances, should be free from collateral attack arising out of real or apparent conflicts of interest.

(b) *Scope.* Two characteristics of the qualified trust assure that true “blindness” exists: the independence of the trustee and the restriction on communications between the independent trustee and the interested parties. In order to serve as a trustee for an executive branch qualified trust, an entity must meet the strict requirements for independence set forth in the Ethics in Government Act and this regulation. Restrictions on communications also reinforce the independence of the trustee from the interested parties. During both the establishment of the trust and the administration of the trust, communications are limited to certain reports that are required by the Act and to written communications that are pre-screened by the Office of Government Ethics. No other communications, even about matters not connected to the trust, are permitted between the independent trustee and the interested parties.

§ 2634.402 Definitions.

As used in this subpart:

Director means the Director of the Office of Government Ethics.

Employee means an officer or employee of the executive branch of the United States.

Independent trustee means a trustee who meets the requirements of § 2634.405 of this subpart and who is approved by the Director under this subpart.

Interested party means an employee, the employee's spouse, and any minor or dependent child, in any case in which the employee, spouse, or minor or dependent child has a beneficial interest in the principal or income of a trust proposed for certification under this subpart or certified under this subpart.

Qualified blind trust means a trust in which the employee, his spouse, or his minor or dependent child has a beneficial interest and which:

- (1) Is certified pursuant to § 2634.407 by the Director;
- (2) Has a portfolio as specified in § 2634.406(a);
- (3) Follows the model trust document prepared by the Office of Government Ethics; and
- (4) Has an independent trustee as defined in § 2634.405.

Qualified diversified trust means a trust in which the employee, his spouse, or his minor or dependent child has a beneficial interest and which:

- (1) Is certified pursuant to § 2634.407 by the Director;
- (2) Has a portfolio as specified in § 2634.406(b);
- (3) Follows the model trust document prepared by the Office of Government Ethics; and
- (4) Has an independent trustee as defined in § 2634.405.

Qualified trust means a trust described in the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 and this regulation and certified by the Director under this subpart. There are two types of qualified trusts, the qualified blind trust and the qualified diversified trust.

§ 2634.403 General description of trusts.

(a) *Qualified blind trust.* (1) The qualified blind trust is the most universally adaptable qualified trust. An interested party may put most types of assets (such as cash, stocks, bonds, mutual funds or real estate) into a qualified blind trust.

(2) In the case of a qualified blind trust, 18 U.S.C. 208 and other Federal

conflict of interest statutes and regulations apply to the assets that an interested party transfers to the trust until such time as he or she is notified by the independent trustee that such asset has been disposed of or has a value of less than \$1,000. Because the employee knows what assets he or she placed in the trust and there is no requirement that these assets be diversified, the possibility still exists that the employee could be influenced in the performance of official duties by those interests.

(b) *Qualified diversified trust.* (1) An interested party may put only readily marketable securities into a qualified diversified trust. In addition, the portfolio must meet the diversification requirements of § 2634.406(b)(2).

(2) In the case of a qualified diversified trust, the conflict of interest laws do not apply to the assets that an interested party transfers to the trust. Because the assets that an interested party puts into this trust must meet the diversification requirements set forth in this regulation, the diversification achieves "blindness" with regard to the initial assets.

(3) *Special notice for Presidential appointees—(i) In general.* In any case in which the establishment of a qualified diversified trust is contemplated with respect to an individual whose nomination is being considered by a Senate committee, that individual shall inform the committee of the intention to establish a qualified diversified trust at the time of filing a financial disclosure report with the committee. There is a section on the public financial disclosure form, the OGE Form 278, for the individual to indicate whether he or she intends to create a qualified diversified trust.

(ii) *Applicability.* Paragraph (b)(3)(i) of this section is not applicable to members of the uniformed services or Foreign Service officers. The special notice requirement of this section shall not preclude an individual from seeking the certification of a qualified blind trust or qualified diversified trust after the Senate has given its advice and consent to a nomination.

(c) *Conflict of interest laws.* In the case of each type of trust, the conflict of interest laws do not apply to the assets

that the independent trustee or any other designated fiduciary adds to the trust.

§ 2634.404 Summary of procedures for creation of a qualified trust.

(a) *Consultation with the Office of Government Ethics.* Any employee, spouse, or minor or dependent child (or that party's representative) who is interested in setting up a qualified blind or qualified diversified trust must contact the Office of Government Ethics prior to beginning the process of creating the trust. The Office of Government Ethics is the only entity that has the authority to certify a qualified trust. Because an interested party must propose, for the approval of the Office of Government Ethics, an entity to serve as the independent trustee, the Office of Government Ethics will explain the requirements that an entity must meet in order to qualify as an independent trustee. Such information is essential in order for the employee to interview entities for the position of independent trustee. The Office of Government Ethics will also explain the restrictions on the communications between the interested parties and the proposed trustee.

(b) *Selecting an independent trustee.* After consulting with the Office of Government Ethics, the interested party may interview entities who meet the requirements of § 2634.405(a) in order to find one to serve as an independent trustee. At an interview, the interested party may ask general questions about the institution, such as how long it has been in business, its policies and philosophy in managing assets, the types of clients it serves, its prior performance record, and the qualifications of the personnel who would be handling the trust. Because the purpose of a qualified trust is to give an independent trustee the sole responsibility to manage the trust assets without the interested party having any knowledge of the identity of the assets in the trust, the interested party may communicate his or her general financial interests and needs to any institution which he or she interviews. For example, the interested party may communicate a preference for maximizing income or long-term capital gain or for balancing safety of capital

with growth. The interested party may not give more specific instructions to the proposed trustee, such as instructing it to maintain a specific allocation between stocks and bonds, or choosing stocks in a particular industry.

(c) *The proposed independent trustee.* (1) The entity selected by an interested party as a possible trustee must contact the Office of Government Ethics to receive guidance on the qualified trust program. The Office of Government Ethics will ask the proposed trustee to submit a letter describing its past and current contacts, including banking and client relationships, with the employee, spouse, and minor or dependent children. The extent of these contacts will determine whether the proposed trustee is independent under the Act and this regulation.

(2) In addition, an interested party may select an investment manager or other fiduciary. Other proposed fiduciaries selected by an interested party, such as an investment manager, must meet the independence requirements.

(d) *Approval of the independent trustee.* If the Director determines that the proposed trustee meets the requirements of independence, the Director will approve, in writing, that entity as the trustee for the qualified trust.

(e) *Confidentiality agreement.* If any person other than the independent trustee or designated fiduciary has access to information that must not be shared with an interested party or that party's representative, that person must file a Confidentiality Agreement with the Office of Government Ethics. Persons filing a Confidentiality Agreement must certify that they will not make prohibited contacts with an interested party or that party's representative.

(f) *Drafting the trust instrument.* The representative of the interested party will use the model documents provided by the Office of Government Ethics to draft the trust instrument. There are two annexes to the model trust document: An annex describing any current, permissible banking or client relationships between any interested parties and the independent trustee or other fiduciaries and an annex listing the initial assets that the interested

party transfers to the trust. Any deviations from the model trust documents must be approved by the Director.

(g) *Certification of the trust.* The representative then presents the unexecuted trust instrument to the Office of Government Ethics for review. If the Director finds that the instrument conforms to one of the model documents, the Director will certify the qualified trust. After certification, the employee and the independent trustee will sign the trust instrument. They will submit a copy of the executed instrument to the Office of Government Ethics within 30 days of execution. The employee will then transfer the assets to the trust.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (g): Existing qualified trusts approved under any State law or by the legislative or judicial branches of the Federal Government of the United States will not be recertified by the Director. Individuals with existing qualified trusts who are required to file a financial disclosure report upon entering the executive branch, becoming a nominee for a position appointed by the President and subject to confirmation by the Senate, or becoming a candidate for President or Vice President must file a complete financial disclosure form that includes a full disclosure of items in the trust. After filing a complete form, the individual may establish a qualified trust under the policies and provisions of this rule.

§ 2634.405 Standards for becoming an independent trustee or other fiduciary.

(a) *Eligible entities.* An interested party must select an entity that meets the requirements of this regulation to serve as an independent trustee or other fiduciary. The type of entity that is allowed to serve as an independent trustee is a financial institution, not more than 10 percent of which is owned or controlled by a single individual, which is:

(1) A bank, as defined in 12 U.S.C. 1841(c); or

(2) An investment adviser, as defined in 15 U.S.C. 80b-2(a)(11).

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (a): By the terms of paragraph (3)(A)(i) of section 102(f) of the Act, an individual who is an attorney, a certified public accountant, a broker, or an investment adviser is also eligible to serve as an independent trustee. However, experience of the Office of Government Ethics over the years dictates the necessity of limiting serv-

ice as a trustee or other fiduciary to the financial institutions referred to in this paragraph, to maintain effective administration of trust arrangements and preserve confidence in the Federal qualified trust program. Accordingly, under its authority pursuant to paragraph (3)(D) of section 102(f) of the Act, the Office of Government Ethics will not approve proposed trustees or other fiduciaries who are not financial institutions, except in unusual cases where compelling necessity is demonstrated to the Director, in his or her sole discretion.

(b) *Orientation.* After the interested party selects a proposed trustee, that proposed trustee should contact the Office of Government Ethics for an orientation about the qualified trust program.

(c) *Independence requirements.* The Director shall determine that a proposed trustee is independent if:

(1) The entity is independent of and unassociated with any interested party so that it cannot be controlled or influenced in the administration of the trust by any interested party;

(2) The entity is not and has not been affiliated with any interested party, and is not a partner of, or involved in any joint venture or other investment or business with, any interested party; and

(3) Any director, officer, or employee of such entity:

(i) Is independent of and unassociated with any interested party so that such director, officer, or employee cannot be controlled or influenced in the administration of the trust by any interested party;

(ii) Is not and has not been employed by any interested party, not served as a director, officer, or employee of any organization affiliated with any interested party, and is not and has not been a partner of, or involved in any joint venture or other investment with, any interested party; and

(iii) Is not a relative of any interested party.

(d) *Required documents.* In order to make this determination, the proposed trustee must submit the following documentation to the Director:

(1) A letter describing its past and current contacts, including banking and client relationships, with the employee, spouse, or minor or dependent child; and

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(2) The Certificate of Independence, which must be executed in the form prescribed in appendix A to this part.

(e) *Determination.* If the Director determines that the current relationships, if any, between the interested party and the independent trustee do not violate the independence requirements, these relationships will be disclosed in an annex to the trust instrument. No additional relationships with the independent trustee may be established unless they are approved by the Director.

(f) *Approval of the trustee.* If the Director determines that the proposed trustee meets applicable requirements, the Office of Government Ethics will send the interested parties and their representatives a letter indicating its approval of a proposed trustee.

(g) *Revocation.* The Director may revoke the approval of a trustee or any other designated fiduciary pursuant to the rules of subpart E of this part.

(h) *Adding fiduciaries.* An independent trustee may employ or consult other entities, such as investment counsel, investment advisers, accountants, and tax preparers, to assist in any capacity to administer the trust or to manage and control the trust assets, if all of the following conditions are met:

(1) When any interested party or any representative of an interested party learns about such employment or consultation, the person must sign the trust instrument as a party, subject to the prior approval of the Director;

(2) Under all the facts and circumstances, the person is determined pursuant to the requirements for eligible entities under paragraphs (a) through (f) of this section to be independent of an interested party with respect to the trust arrangement;

(3) The person is instructed by the independent trustee or other designated fiduciary not to disclose publicly or to any interested party information which might specifically identify current trust assets or those assets which have been sold or disposed of from trust holdings, other than information relating to the sale or disposition of original trust assets in the case of the blind trust; and

(4) The person is instructed by the independent trustee or other des-

ignated fiduciary to have no direct communication with respect to the trust with any interested party or any representative of an interested party, and to make all indirect communications with respect to the trust only through the independent trustee, pursuant to § 2634.408(a).

§ 2634.406 Initial portfolio.

(a) *Qualified blind trust.* (1) None of the assets initially placed in the portfolio of the blind trust shall include assets the holding of which by any interested party would be prohibited by the Act, by the implementing regulations, or by any other applicable Federal law, Executive order, or regulation.

(2) Except as described in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, an interested party may put most types of assets (such as cash, stocks, bonds, mutual funds or real estate) into a qualified blind trust.

(b) *Qualified diversified trust.* (1) The initial portfolio may not contain securities of entities having substantial activities in the employee's primary area of Federal responsibility. If requested by the Director, the designated agency ethics official for the employee's agency shall certify whether the proposed portfolio meets this standard.

(2) The initial assets of a diversified trust shall comprise a widely diversified portfolio of readily marketable securities.

(i) A portfolio will be widely diversified if:

(A) The value of the securities concentrated in any particular or limited economic or geographic sector is no more than twenty percent of the total; and

(B) The value of the securities of any single entity (other than the United States Government) is no more than five percent of the total.

(ii) A security will be readily marketable if:

(A) Daily price quotations for the security appear regularly in newspapers of general circulation; and

(B) The trust holds the security in a quantity that does not unduly impair liquidity.

(iii) The interested party or the party's representative shall provide the

Director with a detailed list of the securities proposed for inclusion in the portfolio, specifying their fair market value and demonstrating that these securities meet the requirements of this paragraph. The Director will determine whether the initial assets of the trust proposed for certification comprise a widely diversified portfolio of readily marketable securities.

(iv) The independent trustee shall not acquire additional securities in excess of the diversification standards.

(c) *Hybrid qualified trust.* A qualified trust may contain both a blind portfolio of assets and a diversified portfolio of assets. The Office of Government Ethics refers to this arrangement as a hybrid qualified trust.

§ 2634.407 Certification of qualified trust by the Office of Government Ethics.

(a) *General.* After the Director approves the independent trustee, the employee or a representative will prepare the trust instrument for review by the Director. The representative of the interested party will use the model documents provided by the Office of Government Ethics to draft the trust instrument. Any deviations from the model trust documents must be approved by the Director. No trust will be considered qualified for purposes of the Act until the Office of Government Ethics certifies the trust prior to execution.

(b) *Certification procedures.* (1) After the Director has approved the trustee, the interested party or the party's representative must submit the following documents to the Office of Government Ethics for review:

(i) A copy of the proposed, unexecuted trust instrument;

(ii) A list of the assets which the employee, spouse, or minor or dependent child proposes to place in the trust; and

(iii) In the case of a pre-existing trust as described in § 2634.409 of this subpart which the employee asks the Office of Government Ethics to certify, a copy of the pre-existing trust instrument and a list of that trust's assets categorized as to value in accordance with § 2634.301(d).

(2) In order to assure timely trust certification, the interested parties and their representatives shall be responsible for the expeditious submission to the Office of Government Ethics of all required documents and responses to requests for information.

(3) The Director will indicate that he or she has certified the trust in a letter to the interested parties or their representatives. The interested party and the independent trustee may then execute the trust instrument.

(4) Within thirty days after the trust is certified under this section by the Director, the interested party or that party's representative must file with the Director a copy of the executed trust instrument and all annexed schedules (other than those provisions which relate to the testamentary disposition of the trust assets), including a list of the assets which were transferred to the trust, categorized as to value of each asset in accordance with § 2634.301(d).

(5) Once a trust is classified as a qualified blind or qualified diversified trust in the manner discussed in this section, § 2634.310(b) applies less inclusive financial disclosure requirements to the trust assets.

(c) *Certification standard.* A trust will be certified for purposes of this subpart only if:

(1) It is established to the Director's satisfaction that the requirements of section 102(f) of the Act and this subpart have been met; and

(2) The Director determines that approval of the trust arrangement as a qualified trust is appropriate to assure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

(d) *Revocation.* The Director may revoke certification of a trust pursuant to the rules of subpart E of this part.

§ 2634.408 Administration of a qualified trust.

(a) *General rules on communications between the independent fiduciaries and the interested parties.* (1) There shall be no direct or indirect communications with respect to the qualified trust between an interested party or the party's representative and the independent trustee or any other designated fiduciary with respect to the trust unless:

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(i) In the case of the blind trust, the proposed communication is approved in advance by the Director and it relates to:

(A) A distribution of cash or other unspecified assets of the trust;

(B) The general financial interest and needs of the interested party including, but not limited to, a preference for maximizing income or long-term capital gain;

(C) Notification to the independent trustee by the employee that the employee is prohibited by a subsequently applicable statute, Executive order, or regulation from holding an asset, and to direction to the independent trustee that the trust shall not hold that asset; or

(D) Instructions to the independent trustee to sell all of an asset which was initially placed in the trust by an interested party, and which in the determination of the employee creates a real or apparent conflict due to duties the employee subsequently assumed (but nothing herein requires such instructions); or

(ii) In the case of the diversified trust, the proposed communication is approved in advance by the Director and it relates to:

(A) A distribution of cash or other unspecified assets of the trust;

(B) The general financial interest and needs of the interested party including, but not limited to, a preference for maximizing income or long-term capital gain; or

(C) Information, documents, and funds concerning income tax obligations arising from sources other than the property held in trust that are required by the independent trustee to enable him to file, on behalf of an interested party, the personal income tax returns and similar tax documents which may contain information relating to the trust.

(2) The person initiating a communication approved under paragraphs (a)(1)(i) or (a)(1)(ii) of this section shall file a copy of the communication with the Director within five days of the date of its transmission.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (a): By the terms of paragraph (3)(C)(vi) of section 102(f) of the Act, communications which solely consist of requests for distributions of cash or other

unspecified assets of the trust are not required to be in writing. Further, there is no statutory mechanism for pre-screening of proposed communications. However, experience of the Office of Government Ethics over the years dictates the necessity of prohibiting any oral communications between the trustee and an interested party with respect to the trust and pre-screening all proposed written communications, to prevent inadvertent prohibited communications and preserve confidence in the Federal qualified trust program. Accordingly, under its authority pursuant to paragraph (3)(D) of section 102(f) of the Act, the Office of Government Ethics will not approve proposed trust instruments that do not contain language conforming to this policy, except in unusual cases where compelling necessity is demonstrated to the Director, in his or her sole discretion.

(b) *Required reports from the independent trustee to the interested parties—*

(1) *Quarterly reports.* The independent trustee shall, without identifying specifically an asset or holding, report quarterly to the interested parties and their representatives the aggregate market value of the assets representing the interested party's interest in the trust. The independent trustee must follow the model document for this report and shall file a copy of the report, within five days of the date of its transmission, with the Director.

(2) *Annual report.* In the case of a qualified blind trust, the independent trustee shall, without identifying specifically an asset or holding, report annually to the interested parties and their representatives the aggregate amount of the trust's income attributable to the interested party's beneficial interest in the trust, categorized in accordance with §2634.302(b) to enable the employee to complete the public financial disclosure form. In the case of a qualified diversified trust, the independent trustee shall, without identifying specifically an asset or holding, report annually to the interested parties and their representatives the aggregate amount actually distributed from the trust to the interested party or applied for the party's benefit. Additionally, in the case of the blind trust, the independent trustee shall report on Schedule K-1 the net income or loss of the trust and any other information necessary to enable the interested party to complete an individual

tax return. The independent trustee must follow the model document for each report and shall file a copy of the report, within five days of the date of its transmission, with the Director.

(3) *Report of sale of asset.* In the case of the qualified blind trust, the independent trustee shall promptly notify the employee and the Director when any particular asset transferred to the trust by an interested party has been completely disposed of or when the value of that asset is reduced to less than \$1,000. The independent trustee shall file a copy of the report, within five days of the date of its transmission, with the Director.

(c) *Communications regarding trust and beneficiary taxes.* The Act establishes special tax filing procedures to be used by the independent trustee and the trust beneficiaries in order to maintain the substantive separation between trust beneficiaries and trust administrators.

(1) *Trust taxes.* Because a trust is a separate entity distinct from its beneficiaries, an independent trustee must file an annual fiduciary tax return for the trust (IRS Form 1041). The independent trustee is prohibited from providing the interested parties and their representatives with a copy of the trust tax return.

(2) *Beneficiary taxes.* The trust beneficiaries must report income received from the trust on their individual tax returns.

(i) For beneficiaries of qualified blind trusts, the independent trustee sends a modified K-1 summarizing trust income in appropriate categories to enable the beneficiaries to file individual tax returns. The independent trustee is prohibited from providing the interested parties or their representatives with the identity of the assets.

(ii) For beneficiaries of qualified diversified trusts, the Act requires the independent trustee to file the individual tax returns on behalf of the trust beneficiaries. The interested parties shall give the independent trustee a power of attorney to prepare and file, on their behalf, the personal income tax returns and similar tax documents which may contain information relating to the trust. Appropriate Internal Revenue Service power of attorney

forms shall be used for this purpose. The beneficiaries must transmit to the trustee materials concerning taxable transactions and occurrences outside of the trust, pursuant to the requirements in each trust instrument which detail this procedure. This communication must be approved in advance by the Director in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section.

(iii) Some qualified trust beneficiaries may pay estimated income taxes.

(A) In order to pay the proper amount of estimated taxes each quarter, the beneficiaries of a qualified blind trust will need to receive information about the amount of income, if any, generated by the trust each quarter. To assist the beneficiaries, the independent trustee is permitted to send, on a quarterly basis, information about the amount of income generated by the trust in that quarter. This communication must be approved in advance by the Director in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section.

(B) In order to pay the proper amount of estimated taxes each quarter, the independent trustee of a qualified diversified trust will need to receive information about the amount of income, if any, earned by the beneficiaries on assets that are not in the trust. To assist the independent trustee, the beneficiaries are permitted to send, on a quarterly basis, information about the amount of income they earned in that quarter on assets that are outside of the trust. This communication must be approved in advance by the Director in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section.

(d) *Responsibilities of the independent trustee and other fiduciaries.* (1) Any independent trustee or any other designated fiduciary of a qualified trust shall not knowingly and willfully, or negligently:

(i) Disclose any information to an interested party or that party's representative with respect to the trust that may not be disclosed under title I of the Act, the implementing regulations or the trust instrument;

(ii) Acquire any holding:

(A) Directly from an interested party or that party's representative without

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the prior written approval of the Director; or

(B) The ownership of which is prohibited by, or not in accordance with, title I of the Act, the implementing regulations, the trust instrument, or with other applicable statutes and regulations;

(iii) Solicit advice from any interested party or any representative of that party with respect to such trust, which solicitation is prohibited by title I of the Act, the implementing regulations, or the trust instrument; or

(iv) Fail to file any document required by the implementing regulations or the trust instrument.

(2) The independent trustee and any other designated fiduciary, in the exercise of their authority and discretion to manage and control the assets of the trust, shall not consult or notify any interested party or that party's representative.

(3) The independent trustee shall not acquire by purchase, grant, gift, exercise of option, or otherwise, without the prior written approval of the Director, securities, cash, or other property from any interested party or any representative of an interested party.

(4) *Certificate of Compliance.* An independent trustee and any other designated fiduciary shall file, with the Director by May 15th following any calendar year during which the trust was in existence, a properly executed Certificate of Compliance in the form prescribed in appendix B to this part. In addition, the independent trustee and such fiduciary shall maintain and make available for inspection by the Office of Government Ethics, as it may from time to time direct, the trust's books of account and other records and copies of the trust's tax returns for each taxable year of the trust.

(e) *Responsibilities of the interested parties and their representatives.* (1) Interested parties to a qualified trust and their representatives shall not knowingly and willfully, or negligently:

(i) Solicit or receive any information about the trust that may not be disclosed under title I of the Act, the implementing regulations or the trust instrument; or

(ii) Fail to file any document required by this subpart or the trust instrument.

(2) The interested parties and their representatives shall not take any action to obtain, and shall take reasonable action to avoid receiving, information with respect to the holdings and the sources of income of the trust, including a copy of any trust tax return filed by the independent trustee, or any information relating to that return, except for the reports and information specified in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section.

(3) In the case of any qualified trust, the interested party shall, within thirty days of transferring an asset, other than cash, to a previously established qualified trust, file a report with the Director, which identifies each asset, categorized as to value in accordance with §2634.301(d).

(4) Any portfolio asset transferred to the trust by an interested party shall be free of any restriction with respect to its transfer or sale, except as fully described in schedules attached to the trust instrument, and as approved by the Director.

(5) During the term of the trust, the interested parties shall not pledge, mortgage, or otherwise encumber their interests in the property held by the trust.

(f) *Amendment of the trust.* The independent trustee and the interested parties may amend the terms of a qualified trust only with the prior written approval of the Director and upon a showing of necessity and appropriateness.

§ 2634.409 Pre-existing trusts.

An interested party may place a pre-existing irrevocable trust into a qualified trust, which may then be certified by the Office of Government Ethics. This arrangement should be considered in the case of a pre-existing trust whose terms do not permit amendments that are necessary to satisfy the rules of this subpart. All of the relevant parties (including the employee, any other interested parties, the trustee of the pre-existing trust, and all of the other parties and beneficiaries of the pre-existing trust) will be required pursuant to section 102(f)(7) of the Act

to enter into an umbrella trust agreement. The umbrella trust agreement will specify that the pre-existing trust will be administered in accordance with the provisions of this subpart. A parent or guardian may execute the umbrella trust agreement on behalf of a required participant who is a minor child. The Office of Government Ethics has prepared model umbrella trust agreements that the employee can use in this circumstance. The umbrella trust agreement will be certified as a qualified trust if all of the requirements of this subpart are fulfilled under conditions where required confidentiality with respect to the trust can be assured.

§ 2634.410 Dissolution.

Within thirty days of dissolution of a qualified trust, the interested party shall file a report of the dissolution with the Director and a list of assets of the trust at the time of the dissolution, categorized as to value in accordance with § 2634.301(d).

§ 2634.411 Reporting on financial disclosure reports.

An employee who files a public or confidential financial disclosure report shall report the trust on the financial disclosure report.

(a) *Public financial disclosure report.* If the employee files a public financial disclosure report, the employee shall report the trust as an asset, including the overall category of value of the trust. Additionally, in the case of a qualified blind trust, the employee shall disclose the category of value of income earned by the trust. In the case of a qualified diversified trust, the employee shall report the category of value of income received from the trust by the employee, the employee's spouse, or dependent child, or applied for the benefit of any of them.

(b) *Confidential financial disclosure report.* In the case of a confidential financial disclosure report, the employee shall report the trust as an asset.

§ 2634.412 Sanctions and enforcement.

Section 2634.702 sets forth civil sanctions, as provided by sections 102(f)(6)(C)(i) and (ii) of the Act and as adjusted in accordance with the Fed-

eral Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act, which apply to any interested party, independent trustee, or other trust fiduciary who violates his obligations under the Act, its implementing regulations, or the trust instrument. Subpart E of this part delineates the procedure which must be followed with respect to the revocation of trust certificates and trustee approvals.

§ 2634.413 Public access.

(a) *Documents subject to public disclosure requirements.* The following qualified trust documents filed by a public filer, nominee, or candidate are subject to the public disclosure requirements of § 2634.603:

(1) The executed trust instrument and any amendments (other than those provisions which relate to the testamentary disposition of the trust assets), and a list of the assets which were transferred to the trust, categorized as to the value of each asset;

(2) The identity of each additional asset (other than cash) transferred to a qualified trust by an interested party during the life of the trust, categorized as to the value of each asset;

(3) The report of the dissolution of the trust and a list of the assets of the trust at the time of the dissolution, categorized as to the value of each asset;

(4) In the case of a blind trust, the lists provided by the independent trustee of assets placed in the trust by an interested party which have been sold; and

(5) The Certificates of Independence and Compliance.

(b) *Documents exempt from public disclosure requirements.* The following documents are exempt from the public disclosure requirements of § 2634.603 and also shall not be disclosed to any interested party:

(1) Any document (and the information contained therein) filed under the requirements of § 2634.408(a) and (c); and

(2) Any document (and the information contained therein) inspected under the requirements of § 2634.408(d)(4) (other than a Certificate of Compliance).

§ 2634.414 OMB control number.

The various model trust documents and Certificates of Independence and Compliance referenced in this subpart, together with the underlying regulatory provisions (and appendices A, B and C to this part for the Certificates), are all approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3209–0007.

Subpart E—Revocation of Trust Certificates and Trustee Approvals

SOURCE: 77 FR 391440, July 2, 2012, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2634.501 Purpose and scope.

(a) *Purpose.* This subpart establishes the procedures of the Office of Government Ethics for enforcement of the qualified blind trust, qualified diversified trust, and independent trustee provisions of title I of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, as amended, and the regulation issued thereunder (subpart D of this part).

(b) *Scope.* This subpart applies to all trustee approvals and trust certifications pursuant to §§ 2634.405 and 2634.407, respectively.

§ 2634.502 Definitions.

For purposes of this subpart (unless otherwise indicated), the term “trust restrictions” means the applicable provisions of title I of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, subpart D of this part, and the trust instrument.

§ 2634.503 Determinations.

(a) *Violations.* If the Office of Government Ethics learns that violations or apparent violations of the trust restrictions exist that may warrant revocations of trust certification or trustee approval previously granted under § 2634.407 or § 2634.405, the Director may, pursuant to the procedure specified in paragraph (b) of this section, appoint an attorney on the staff of the Office of Government Ethics to review the matter. After completing the review, the attorney will submit findings and recommendations to the Director.

(b) *Review procedure.* (1) In the review of the matter, the attorney shall perform such examination and analysis of

violations or apparent violations as the attorney deems reasonable.

(2) The attorney shall provide an independent trustee and, if appropriate, the interested parties, with:

(i) Notice that revocation of trust certification or trustee approval is under consideration pursuant to the procedures in this subpart;

(ii) A summary of the violation or apparent violations that shall state the preliminary facts and circumstances of the transactions or occurrences involved with sufficient particularity to permit the recipients to determine the nature of the allegations; and

(iii) Notice that the recipients may present evidence and submit statements on any matter in issue within ten business days of the recipient’s actual receipt of the notice and summary.

(c) *Determination.* (1) In making determinations with respect to the violations or apparent violations under this section, the Director shall consider the findings and recommendations submitted by the attorney, as well as any written statements submitted by the independent trustee or interested parties.

(2) The Director may take one of the following actions upon finding a violation or violations of the trust restrictions:

(i) Issue an order revoking trust certification or trustee approval;

(ii) Resolve the matter through any other remedial action within the Director’s authority;

(iii) Order further examination and analysis of the violation or apparent violation; or

(iv) Decline to take further action.

(3) If the Director issues an order of revocation, parties to the trust instrument will receive prompt written notification. The notice shall state the basis for the revocation and shall inform the parties of the consequence of the revocation, which will be either of the following:

(i) The trust is no longer a qualified blind or qualified diversified trust for any purpose under Federal law; or

(ii) The independent trustee may no longer serve the trust in any capacity and must be replaced by a successor,

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who is subject to the prior written approval of the Director.

Subpart F—Procedure

SOURCE: 57 FR 11821, Apr. 7, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2634.601 Report forms.

(a) The Office of Government Ethics provides, through the Federal Supply Service of the General Services Administration (GSA), a standard form, the SF 278 (Public Financial Disclosure Report), for reporting the information described in subpart B of this part on executive branch public disclosure. The Office of Government Ethics also provides two uniform formats relating to confidential financial disclosure: OGE Form 450 (Confidential Financial Disclosure Report) for reporting the information described in subpart I of this part on executive branch confidential disclosure; and OGE Optional Form 450-A (Confidential Certificate of No New Interests) for voluntary use by certain employees in lieu of filing an annual OGE Form 450, if authorized by their agency, in accordance with § 2634.905(b) of subpart I of this part. Supplies of the two confidential forms are to be reproduced locally by each agency, from a camera-ready copy or an electronic format made available by the Office of Government Ethics.

(b) Subject to the prior written approval of the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, an agency may require employees to file additional confidential financial disclosure forms which supplement either or both of the standard forms referred to in paragraph (a) of this section, if necessary because of special or unique agency circumstances. The Director may approve such agency forms when, in his opinion, the supplementation is shown to be necessary for a comprehensive and effective agency ethics program to identify and resolve conflicts of interest. See §§ 2634.103 and 2634.901.

(c) The information collection and recordkeeping requirements have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3209-0001 for the SF 278, and control number 3209-0006 for OGE Form 450/SF 450. OGE Optional Form 450-A has been deter-

mined not to require an OMB paperwork control number, as its use is strictly optional for employees, it is used exclusively by current Government employees, and it does not require affirmative disclosure of substantive information.

[57 FR 11821, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 58 FR 38912, July 21, 1993; 59 FR 34756, July 7, 1994; 62 FR 33976, June 24, 1997; 63 FR 43068, Aug. 12, 1998; 71 FR 28234, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.602 Filing of reports.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the reporting individual shall file financial disclosure reports required under this part with the designated agency ethics official or his delegate at the agency where the individual is employed, or was employed immediately prior to termination of employment, or in which he will serve. Detailees shall file with their primary agency. Reports are due at the times indicated in § 2634.201 of subpart B (public disclosure) or § 2634.903 of subpart I (confidential disclosure) of this part, unless an extension is granted pursuant to the provisions of subparts B or I of this part.

(b) The President, the Vice President, any independent counsel, and persons appointed by independent counsel under 28 U.S.C. chapter 40, shall file the public financial disclosure reports required under this part with the Director of the Office of Government Ethics.

(c)(1) Each agency receiving the public financial disclosure reports required to be filed under this part by the following individuals shall transmit copies to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics:

- (i) The Postmaster General;
- (ii) The Deputy Postmaster General;
- (iii) The Governors of the Board of Governors of the United States Postal Service;
- (iv) The designated agency ethics official;
- (v) Employees of the Executive Office of the President who are appointed under 3 U.S.C. 105(a)(2)(A) or (B) or 3 U.S.C. 107(a)(1)(A) or (b)(1)(A)(i), and employees of the Office of Vice President who are appointed under 3 U.S.C. 106(a)(1)(A) or (B); and

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(vi) Officers and employees in, and nominees to, offices or positions which require confirmation by the Senate, other than members of the uniformed services.

(2) Prior to transmitting a copy of a report to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, the designated agency ethics official or his delegate shall review that report in accordance with § 2634.605 of this subpart, except for his own report, which shall be reviewed by the agency head or by a delegate of the agency head.

(3) For nominee reports, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall forward a copy to the Senate committee that is considering the nomination. (See § 2634.605(c) of this subpart for special procedures regarding the review of such reports.)

(d) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall file his financial disclosure report with his Office, which shall make it immediately available to the public in accordance with this part.

(e) Candidates for President and Vice President identified in § 2634.201(d), other than an incumbent President or Vice President, shall file their financial disclosure reports with the Federal Election Commission, which shall review and send copies of such reports to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics.

(f) Members of the uniformed services identified in § 2634.202(c) shall file their financial disclosure reports with the Secretary concerned, or his delegate.

§ 2634.603 Custody of and access to public reports.

(a) Each agency shall make available to the public in accordance with the provisions of this section those public reports filed with the agency by reporting individuals described under subpart B of this part.

(b) This section does not require public availability of those reports filed by:

(1) Any individual in the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, or the National Security Agency, or any individual engaged in intelligence activities in any agency of the United States, if the President finds or has found that, due to the nature of the office or position occupied

by that individual, public disclosure of the report would, by revealing the identity of the individual or other sensitive information, compromise the national interest of the United States. Individuals referred to in this paragraph who are exempt from the public availability requirement may also be authorized, notwithstanding § 2634.701, to file any additional reports necessary to protect their identity from public disclosure, if the President finds or has found that such filings are necessary in the national interest; or

(2) An independent counsel whose identity has not been disclosed by the Court under 28 U.S.C chapter 40, or any person appointed by that independent counsel under such chapter.

(c) Each agency shall, within thirty days after any public report is received by the agency, permit inspection of the report by, or furnish a copy of the report to, any person who makes written application as provided by agency procedure. Agency reviewing officials and the support staffs who maintain the files, the staff of the Office of Government Ethics, and Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation who are conducting a criminal inquiry into possible conflict of interest violations need not submit an application. The agency may utilize Office of Government Ethics Form 201 for such applications. An application shall state:

(1) The requesting person's name, occupation, and address;

(2) The name and address of any other person or organization on whose behalf the inspection or copy is requested; and

(3) That the requesting person is aware of the prohibitions on obtaining or using the report set forth in paragraph (f) of this section.

(d) Applications for the inspection of or copies of public reports shall also be made available to the public throughout the period during which the report itself is made available, utilizing the procedures in paragraph (c) of this section.

(e) The agency may require a reasonable fee, established by agency regulation, to recover the direct cost of reproduction or mailing of a public report, excluding the salary of any employee involved. A copy of the report

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may be furnished without charge or at a reduced charge if the agency determines that waiver or reduction of the fee is in the public interest. The criteria used by an agency to determine when a fee will be reduced or waived shall be established by regulation. Agency regulations contemplated by paragraph (e) of this section do not require approval pursuant to §2634.103.

(f) It is unlawful for any person to obtain or use a public report:

(1) For any unlawful purpose;

(2) For any commercial purpose, other than by news and communications media for dissemination to the general public;

(3) For determining or establishing the credit rating of any individual; or

(4) For use, directly or indirectly, in the solicitation of money for any political, charitable, or other purpose.

Example 1. The deputy general counsel of Agency X is responsible for reviewing the public financial disclosure reports filed by persons within that agency. The agency personnel director, who does not exercise functions within the ethics program, wishes to review the disclosure report of an individual within the agency. The personnel director must file an application to review the report. However, the supervisor of an official with whom the deputy general counsel consults concerning matters arising in the review process need not file such an application.

Example 2. A state law enforcement agent is conducting an investigation which involves the private financial dealings of an individual who has filed a public financial disclosure report. The agent must complete a written application in order to inspect or obtain a copy.

Example 3. A financial institution has received an application for a loan from an official which indicates her present financial status. The official has filed a public financial disclosure statement with her agency. The financial institution cannot be given access to the disclosure form for purposes of verifying the information contained on the application.

(g)(1) Any public report filed with an agency or transmitted to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics under this section shall be retained by the agency, and by the Office of Government Ethics when it receives a copy. The report shall be made available to the public for a period of six years after receipt. After the six-year period, the report shall be destroyed unless needed in an ongoing investiga-

tion, except that in the case of an individual who filed the report pursuant to §2634.201(c) as a nominee and was not subsequently confirmed by the Senate, or who filed the report pursuant to §2634.201(d) as a candidate and was not subsequently elected, the report, unless needed in an ongoing investigation, shall be destroyed one year after the individual either is no longer under consideration by the Senate or is no longer a candidate for nomination or election to the Office of President or Vice President. See also the OGE/GOVT-1 Governmentwide executive branch Privacy Act system of records (available for inspection at the Office of Government Ethics), as well as any applicable agency system of records.

(2) For purposes of paragraph (g)(1) of this section, in the case of a reporting individual with respect to whom a trust has been certified under subpart D of this part, a copy of the qualified trust agreement, the list of assets initially placed in the trust, and all other publicly available documents relating to the trust shall be retained and made available to the public until the periods for retention of all other reports of the individual have lapsed under paragraph (g)(1) of this section.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control numbers 3209-0001 and 3209-0002)

[57 FR 11821, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21854, May 22, 1992, as amended at 59 FR 34756, July 7, 1994]

§ 2634.604 Custody of and denial of public access to confidential reports.

(a) Any report filed with an agency under subpart I of this part shall be retained by the agency for a period of six years after receipt. After the six-year period, the report shall be destroyed unless needed in an ongoing investigation. See also the OGE/GOVT-2 Governmentwide executive branch Privacy Act system of records (available for inspection at the Office of Government Ethics), as well as any applicable agency system of records.

(b) The reports filed pursuant to subpart I of this part are confidential. No member of the public shall have access to such reports, except pursuant to the order of a Federal court or as otherwise provided under the Privacy Act. See 5

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U.S.C. 552a and the OGE/GOVT-2 Privacy Act system of records (and any applicable agency system); 5 U.S.C. app. (Ethics in Government Act of 1978, section 107(a)); sections 201(d) and 502(b) of Executive Order 12674, as modified by Executive Order 12731; and § 2634.901(d).

[57 FR 11821, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21854, May 22, 1992]

§ 2634.605 **Review of reports.**

(a) *In general.* The designated agency ethics official shall normally serve as the reviewing official for reports submitted to his agency. That responsibility may be delegated, except in the case of certification of nominee reports required by paragraph (c) of this section. See also § 2634.105(q). He shall note on any report or supplemental report the date on which it is received. Except as indicated in paragraph (c) of this section, all reports shall be reviewed within 60 days after the date of filing. Reports reviewed by the Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall be reviewed within 60 days from the date on which they are received by that Office. Final certification in accordance with paragraph (b)(2) of this section may, of necessity, occur later, where additional information is being sought or remedial action is being taken under this section.

(b) *Responsibilities of reviewing officials—(1) Initial review.* The reviewing official may request an intermediate review by the filer’s supervisor. In the case of a filer who is detailed to another agency for more than 60 days during the reporting period, the reviewing official shall obtain an intermediate review by the agency where the filer served as a detailee. After obtaining any intermediate review or determining that such review is not required, the reviewing official shall examine the report to determine, to his satisfaction that:

(i) Each required item is completed; and

(ii) No interest or position disclosed on the form violates or appears to violate:

(A) Any applicable provision of chapter 11 of title 18, United States Code;

(B) The Act, as amended, and the implementing regulations;

(C) Executive Order 12674, as modified by Executive Order 12731, and the implementing regulations; or

(D) Any other agency-specific statute or regulation which governs the filer.

(2) *Signature by reviewing official.* If the reviewing official determines that the report meets the requirements of paragraph (b)(1) of this section, he shall certify it by signature and date. The reviewing official need not audit the report to ascertain whether the disclosures are correct. Disclosures shall be taken at “face value” as correct, unless there is a patent omission or ambiguity or the official has independent knowledge of matters outside the report. However, a report which is signed by a reviewing official certifies that the filer’s agency has reviewed the report, and that the reviewing official has concluded that each required item has been completed and that on the basis of information contained in such report the filer is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations noted in paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section.

(3) *Requests for, and review based on, additional information.* If the reviewing official believes that additional information is required, he shall request that it be submitted by a specified date. This additional information shall be made a part of the report. If the reviewing official concludes, on the basis of the information disclosed in the report and any additional information submitted, that the report fulfills the requirements of paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the reviewing official shall sign and date the report.

(4) *Compliance with applicable laws and regulations.* If the reviewing official concludes that information disclosed in the report may reveal a violation of applicable laws and regulations as specified in paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section, the official shall:

(i) Notify the filer of that conclusion;

(ii) Afford the filer a reasonable opportunity for an oral or written response; and

(iii) Determine, after considering any response, whether or not the filer is then in compliance with applicable laws and regulations specified in paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section. If the reviewing official concludes that the report does fulfill the requirements, he

shall sign and date the report. If he determines that it does not, he shall:

(A) Notify the filer of the conclusion;

(B) Afford the filer an opportunity for personal consultation if practicable;

(C) Determine what remedial action under paragraph (b)(5) of this section should be taken to bring the report into compliance with the requirements of paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section; and

(D) Notify the filer in writing of the remedial action which is needed, and the date by which such action should be taken.

(5) *Remedial action.* (i) Except in unusual circumstances, which must be fully documented to the satisfaction of the reviewing official, remedial action shall be completed not later than three months from the date on which the filer received notice that the action is required.

(ii) Remedial action may include, as appropriate:

(A) Divestiture of a conflicting interest (see subpart J of this part);

(B) Resignation from a position with a non-Federal business or other entity;

(C) Restitution;

(D) Establishment of a qualified blind or diversified trust under the Act and subpart D of this part;

(E) Procurement of a waiver under 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(1) or (b)(3);

(F) Preparation of a written instrument of recusal (disqualification); or

(G) Voluntary request by the filer for transfer, reassignment, limitation of duties, or resignation.

(6) *Compliance or referral.* (i) If the filer complies with a written request for remedial action under paragraph (b)(4) of this section, the reviewing official shall indicate, in the comment section of the report, what remedial action has been taken. The official shall also sign and date the report.

(ii) If the filer does not comply by the designated date with the written request for remedial action transmitted under paragraph (b)(4) of this section, the reviewing official shall, in the case of a public filer under subpart B of this part, notify the head of the agency and the Office of Government Ethics, for appropriate action. Where the filer is in a position in the executive branch

(other than in the uniformed services or the Foreign Service), appointment to which requires the advice and consent of the Senate, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall refer the matter to the President. In the case of the Postmaster General or Deputy Postmaster General, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall recommend to the Governors of the Board of Governors of the United States Postal Service the action to be taken. For confidential filers, the reviewing official will follow agency procedures.

(c) *Expedited procedure in the case of individuals appointed by the President and subject to confirmation by the Senate.* In the case of a report filed by an individual described in § 2634.201(c) who is nominated by the President for appointment to a position that requires the advice and consent of the Senate:

(1) The Executive Office of the President shall furnish the applicable financial disclosure report form to the nominee. It shall forward the completed report to the designated agency ethics official at the agency where the nominee is serving or will serve, or it may direct the nominee to file the completed report directly with the designated agency ethics official.

(2) The designated agency ethics official shall complete an accelerated review of the report, in accordance with the standards and procedures in paragraph (b) of this section. If that official concludes that the report reveals no conflict of interest under applicable laws and regulations, the official shall:

(i) Attach to the report a description (when available) of the position to be filled by the nominee;

(ii) Personally certify the report by signature, and date the certification;

(iii) Write an opinion letter to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, personally certifying that there is no unresolved conflict of interest under applicable laws and regulations, and discussing:

(A) Any actual or apparent conflicts of interest that were detected during the review process; and

(B) The resolution of those real or apparent conflicts, including any specific commitment, ethics agreement entered under the provisions of subpart H of

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this part, or other undertaking by the nominee to resolve any such conflicts. A copy of any commitment, agreement, or other undertaking which is reduced to writing shall be sent to the Director, in accordance with subpart H of this part; and

(iv) Deliver the letter and the report to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, within three working days after the designated agency ethics official receives the report.

NOTE: The designated agency ethics official's certification responsibilities in § 2634.605(c) are nondelegable and must be accomplished by him personally, or by the agency's alternate designated agency ethics official, in his absence. See § 2638.203 of this chapter.

(3) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall review the report and the letter from the designated agency ethics official. If the Director is satisfied that no unresolved conflicts of interest exist, then the Director shall sign and date the report form. The Director shall then submit the report with a letter to the appropriate Senate committee, expressing the Director's opinion whether, on the basis of information contained in the report, the nominee has complied with all applicable conflict laws and regulations.

(4) If, in the case of any nominee or class of nominees, the expedited procedure specified in this paragraph cannot be completed within the time set forth in paragraph (c)(2)(iv) of this section, the designated agency ethics official shall inform the Director. When necessary and appropriate, the Director may modify the rule of that paragraph for a nominee or a class of nominees with respect to a particular department or agency.

§ 2634.606 Updated disclosure of advice-and-consent nominees.

(a) *General rule.* Each individual described in § 2634.201(c) who is nominated by the President for appointment to a position that requires advice and consent of the Senate, shall, at or before the commencement of the first Senate committee hearing to consider the nomination, submit to the committee an amendment to the report previously filed under § 2634.201(c) and transmit copies of the amendment to the des-

ignated agency ethics official referred to in § 2634.605(c)(1) of this subpart and to the Office of Government Ethics, which shall update, through the period ending no more than five days prior to the commencement of the hearing, the disclosure of information required with respect to receipt of:

(1) Outside earned income; and

(2) Honoraria, as defined in § 2634.105(i).

(b) *Additional certification.* In each case to which this section applies, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall, at the request of the committee considering the nomination, submit to the committee an opinion letter of the nature described in § 2634.605(c)(3) of this subpart concerning the updated disclosure. If the committee requests such a letter, the expedited procedure provided by § 2634.605(c) of this subpart shall govern review of the updated disclosure, which shall be deemed a report filed for purposes of that paragraph.

§ 2634.607 Advice and opinions.

To assist employees in avoiding situations in which they might violate applicable financial disclosure laws and regulations:

(a) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics shall render formal advisory opinions and informal advisory letters on generally applicable matters, or on important matters of first impression. See also subpart C of part 2638 of this chapter. The Director shall insure that these advisory opinions and letters are compiled, published, and made available to agency ethics officials and the public. Good faith reliance on such opinions shall provide a defense to any penalty or sanction provided by this part for fact situations indistinguishable in all material aspects from those in the opinion.

(b) Designated agency ethics officials will offer advice and guidance to employees as needed, to assist them in complying with the requirements of the Act and this part on financial disclosure.

Subpart G—Penalties

SOURCE: 57 FR 11824, Apr. 7, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

Office of Government Ethics

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§ 2634.701 Failure to file or falsifying reports.

(a) *Referral of cases.* The head of each agency, each Secretary concerned, or the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, as appropriate, shall refer to the Attorney General the name of any individual when there is reasonable cause to believe that such individual has willfully failed to file a public report or information required on such report, or has willfully falsified any information (public or confidential) required to be reported under this part.

(b) *Civil action.* The Attorney General may bring a civil action in any appropriate United States district court against any individual who knowingly and willfully falsifies or who knowingly and willfully fails to file or report any information required by filers of public reports under subpart B of this part. The court in which the action is brought may assess against the individual a civil monetary penalty in any amount, not to exceed the amounts set forth below, as provided by section 104(a) of the Act, as amended, and as adjusted in accordance with the inflation adjustment procedures prescribed in the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended:

Date of violation	Penalty
Violation occurring between Sept. 14, 2007 and Nov. 2, 2015	\$50,000
Violation occurring after Nov. 2, 2015	57,847

(c) *Criminal action.* An individual may also be prosecuted under criminal statutes for supplying false information on any financial disclosure report.

(d) *Administrative remedies.* The President, the Vice President, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, the Secretary concerned, the head of each agency, and the Office of Personnel Management may take appropriate personnel or other action in accordance with applicable law or regulation against any individual for failing to file public or confidential reports required by this part, for filing such reports late, or for falsifying or failing to report required information. This may

include adverse action under 5 CFR part 752, if applicable.

[57 FR 11824, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 47096, Aug. 30, 1999; 81 FR 41789, June 28, 2016; 82 FR 8132, Jan. 24, 2017]

§ 2634.702 Breaches by trust fiduciaries and interested parties.

(a) The Attorney General may bring a civil action in any appropriate United States district court against any individual who knowingly and willfully violates the provisions of § 2634.408(d)(1) or (e)(1). The court in which the action is brought may assess against the individual a civil monetary penalty in any amount, not to exceed the amounts set forth below, as provided by section 102(f)(6)(C)(i) of the Act and as adjusted in accordance with the inflation adjustment procedures prescribed in the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended:

Date of violation	Penalty
Violation occurring between Sept. 29, 1999 and Nov. 2, 2015	\$11,000
Violation occurring after Nov. 2, 2015	19,246

(b) The Attorney General may bring a civil action in any appropriate United States district court against any individual who negligently violates the provisions of § 2634.408(d)(1) or (e)(1). The court in which the action is brought may assess against the individual a civil monetary penalty in any amount, not to exceed the amounts set forth below, as provided by section 102(f)(6)(C)(ii) of the Act and as adjusted in accordance with the inflation adjustment procedures of the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended:

Date of violation	Penalty
Violation occurring between Sept. 29, 1999 and Nov. 2, 2015	\$5,500
Violation occurring after Nov. 2, 2015	9,623

[82 FR 8132, Jan. 24, 2017]

§ 2634.703 Misuse of public reports.

(a) The Attorney General may bring a civil action against any person who obtains or uses a report filed under this

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part for any purpose prohibited by section 105(c)(1) of the Act, as incorporated in §2634.603(f). The court in which the action is brought may assess against the person a civil monetary penalty in any amount, not to exceed the amounts set forth below, as provided by section 105(c)(2) of the Act and as adjusted in accordance with the inflation adjustment procedures prescribed in the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990, as amended:

Date of violation	Penalty
Violation occurring between Sept. 29, 1999 and Nov. 2, 2015	\$11,000
Violation occurring after Nov. 2, 2015	19,246

(b) This remedy shall be in addition to any other remedy available under statutory or common law.

[82 FR 8133, Jan. 24, 2017]

§ 2634.704 Late filing fee.

(a) *In general.* In accordance with section 104(d) of the Act, any reporting individual who is required to file a public financial disclosure report by the provisions of this part shall remit a late filing fee of \$200 to the appropriate agency, payable to the U.S. Treasury, if such report is filed more than thirty days after the later of:

(1) The date such report is required to be filed pursuant to the provisions of this part; or

(2) The last day of any filing extension period granted pursuant to §2634.201(f).

(b) *Exceptions.* (1) The designated agency ethics official may waive the late filing fee if he determines that the delay in filing was caused by extraordinary circumstances, including the agency's failure to notify a new entrant, first-time annual filer, or termination filer of the requirement to file the public financial disclosure report, which made the delay reasonably necessary.

(2) Employees requesting a waiver of the late filing fee from the designated agency ethics official must request the waiver in writing with supporting documentation. The designated agency ethics official's determination must be made in writing to the employee with a copy placed in the employee's public fi-

ancial disclosure report file. The designated agency ethics official may consult with the Office of Government Ethics prior to approving any waiver of the late filing fee.

(c) *Procedure.* (1) The designated agency ethics official shall maintain a record of the due dates for all public reports which the employees of that agency must file, along with the new filing dates under extensions which have been granted. Each report received by the agency shall be marked with the date of receipt. For any report which has not been received by the end of the period specified in paragraph (a) of this section, the agency shall advise the delinquent filer, in writing, that:

(i) Because his financial disclosure report is more than thirty days overdue, a \$200 late filing fee will become due at the time of filing, by reason of section 104(d) of the Act and §2634.704;

(ii) The filer is directed to remit to the agency, with the completed report, the \$200 fee, payable to the United States Treasury;

(iii) If the filer fails to remit the \$200 fee when filing his late report, it shall be subject to agency debt collection procedures; and

(iv) If extraordinary circumstances exist that would justify a request for a fee waiver, pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section, such request and supporting documentation must be submitted immediately.

(2) Upon receipt from the reporting individual of the \$200 late filing fee, the collecting agency shall note the payment in its records, and shall then forward the money to the U.S. Treasury for deposit as miscellaneous receipts, in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3302 and section 8030.30 of Volume 1 of the Treasury Financial Manual. If payment is not forthcoming, agency debt collection procedures shall be utilized, which may include salary or administrative offset, initiation of a tax refund offset, or other authorized action.

(d) *Late filing fee not exclusive remedy.* The late filing fee is in addition to other sanctions which may be imposed for late filing. See §2634.701 of this subpart.

(e) *Confidential filers.* The late filing fee does not apply to confidential filers. Late filing of confidential reports

will be handled administratively under § 2634.701(d) of this subpart.

(f) *Date of filing.* The date of filing for purposes of determining whether a public financial disclosure report is filed more than thirty days late under this section will be the date of receipt by the agency, which should be noted on the report in accordance with § 2634.605(a). The thirty-day grace period on imposing a late filing fee is adequate allowance for administrative delays in the receipt of reports by an agency.

[57 FR 11824, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 58 FR 38912, July 21, 1993; 67 FR 49857, Aug. 1, 2002]

Subpart H—Ethics Agreements

SOURCE: 57 FR 11825, Apr. 7, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2634.801 Scope.

This subpart applies to ethics agreements made by any reporting individual under either subpart B or I of this part, to resolve potential or actual conflicts of interest.

§ 2634.802 Requirements.

(a) *Ethics agreement defined.* The term *ethics agreement* shall include, for the purposes of this subpart, any oral or written promise by a reporting individual to undertake specific actions in order to alleviate an actual or apparent conflict of interest, such as:

- (1) Preparation of a written instrument for recusing (disqualifying) the individual from one or more particular matters or categories of official action;
- (2) Divestiture of a financial interest;
- (3) Resignation from a position with a non-Federal business or other entity;
- (4) Procurement of a waiver pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(1) or (b)(3); or
- (5) Establishment of a qualified blind or diversified trust under the Act and subpart D of this part.

(b) *Time limit.* The ethics agreement shall specify that the individual must complete the action which he or she has agreed to undertake within a period not to exceed three months from the date of the agreement (or of Senate confirmation, if applicable). Exceptions to the three-month deadline can be

made in cases of unusual hardship, as determined by the Office of Government Ethics, for those ethics agreements which are submitted to it (see § 2634.803 (a), (b), or (c) of this subpart), or by the designated agency ethics official for all other ethics agreements.

Example: An official of the ABC Aircraft Company is nominated to a Department of Defense position requiring the advice and consent of the Senate. As a condition of assuming the position, the individual has agreed to divest himself of his ABC Aircraft stock which he recently acquired while he was an officer with the company. However, the Securities and Exchange Commission prohibits officers of public corporations from deriving a profit from the sale of stock in the corporation in which they hold office within six months of acquiring the stock, and directs that any such profit must be returned to the issuing corporation or its stock holders. Since meeting the usual three-month time limit specified in this subpart for satisfying an ethics agreement might entail losing any profit that could be realized on the sale of this stock, the nominee requests that the limit be extended beyond the six-month period imposed by the Commission. Written approval would have to be obtained from the Office of Government Ethics to extend the customary three-month period.

§ 2634.803 Notification of ethics agreements.

(a) *Nominees to positions requiring the advice and consent of the Senate.* (1) In the case of a nominee referred to in § 2634.201(c), the designated agency ethics official shall include with the report submitted to the Office of Government Ethics any ethics agreement which the nominee has made.

(2) A designated agency ethics official shall immediately notify the Office of Government Ethics of any ethics agreement of a nominee which is made or becomes known to the designated agency ethics official after the submission of the nominee's report to the Office of Government Ethics. This requirement includes an ethics agreement made between a nominee and the Senate confirmation committee. The nominee shall immediately report to the designated agency ethics official any ethics agreement made with the committee.

(3) The Office of Government Ethics shall immediately apprise the designated agency ethics official and the

Senate confirmation committee of any ethics agreements made directly between the nominee and the Office of Government Ethics.

(b) *Incumbents in positions requiring the advice and consent of the Senate.* In the case of a position which required the advice and consent of the Senate, the designated agency ethics official shall keep the Office of Government Ethics apprised of any ethics agreements which the incumbent makes, or which become known to the designated agency ethics official during the incumbent's term in his position.

(c) *Designated agency ethics officials not holding advice-and-consent positions, and employees of the Offices referred to in § 2634.602(c)(1)(v).* A designated agency ethics official who has entered into an ethics agreement, and who is neither a nominee to, nor an incumbent in, a position which requires the advice and consent of the Senate, as well as each employee of the Executive Office of the President or the Office of the Vice President who is referred to in § 2634.602(c)(1)(v), shall include with his initial financial disclosure report submitted to the Office of Government Ethics any ethics agreement undertaken by such official or employee. He shall also apprise the Office of Government Ethics promptly of any subsequent ethics agreement.

(d) *Other reporting individuals.* Other reporting individuals desiring to enter into an ethics agreement may do so with the designated agency ethics official for the employee's agency. Where an ethics agreement has been made with someone other than the designated agency ethics official, the officer or employee involved shall promptly apprise the designated agency ethics official of the agreement.

[57 FR 11825, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21855, May 22, 1992, as amended at 73 FR 15388, Mar. 24, 2008]

§ 2634.804 Evidence of compliance.

(a) *Requisite evidence of action taken.* (1) For ethics agreements of nominees to positions requiring the advice and consent of the Senate, evidence of any action taken to comply with the terms of such ethics agreements shall be submitted by the designated agency ethics official, upon receipt of the evidence,

to the Office of Government Ethics and to the Senate confirmation committee.

(2) For ethics agreements of incumbents in positions which required the advice and consent of the Senate, evidence of any action taken to comply with the terms of such ethics agreements shall be submitted promptly by the designated agency ethics official to the Office of Government Ethics. A designated agency ethics official or an employee referred to in § 2634.803(c) of this subpart who is neither a nominee to, nor an incumbent in, an advice-and-consent position, must also promptly send evidence of any action taken to comply with the terms of an ethics agreement to the Office of Government Ethics.

(3) In the case of all other reporting individuals, evidence of any action taken to comply with the terms of an ethics agreement must be sent promptly to the designated agency ethics official.

(b) The following materials and any other appropriate information constitute evidence of the action taken:

(1) *Recusal.* A copy of any recusal instrument listing and describing the specific matters or subjects to which the recusal applies, a statement of the method by which the agency will enforce the recusal, and a list of the positions of those agency employees involved in the enforcement (*i.e.*, the individual's immediate subordinates and supervisors).

Example: A new employee of a Federal safety board owns stock in Nationwide Airlines. She has entered into an ethics agreement to recuse herself from participating in any accident investigations involving that company's aircraft until such time as she can complete a divestiture of the asset. She must give a copy of the recusal instrument to her immediate subordinates and supervisors, and to the designated agency ethics official. The employee has also agreed to recuse herself from any particular matter (as that term is used in 18 U.S.C. 208) that might arise with respect to any of her present or future holdings. There is no requirement to execute a recusal instrument for this type of general recusal, because it is simply a promise to abide by the terms of the statute.

(2) *Divestiture or resignation.* Written notification that the divestiture or resignation has occurred.

(3) *Waivers*. A copy of any waivers issued pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(1) or (b)(3) and signed by the appropriate supervisory official.

(4) *Blind or diversified trusts*. Information required by subpart D of this part to be submitted to the Office of Government Ethics for its certification of any qualified trust instrument. If the Office of Government Ethics does not certify the trust, the designated agency ethics official and, as appropriate, the Senate confirmation committee should be informed immediately.

[57 FR 11825, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21855, May 22, 1992]

§ 2634.805 Retention.

Records of ethics agreements and actions described in this subpart shall be maintained with the individual's financial disclosure report at the agency and additionally, in the case of filers described in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of § 2634.803 of this subpart, at the Office of Government Ethics.

[57 FR 11825, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21855, May 22, 1992]

Subpart I—Confidential Financial Disclosure Reports

SOURCE: 57 FR 11826, Apr. 7, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2634.901 Policies of confidential financial disclosure reporting.

(a) The confidential financial reporting system set forth in this subpart is designed to complement the public reporting system established by title I of the Act. High-level officials in the executive branch are required to report certain financial interests publicly to ensure that every citizen can have confidence in the integrity of the Federal Government. It is equally important in order to guarantee the efficient and honest operation of the Government that other, less senior, executive branch employees, whose Government duties involve the exercise of significant discretion in certain sensitive areas, report their financial interests and outside business activities to their employing agencies, to facilitate the review of possible conflicts of interest. These reports assist an agency in ad-

ministering its ethics program and counseling its employees. Such reports are filed on a confidential basis.

(b) The confidential reporting system seeks from employees only that information which is relevant to the administration and application of criminal conflict of interest laws, administrative standards of conduct, and agency-specific statutory and program-related restrictions. The basic content of the reports required by § 2634.907 of this subpart reflects that certain information is generally relevant to all agencies. However, depending upon an agency's authorized activities and any special or unique circumstances, additional information may be necessary. In these situations, and subject to the prior written approval of the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, agencies may formulate supplemental reporting requirements by following the procedures of §§ 2634.103 and 2634.601(b).

(c) This subpart also allows an agency to request, on a confidential basis, additional information from persons who are already subject to the public reporting requirements of this part. The public reporting requirements of the Act address Governmentwide concerns. The reporting requirements of this subpart allow agencies to confront special or unique agency concerns. If those concerns prompt an agency to seek more extensive reporting from employees who file public reports, it may proceed on a confidential, nonpublic basis, with prior written approval from the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, under the procedures of §§ 2634.103 and 2634.601(b).

(d) The reports filed pursuant to this subpart are specifically characterized as "confidential," and are required to be withheld from the public, pursuant to section 107(a) of the Act. Section 107(a) leaves no discretion on this issue with the agencies. See also § 2634.604. Further, Executive Order 12674 as modified by Executive Order 12731 provides, in section 201(d), for a system of nonpublic (confidential) executive

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branch financial disclosure to complement the Act's system of public disclosure. The confidential reports provided for by this subpart contain sensitive commercial and financial information, as well as personal privacy-protected information. These reports and the information which they contain are, accordingly, exempt from being released to the public, under exemptions 3 (A) and (B), 4, and 6 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(3) (A) and (B), (b)(4), and (b)(6). Additional FOIA exemptions may apply to particular reports or portions of reports. Agency personnel shall not publicly release the reports or the information which these reports contain, except pursuant to an order issued by a Federal court, or as otherwise provided under applicable provisions of the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a), and in the OGE/GOVT-2 Government-wide executive branch Privacy Act system of records, as well as any applicable agency records system. If an agency statute requires the public reporting of certain information and, for purposes of convenience, an agency chooses to collect that information on the confidential report form filed under this subpart, only the special statutory information may be released to the public, pursuant to the terms of the statute under which it was collected.

(e) Executive branch agencies hire or use the paid and unpaid services of many individuals on an advisory or other less than full-time basis as special Government employees. These employees may include experts and consultants to the Government, as well as members of Government advisory committees. It is important for those agencies that utilize such services, and for the individuals who provide the services, to anticipate and avoid real or apparent conflicts of interest. The confidential financial disclosure system promotes that goal, with special Government employees among those required to file confidential reports.

(f) For additional policies and definitions of terms applicable to both the public and confidential reporting systems, see §§ 2634.104 and 2634.105.

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§ 2634.902 [Reserved]

§ 2634.903 General requirements, filing dates, and extensions.

(a) *Incumbents.* A confidential filer who holds a position or office described in § 2634.904(a) of this subpart and who performs the duties of that position or office for a period in excess of 60 days during the calendar year (including more than 60 days in an acting capacity) shall file a confidential report as an incumbent, containing the information prescribed in §§ 2634.907 and 2634.908 of this subpart on or before February 15 of the following year. This requirement does not apply if the employee has left Government service prior to the due date for the report. No incumbent reports are required of special Government employees described in § 2634.904(a)(2) of this subpart, but they must file new entrant reports under § 2634.903(b) of this subpart upon each appointment or reappointment. For confidential filers under § 2634.904(a)(3) of this subpart, consult agency supplemental regulations.

(b) *New entrants.* (1) Not later than 30 days after assuming a new position or office described in § 2634.904(a) of this subpart (which also encompasses the reappointment or redesignation of a special Government employee, including one who is serving on an advisory committee), a confidential filer shall file a confidential report containing the information prescribed in §§ 2634.907 and 2634.908 of this subpart. For confidential filers under § 2634.904(a)(3) of this subpart, consult agency supplemental regulations.

(2) However, no report shall be required if the individual:

(i) Has, within 30 days prior to assuming his position, left another position or office referred to in § 2634.904(a) of this subpart or in § 2634.202, and has previously satisfied the reporting requirements applicable to that former position, but a copy of the report filed by the individual while in that position should be made available to the appointing agency, and the individual must comply with any agency requirement for a supplementary report for the new position;

(ii) Has already filed such a report in connection with consideration for appointment to the position. The agency may request that the individual update such a report if more than six months has expired since it was filed; or

(iii) Is not reasonably expected to perform the duties of an office or position referred to in § 2634.904(a) of this subpart for more than 60 days in the following twelve-month period, as determined by the designated agency ethics official or delegate. That may occur most commonly in the case of an employee who temporarily serves in an acting capacity in a position described by § 2634.904(a)(1) of this subpart. If the individual actually performs the duties of such position for more than 60 days in the twelve-month period, then a confidential financial disclosure report must be filed within 15 calendar days after the sixtieth day of such service in the position. Paragraph (b)(2)(iii) of § 2634.903 does not apply to new entrants filing as special Government employees under § 2634.904(a)(2) of this subpart.

(3) Notwithstanding the filing deadline prescribed in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, agencies may at their discretion, require that prospective entrants into positions described in § 2634.904(a) of this subpart file their new entrant confidential financial disclosure reports prior to serving in such positions, to insure that there are no insurmountable ethics concerns. Additionally, a special Government employee who has been appointed to serve on an advisory committee shall file the required report before any advice is rendered by the employee to the agency, or in no event, later than the first committee meeting.

(c) *Advisory committee definition.* For purposes of this subpart, the term *advisory committee* shall have the meaning given to that term under section 3 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. app). Specifically, it means any committee, board, commission, council, conference, panel, task force, or other similar group which is established by statute or reorganization plan, or established or utilized by the President or one or more agencies, in the interest of obtaining advice or recommendations for the President or one

or more agencies or officers of the Federal Government. Such term includes any subcommittee or other subgroup of any advisory committee, but does not include the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, the Commission on Government Procurement, or any committee composed wholly of full-time officers or employees of the Federal Government.

(d) *Extensions—(1) Agency extensions.* The agency reviewing official may, for good cause shown, grant to any employee or class of employees a filing extension or several extensions totaling not more than 90 days.

(2) *Certain service during period of national emergency.* In the case of an active duty military officer or enlisted member of the Armed Forces, a Reserve or National Guard member on active duty under orders issued pursuant to title 10 or title 32 of the United States Code, a commissioned officer of the Uniformed Services (as defined in 10 U.S.C. 101), or any other employee, who is deployed or sent to a combat zone or required to perform services away from his permanent duty station in support of the Armed Forces or other governmental entities following a declaration by the President of a national emergency, the agency reviewing official may grant such individual a filing extension to last no longer than 90 days after the last day of:

(i) The individual's service in the combat zone or away from his permanent duty station; or

(ii) The individual's hospitalization as a result of injury received or disease contracted while serving during the national emergency.

(3) *Agency procedures.* Each agency may prescribe procedures to provide for the implementation of the extensions provided for by this paragraph.

(e) *Termination reports not required.* An employee who is required to file a confidential financial disclosure report is not required to file a termination report upon leaving the filing position.

[57 FR 11826, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 58 FR 38912, July 21, 1993; 63 FR 69992, Dec. 18, 1998; 66 FR 55872, Nov. 5, 2001; 71 FR 28234, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.904

§ 2634.904 Confidential filer defined.

(a) The term *confidential filer* includes:

(1) Each officer or employee in the executive branch whose position is classified at GS-15 or below of the General Schedule prescribed by 5 U.S.C. 5332, or the rate of basic pay for which is fixed, other than under the General Schedule, at a rate which is less than 120% of the minimum rate of basic pay for GS-15 of the General Schedule; each officer or employee of the United States Postal Service or Postal Rate Commission whose basic rate of pay is less than 120% of the minimum rate of basic pay for GS-15 of the General Schedule; each member of a uniformed service whose pay grade is less than 0-7 under 37 U.S.C. 201; and each officer or employee in any other position determined by the designated agency ethics official to be of equal classification; if:

(i) The agency concludes that the duties and responsibilities of the employee's position require that employee to participate personally and substantially (as defined in §§ 2635.402(b)(4) and 2640.103(a)(2) of this chapter) through decision or the exercise of significant judgment, and without substantial supervision and review, in taking a Government action regarding:

(A) Contracting or procurement;

(B) Administering or monitoring grants, subsidies, licenses, or other federally conferred financial or operational benefits;

(C) Regulating or auditing any non-Federal entity; or

(D) Other activities in which the final decision or action will have a direct and substantial economic effect on the interests of any non-Federal entity; or

(ii) The agency concludes that the duties and responsibilities of the employee's position require the employee to file such a report to avoid involvement in a real or apparent conflict of interest, and to carry out the purposes behind any statute, Executive order, rule, or regulation applicable to or administered by the employee. Positions which might be subject to a reporting requirement under this subparagraph include those with duties which involve

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investigating or prosecuting violations of criminal or civil law.

Example 1 to paragraph (a)(1). A contracting officer develops the requests for proposals for data processing equipment of significant value which is to be purchased by his agency. He works with substantial independence of action and exercises significant judgment in developing the requests. By engaging in this activity, he is participating personally and substantially in the contracting process. The contracting officer should be required to file a confidential financial disclosure report.

Example 2 to paragraph (a)(1). An agency environmental engineer inspects a manufacturing plant to ascertain whether the plant complies with permits to release a certain effluent into a nearby stream. Any violation of the permit standards may result in civil penalties for the plant, and in criminal penalties for the plant's management based upon any action which they took to create the violation. If the agency engineer determines that the plant does not meet the permit requirements, he can require the plant to terminate release of the effluent until the plant satisfies the permit standards. Because the engineer exercises substantial discretion in regulating the plant's activities, and because his final decisions will have a substantial economic effect on the plant's interests, the engineer should be required to file a confidential financial disclosure report.

Example 3 to paragraph (a)(1). A GS-13 employee at an independent grant making agency conducts the initial agency review of grant applications from nonprofit organizations and advises the Deputy Assistant Chairman for Grants and Awards about the merits of each application. Although the process of reviewing the grant applications entails significant judgment, the employee's analysis and recommendations are reviewed by the Deputy Assistant Chairman, and the Assistant Chairman, before the Chairman decides what grants to award. Because his work is subject to "substantial supervision and review," the employee is not required to file a confidential financial disclosure report unless the agency determines that filing is necessary under § 2634.904(a)(1)(ii).

Example 4 to paragraph (a)(1). As a senior investigator for a criminal law enforcement agency, an employee often leads investigations, with substantial independence, of suspected felonies. The investigator usually decides what information will be contained in the agency's report of the suspected misconduct. Because he participates personally and substantially through the exercise of significant judgment in investigating violations of criminal law, and because his work is not substantially supervised, the investigator should be required to file a confidential financial disclosure report.

Example 5 to paragraph (a)(1). An investigator is principally assigned as the field agent to investigate alleged violations of conflict of interest laws. The investigator works under the direct supervision of an agent-in-charge. The agent-in-charge reviews all of the investigator's work product and then uses those materials to prepare the agency's report which is submitted under his own name. Because of the degree of supervision involved in the investigator's duties, the investigator is not required to file a confidential disclosure report unless the agency determines that filing is necessary under § 2634.904(a)(1)(ii).

(2) Unless required to file public financial disclosure reports by subpart B of this part, all executive branch special Government employees.

Example 1 to paragraph (a)(2). A consultant to an agency periodically advises the agency regarding important foreign policy matters. The consultant must file a confidential report if he is retained as a special Government employee and not an independent contractor.

Example 2 to paragraph (a)(2). A special Government employee serving as a member of an advisory committee (who is not a private group representative) attends four committee meetings every year to provide advice to an agency about pharmaceutical matters. No compensation is received by the committee member, other than travel expenses. The advisory committee member must file a confidential disclosure report because she is a special Government employee.

(3) Each public filer referred to in § 2634.202 on public disclosure who is required by agency regulations and forms issued in accordance with §§ 2634.103 and 2634.601(b) to file a supplemental confidential financial disclosure report which contains information that is more extensive than the information required in the reporting individual's public financial disclosure report under this part.

(4) Any employee who, notwithstanding his exclusion from the public financial reporting requirements of this part by virtue of a determination under § 2634.203, is covered by the criteria of paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

(b) Any individual or class of individuals described in paragraph (a) of this section, including special Government employees unless otherwise noted, may be excluded from all or a portion of the confidential reporting requirements of this subpart, when the agency head or

designee determines that the duties of a position make remote the possibility that the incumbent will be involved in a real or apparent conflict of interest.

Example 1 to paragraph (b). A special Government employee who is a draftsman prepares the drawings to be used by an agency in soliciting bids for construction work on a bridge. Because he is not involved in the contracting process associated with the construction, the likelihood that this action will create a conflict of interest is remote. As a result, the special Government employee is not required to file a confidential financial disclosure report.

Example 2 to paragraph (b). An agency has just hired a GS-5 Procurement Assistant who is responsible for typing and processing procurement documents, answering status inquiries from the public, performing office support duties such as filing and copying, and maintaining an on-line contract database. The Assistant is not involved in contracting and has no other actual procurement responsibilities. Thus, the possibility that the Assistant will be involved in a real or apparent conflict of interest is remote, and the Assistant is not required to file.

[71 FR 28234, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.905 Use of alternative procedures.

(a) With the prior written approval of OGE, an agency may use an alternative procedure in lieu of filing the OGE Form 450 or OGE Optional Form 450-A. The alternative procedure may be an agency-specific form to be filed in place thereof. An agency must submit for approval a description of its proposed alternative procedure to OGE.

Example to paragraph (a). A nonsupervisory auditor at an agency is regularly assigned to cases involving possible loan improprieties by financial institutions. Prior to undertaking each enforcement review, the auditor reviews the file to determine if she, her spouse, minor or dependent child, or any general partner, organization in which she serves as an officer, director, trustee, employee, or general partner, or organization with which she is negotiating or has an agreement or an arrangement for future employment, or a close friend or relative is a subject of the investigation, or will be in any way affected by the investigation. Once she determines that there is no such relationship, she signs and dates a certification which verifies that she has reviewed the file and has determined that no conflict of interest exists. She then files the certification with the head of her auditing division at the

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agency. On the other hand, if she cannot execute the certification, she informs the head of her auditing division. In response, the division will either reassign the case or review the conflicting interest to determine whether a waiver would be appropriate. This alternative procedure, if approved by the Office of Government Ethics in writing, may be used in lieu of requiring the auditor to file a confidential financial disclosure report.

(b) An agency may use the OGE Optional Form 450–A (Confidential Certificate of No New Interests) in place of the OGE Form 450 if the agency head or designee determines it is adequate to prevent possible conflicts of interest. This form may be used by eligible filers, as described in this paragraph, who can certify, after reexamining their most recent previous OGE Form 450, that they (and their spouse and dependent children) have acquired no new interests required to be reported on OGE Form 450, and that they have not changed jobs (no new position description or other significant change in duties) at their agency since filing that previous report. OGE Optional Form 450–A will be used under the following conditions:

(1) OGE Optional Form 450–A will only be made available for use by current employees who are not special Government employees.

(2) OGE Optional Form 450–A will only be used by incumbent filers, as described in § 2634.903(a) of this subpart, in lieu of filing an annual OGE Form 450, who have a previous OGE Form 450 on file with their agency for the position they currently hold. Its due date is as specified in § 2634.903(a), unless extended under § 2634.903(d).

(3) As indicated on the OGE Optional Form 450–A, eligible filers may use OGE Optional Form 450–A, if applicable to their circumstances, or they may file a new OGE Form 450, at their option. Therefore, a blank OGE Form 450 and its accompanying written instructions should ordinarily be distributed to them, along with the blank OGE Optional Form 450–A. The instructions to OGE Form 450 will also provide guidance on what is meant by “reportable” interests on OGE Optional Form 450–A. In lieu of distributing a blank OGE Form 450 and its instructions, agencies may choose to develop separate guidance on the meaning of “reportable”

interests, or they may refer certificate users to guidance contained in any available source, such as the Office of Government Ethics’ Web site on the Internet or agency-approved electronic software for OGE Form 450. Filers would then also have to be advised of where to obtain a blank OGE Form 450, if needed.

(4) OGE Optional Form 450–A may be used by eligible filers for a maximum of three consecutive years before they are required to complete a new OGE Form 450 every fourth year, on a uniform basis for all incumbent (annual) filers, as provided in paragraph (b)(5) of this section. Agencies may, however, elect to permit use of the OGE Optional Form 450–A for only one year (or two years), and to require a new OGE Form 450 every second (or third) year, on a uniform basis for all incumbent filers, as provided in paragraph (b)(5) of this section.

(5) In each year divisible by four, beginning in 2000 (or divisible by two or three, beginning in 1998, for agencies that choose one of the more frequent options described in the second sentence of paragraph (b)(4) of this section), all incumbent filers, as described in § 2634.903(a) of this subpart, must file a new OGE Form 450 rather than OGE Optional Form 450–A, regardless of how recently they may have filed an OGE Form 450 (either as a new entrant or as an annual filer who was not eligible to use, or chose not to use, the optional certificate).

(6) When submitting OGE Optional Form 450–A, filers are not required to attach a copy of their previous OGE Form 450, unless their agency determines that it is necessary. Filers should be encouraged, however, to retain a copy of their previous OGE Form 450, so that it will be readily available for their examination prior to completing an OGE Optional Form 450–A.

[57 FR 11826, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21855, May 22, 1992, as amended at 62 FR 33976, June 24, 1997; 71 FR 28235, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.906 Review of confidential filer status.

The head of each agency, or an officer designated by the head of the agency for that purpose, shall review any

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complaint by an individual that his position has been improperly determined by the agency to be one which requires the submission of a confidential financial disclosure report pursuant to this subpart. A decision by the agency head or designee regarding the complaint shall be final.

[72 FR 56242, Oct. 3, 2007]

§ 2634.907 Report contents.

(a) Other than the reports described in § 2634.904(a)(3) of this subpart, each confidential financial disclosure report shall comply with instructions issued by the Office of Government Ethics and include on the standardized form prescribed by OGE (see § 2634.601 of subpart F of this part) the information described in paragraphs (b) through (g) of this section for the filer. Each report shall also include the information described in paragraph (h) of this section for the filer's spouse and dependent children.

(b) *Noninvestment income.* Each financial disclosure report shall disclose the source of earned or other noninvestment income in excess of \$200 received by the filer from any one source or which has accrued to the filer's benefit during the reporting period, including:

(1) Salaries, fees, commissions, wages and any other compensation for personal services (other than from United States Government employment);

(2) Any honoraria, including payments made or to be made to charitable organizations on behalf of the filer in lieu of honoraria; and

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (b)(2): In determining whether an honorarium exceeds the \$200 threshold, subtract any actual and necessary travel expenses incurred by the filer and one relative, if the expenses are paid or reimbursed by the filer. If such expenses are paid or reimbursed by the honorarium source, they shall not be counted as part of the honorarium payment.

(3) Any other noninvestment income, such as prizes, scholarships, awards, gambling income or discharge of indebtedness.

Example to paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(3). A filer teaches a course at a local community college, for which she receives a salary of \$1,000 per year. She also received, during the previous reporting period, a \$250 award for

outstanding local community service. She must disclose both.

(c) *Assets and investment income.* Each financial disclosure report shall disclose separately:

(1) Each item of real and personal property having a fair market value in excess of \$1,000 held by the filer at the end of the reporting period in a trade or business, or for investment or the production of income, including but not limited to:

- (i) Real estate;
- (ii) Stocks, bonds, securities, and futures contracts;
- (iii) Livestock owned for commercial purposes;
- (iv) Commercial crops, either standing or held in storage;
- (v) Antiques or art held for resale or investment;
- (vi) Vested beneficial interests in trusts and estates;
- (vii) Pensions and annuities;
- (viii) Sector mutual funds (see definition at § 2640.102(q) of this chapter);
- (ix) Accounts or other funds receivable; and
- (x) Capital accounts or other asset ownership in businesses.

(2) The source of investment income (dividends, rents, interest, capital gains, or the income from qualified or excepted trusts or excepted investment funds (see paragraph (i) of this section)), which is received by the filer or accrued to his benefit during the reporting period, and which exceeds \$200 in amount or value from any one source, including but not limited to income derived from:

- (i) Real estate;
- (ii) Collectible items;
- (iii) Stocks, bonds, and notes;
- (iv) Copyrights;
- (v) Vested beneficial interests in trusts and estates;
- (vi) Pensions;
- (vii) Sector mutual funds (see definition at § 2640.102(q) of this chapter);
- (viii) The investment portion of life insurance contracts;
- (ix) Loans;
- (x) Gross income from a business;
- (xi) Distributive share of a partnership;
- (xii) Joint business venture income; and

(xiii) Payments from an estate or an annuity or endowment contract.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPHS (c)(1) AND (c)(2): For Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), brokerage accounts, trusts, mutual or pension funds, and other entities with portfolio holdings, each underlying asset must be separately disclosed, unless the entity qualifies for special treatment under paragraph (i) of this section.

(3) *Exemptions.* The following assets and investment income are exempt from the reporting requirements of paragraphs (c)(1) and (c)(2) of this section:

(i) A personal residence, as defined in § 2634.105(1), of the filer or spouse;

(ii) Accounts (including both demand and time deposits) in depository institutions, including banks, savings and loan associations, credit unions, and similar depository financial institutions;

(iii) Money market mutual funds and accounts;

(iv) U.S. Government obligations, including Treasury bonds, bills, notes, and savings bonds;

(v) Government securities issued by U.S. Government agencies;

(vi) Financial interests in any retirement system of the United States (including the Thrift Savings Plan) or under the Social Security Act; and

(vii) Diversified mutual funds. (“Diversified” means that the fund does not have a stated policy of concentrating its investments in any industry, business, single country other than the United States, or bonds of a single State within the United States and, in the case of an employee benefit plan, means that the plan’s trustee has a written policy of varying plan investments. Whether a mutual fund meets this standard may be determined by checking the fund’s prospectus or by calling a broker or the manager of the fund.)

Example 1 to paragraph (c). A filer owns a beach house which he rents out for several weeks each summer, receiving annual rental income of approximately \$5,000. He must report the rental property, as well as the city and state in which it is located.

Example 2 to paragraph (c). A filer’s investment portfolio consists of several stocks, U.S. Treasury bonds, several cash bank deposit accounts, an account in the Government’s Thrift Savings Plan, and shares in

sector mutual funds and diversified mutual funds. He must report the name of each sector mutual fund in which he owns shares, and the name of each company in which he owns stock, valued at over \$1,000 at the end of the reporting period or from which he received income of more than \$200 during the reporting period. He need not report his diversified mutual funds, U.S. Treasury bonds, bank deposit accounts, or Thrift Savings Plan holdings.

(d) *Liabilities.* Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall identify liabilities in excess of \$10,000 owed by the filer at any time during the reporting period, and the name and location of the creditors to whom such liabilities are owed, except:

(1) Personal liabilities owed to a spouse or to the parent, brother, sister, or child of the filer, spouse, or dependent child;

(2) Any mortgage secured by a personal residence of the filer or his spouse;

(3) Any loan secured by a personal motor vehicle, household furniture, or appliances, provided that the loan does not exceed the purchase price of the item which secures it;

(4) Any revolving charge account;

(5) Any student loan; and

(6) Any loan from a bank or other financial institution on terms generally available to the public.

Example to paragraph (d). A filer owes \$2,500 to his mother-in-law and \$12,000 to his best friend. He also has a \$15,000 balance on his credit card, a \$200,000 mortgage on his personal residence, and a car loan. Under the financial disclosure reporting requirements, he need not report the debt to his mother-in-law, his credit card balance, his mortgage, or his car loan. He must, however, report the debt of over \$10,000 to his best friend.

(e) *Positions with non-Federal organizations—(1) In general.* Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall identify all positions held at any time by the filer during the reporting period, other than with the United States, as an officer, director, trustee, general partner, proprietor, representative, executor, employee, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, trust, or other business enterprise, any nonprofit organization, any labor organization, or any educational or other institution.

(2) *Exemptions.* The following positions are exempt from the reporting requirements of paragraph (e)(1) of this section:

- (i) Positions held in religious, social, fraternal, or political entities; and
- (ii) Positions solely of an honorary nature, such as those with an emeritus designation.

Example to paragraph (e). A filer holds outside positions as the trustee of his family trust, the secretary of a local political party committee, and the “Chairman emeritus” of his town’s Lions Club. He also is a principal of a tutoring school on weekends. The individual must report his outside positions as trustee of the family trust and as principal of the school. He does not need to report his positions as secretary of the local political party committee or “Chairman emeritus” because each of these positions is exempt.

(f) *Agreements and arrangements.* Each financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall identify the parties to, and shall briefly describe the terms of, any agreement or arrangement of the filer in existence at any time during the reporting period with respect to:

- (1) Future employment (including the date on which the filer entered into the agreement for future employment);
- (2) A leave of absence from employment during the period of the filer’s Government service;
- (3) Continuation of payments by a former employer other than the United States Government; and
- (4) Continuing participation in an employee welfare or benefit plan maintained by a former employer.

Example 1 to paragraph (f). A filer plans to retire from Government service in eight months. She has negotiated an arrangement for part-time employment with a private-sector company, to commence upon her retirement. On her financial disclosure report, she must identify the future employer, and briefly describe the terms of, this agreement and disclose the date on which she entered into the agreement.

Example 2 to paragraph (f). A new employee who has entered a position which requires the filing of a confidential form is on a leave of absence from his private-sector employment. During his Government tenure, he will continue to receive deferred compensation from this employer, and will continue to participate in its pension plan. He must report and briefly describe his arrangements for a leave of absence, for the receipt of deferred

compensation, and for participation in the pension plan.

(g) *Gifts and travel reimbursements—(1) Gifts.* Each annual financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall contain a brief description of all gifts aggregating more than \$390 in value which are received by the filer during the reporting period from any one source, as well as the identity of the source. For in-kind travel-related gifts, the report shall include a travel itinerary, the dates, and the nature of expenses provided.

(2) *Travel reimbursements.* Each annual financial disclosure report filed pursuant to this subpart shall contain a brief description (including a travel itinerary, dates, and the nature of expenses provided) of any travel-related reimbursements aggregating more than \$390 in value which are received by the filer during the reporting period from any one source, as well as the identity of the source.

(3) *Aggregation exception.* Any gift or travel reimbursement with a fair market value of \$156 or less need not be aggregated for purposes of the reporting rules of this section. However, the acceptance of gifts, whether or not reportable, is subject to the restrictions imposed by Executive Order 12674, as modified by Executive Order 12731, and the implementing regulations on standards of ethical conduct.

(4) *Valuation of gifts and travel reimbursements.* The value to be assigned to a gift or travel reimbursement is its fair market value. For most reimbursements, this will be the amount actually received. For gifts, the value should be determined in one of the following manners:

(i) If the gift has been newly purchased or is readily available in the market, the value shall be its retail price. The filer need not contact the donor, but may contact a retail establishment selling similar items to determine the present cost in the market.

(ii) If the item is not readily available in the market, such as a piece of art, a handmade item, or an antique, the filer may make a good faith estimate of the value of the item.

(iii) The term “readily available in the market” means that an item generally is available for retail purchase

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in the metropolitan area nearest to the filer's residence.

(5) New entrants, as described in § 2634.903(b) of this subpart, need not report any information on gifts and travel reimbursements.

(6) *Exemptions.* Reports need not contain any information about gifts and travel reimbursements received from relatives (see § 2634.105(o)) or during a period in which the filer was not an officer or employee of the Federal Government. Additionally, any food, lodging, or entertainment received as "personal hospitality of any individual", as defined in § 2634.105(k), need not be reported. See also exclusions specified in the definitions of "gift" and "reimbursement" at § 2634.105(h) and (n).

Example to paragraph (g). A filer accepts a briefcase, a pen and pencil set, a paperweight, and a palm pilot from a community service organization he has worked with solely in his private capacity. He determines that the value of these gifts is:

- Gift 1—Briefcase: \$200
- Gift 2—Pen and Pencil Set: \$35
- Gift 3—Paperweight: \$5
- Gift 4—Palm Pilot: \$275

The filer must disclose gifts 1 and 4 since, together, they aggregate more than \$390 in value from the same source. He need not aggregate or report gifts 2 and 3 because each gift's value does not exceed \$156.

(h) *Disclosure rules for spouses and dependent children—(1) Noninvestment income.* (i) Each financial disclosure report required by the provisions of this subpart shall disclose the source of earned income in excess of \$1,000 from any one source, which is received by the filer's spouse or which has accrued to the spouse's benefit during the reporting period. If earned income is derived from a spouse's self-employment in a business or profession, the report shall also disclose the nature of the business or profession. The filer is not required to report other noninvestment income received by the spouse such as prizes, scholarships, awards, gambling income, or a discharge of indebtedness.

(ii) Each report shall disclose the source of any honoraria received by or accrued to the spouse (or payments made or to be made to charity on the spouse's behalf in lieu of honoraria) in excess of \$200 from any one source during the reporting period.

Example to paragraph (h)(1). A filer's husband has a seasonal part-time job as a sales clerk at a department store, for which he receives a salary of \$1,000 per year. He also received, during the previous reporting period, a \$250 award for outstanding local community service, and an honorarium of \$250 from the state university. The filer need not report either her husband's outside earned income or award because neither exceeded \$1,000. She must, however, report the source of the honorarium because it exceeded \$200.

(2) *Assets and investment income.* Each confidential financial disclosure report shall disclose the assets and investment income described in paragraph (c) of this section and held by the spouse or dependent child of the filer, unless the following three conditions are satisfied:

- (i) The filer certifies that the item represents the spouse's or dependent child's sole financial interest, and that the filer has no specific knowledge regarding that item;
- (ii) The item is not in any way, past or present, derived from the income, assets or activities of the filer; and
- (iii) The filer neither derives, nor expects to derive, any financial or economic benefit from the item.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (h)(2): One who prepares a joint tax return with his spouse will normally derive a financial or economic benefit from assets held by the spouse, and will also be charged with knowledge of such items; therefore, he could not avail himself of this exception. Likewise, a trust for the education of one's minor child normally will convey a financial benefit to the parent. If so, the assets of the trust would be reportable on a financial disclosure report.

(3) *Liabilities.* Each confidential financial disclosure report shall disclose all information concerning liabilities described in paragraph (d) of this section and owed by a spouse or dependent child, unless the following three conditions are satisfied:

- (i) The filer certifies that the item represents the spouse's or dependent child's sole financial responsibility, and that the filer has no specific knowledge regarding that item;
- (ii) The item is not in any way, past or present, derived from the activities of the filer; and
- (iii) The filer neither derives, nor expects to derive, any financial or economic benefit from the item.

(4) *Gifts and travel reimbursements.* (i) Each annual confidential financial disclosure report shall disclose gifts and reimbursements described in paragraph (g) of this section and received by a spouse or dependent child which are not received totally independently of their relationship to the filer.

(ii) A filer who is a new entrant as described in §2634.903(b) of this subpart is not required to report information regarding gifts and reimbursements received by a spouse or dependent child.

(5) *Divorce and separation.* A filer need not report any information about:

(i) A spouse living separate and apart from the filer with the intention of terminating the marriage or providing for permanent separation;

(ii) A former spouse or a spouse from whom the filer is permanently separated; or

(iii) Any income or obligations of the filer arising from dissolution of the filer's marriage or permanent separation from a spouse.

Example to paragraph (h)(5). A filer and her husband are living apart in anticipation of divorcing. The filer need not report any information about her spouse's sole assets and liabilities, but she must continue to report their joint assets and liabilities.

(i) *Trusts, estates, and investment funds—(1) In general.* (i) Except as otherwise provided in this section, each confidential financial disclosure report shall include the information required by this subpart about the holdings of any trust, estate, investment fund or other financial arrangement from which income is received by, or with respect to which a beneficial interest in principal or income is held by, the filer, his spouse, or dependent child.

(ii) No information, however, is required about a nonvested beneficial interest in the principal or income of an estate or trust. A vested interest is a present right or title to property, which carries with it an existing right of alienation, even though the right to possession or enjoyment may be postponed to some uncertain time in the future. This includes a future interest when one has a right, defeasible or indefeasible, to the immediate possession or enjoyment of the property, upon the ceasing of another's interest. Accordingly, it is not the uncertainty of the

time of enjoyment in the future, but the uncertainty of the right of enjoyment (title and alienation), which differentiates a "vested" and a "non-vested" interest.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (i)(1): Nothing in this section requires the reporting of the holdings of a revocable inter vivos trust (also known as a "living trust") with respect to which the filer, his spouse or dependent child has only a remainder interest, whether or not vested, provided that the grantor of the trust is neither the filer, the filer's spouse, nor the filer's dependent child. Furthermore, nothing in this section requires the reporting of the holdings of a revocable inter vivos trust from which the filer, his spouse or dependent child receives any discretionary distribution, provided that the grantor of the trust is neither the filer, the filer's spouse, nor the filer's dependent child.

(2) *Qualified trusts and excepted trusts.*

(i) A filer should not report information about the holdings of any qualified blind trust (as defined in §2634.402) or any qualified diversified trust (as defined in §2634.402).

(ii) In the case of an excepted trust, a filer should indicate the general nature of its holdings, to the extent known, but does not otherwise need to report information about the trust's holdings. For purposes of this part, the term "excepted trust" means a trust:

(A) Which was not created directly by the filer, spouse, or dependent child; and

(B) The holdings or sources of income of which the filer, spouse, or dependent child have no specific knowledge through a report, disclosure, or constructive receipt, whether intended or inadvertent.

(3) *Excepted investment funds.* (i) No information is required under paragraph (i)(1) of this section about the underlying holdings of an excepted investment fund as defined in paragraph (i)(3)(ii) of this section, except that the fund itself shall be identified as an interest in property and/or a source of income.

(ii) For purposes of financial disclosure reports filed under the provisions of this subpart, an "excepted investment fund" means a widely held investment fund (whether a mutual fund, regulated investment company, common trust fund maintained by a bank

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or similar financial institution, pension or deferred compensation plan, or any other investment fund), if:

(A)(1) The fund is publicly traded or available; or

(2) The assets of the fund are widely diversified; and

(B) The filer neither exercises control over nor has the ability to exercise control over the financial interests held by the fund.

(iii) A fund is widely diversified if it holds no more than 5% of the value of its portfolio in the securities of any one issuer (other than the United States Government) and no more than 20% in any particular economic or geographic sector.

(j) *Special rules.* (1) Political campaign funds, including campaign receipts and expenditures, need not be included in any report filed under this subpart. However, if the individual has authority to exercise control over the fund's assets for personal use rather than campaign or political purposes, that portion of the fund over which such authority exists must be reported.

(2) In lieu of entering data on a part of the report form designated by the Office of Government Ethics, a filer may attach to the reporting form a copy of a brokerage report, bank statement, or other material, which, in a clear and concise fashion, readily discloses all information which the filer would otherwise have been required to enter on the concerned part of the report form.

(k) For reports of confidential filers described in § 2634.904(a)(3) of this subpart, each supplemental confidential financial disclosure report shall include only the supplemental information:

(1) Which is more extensive than that required in the reporting individual's public financial disclosure report under this part; and

(2) Which has been approved by the Office of Government Ethics for collection by the agency concerned, as set forth in supplemental agency regulations and forms, issued under §§ 2634.103 and 2634.601(b) (see § 2634.901(b) and (c) of this subpart).

[71 FR 28236, May 16, 2006, as amended at 73 FR 15388, Mar. 24, 2008; 76 FR 38548, July 1, 2011; 77 FR 39150, July 2, 2012; 79 FR 28606, May 19, 2014; 82 FR 22736, May 18, 2017]

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§ 2634.908 Reporting periods.

(a) *Incumbents.* Each confidential financial disclosure report filed under § 2634.903(a) of this subpart shall include on the standard form prescribed by the Office of Government Ethics and in accordance with instructions issued by the Office, a full and complete statement of the information required to be reported according to the provisions of this subpart for the preceding calendar year, or for any portion of that period not covered by a previous confidential or public financial disclosure report filed under this part.

(b) *New entrants.* Each confidential financial disclosure report filed under § 2634.903(b) of this subpart shall include, on the standard form prescribed by the Office of Government Ethics and in accordance with instructions issued by the Office, a full and complete statement of the information required to be reported according to the provisions of this subpart for the preceding twelve months from the date of filing.

[57 FR 11826, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 28239, May 16, 2006]

§ 2634.909 Procedures, penalties, and ethics agreements.

(a) The provisions of subpart F of this part govern the filing procedures and forms for, and the custody and review of, confidential disclosure reports filed under this subpart.

(b) For penalties and remedial action which apply in the event that the reporting individual fails to file, falsifies information, or files late with respect to confidential financial disclosure reports, see subpart G of this part.

(c) Subpart H of this part on ethics agreements applies to both the public and confidential reporting systems under this part.

Subpart J—Certificates of Divestiture

SOURCE: 69 FR 44894, July 28, 2004, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2634.1001 Overview.

(a) *Scope.* 26 U.S.C. 1043 and the rules of this subpart allow an eligible person to defer paying capital gains tax on property sold to comply with conflict

of interest requirements. To defer the gains, an eligible person must obtain a Certificate of Divestiture from the Director of the Office of Government Ethics before selling the property. This subpart describes the circumstances when an eligible person may obtain a Certificate of Divestiture and establishes the procedure that the Office of Government Ethics uses to issue Certificates of Divestiture.

(b) *Purpose.* The purpose of section 1043 and this subpart is to minimize the burden that would result from paying capital gains tax on the sale of assets to comply with conflict of interest requirements. Minimizing this burden aids in attracting and retaining highly qualified personnel in the executive branch and ensures the confidence of the public in the integrity of Government officials and decision-making processes.

§ 2634.1002 Role of the Internal Revenue Service.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has jurisdiction over the tax aspects of a divestiture made pursuant to a Certificate of Divestiture. Eligible persons seeking to defer capital gains:

(a) Must follow IRS requirements for reporting dispositions of property and electing under section 1043 not to recognize capital gains; and

(b) Should consult a personal tax advisor or the IRS for guidance on these matters.

§ 2634.1003 Definitions.

For purposes of this subpart:

Eligible person means:

(1) Any officer or employee of the executive branch of the Federal Government, except a person who is a special Government employee as defined in 18 U.S.C. 202;

(2) The spouse or any minor or dependent child of the individual referred to in paragraph (1) of this definition; and

(3) Any trustee holding property in a trust in which an individual referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) of this definition has a beneficial interest in principal or income.

Permitted property means:

(1) An obligation of the United States; or

(2) A diversified investment fund. A diversified investment fund is a diversified mutual fund or diversified unit investment trust, as defined in 5 CFR 2640.102(a), (k) and (u);

(3) Provided, however, a permitted property cannot be any holding prohibited by statute, regulation, rule, or Executive order. As a result, requirements applicable to specific agencies and positions may limit an eligible person's choices of permitted property. An employee seeking a Certificate of Divestiture should consult the appropriate designated agency ethics official to determine whether a statute, regulation, rule, or Executive order may limit choices of permitted property.

§ 2634.1004 General rule.

(a) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics may issue a Certificate of Divestiture for specific property in accordance with the procedures of § 2634.1005 of this subpart if:

(1) The Director determines that divestiture of the property by an eligible person is reasonably necessary to comply with 18 U.S.C. 208, or any other Federal conflict of interest statute, regulation, rule, or Executive order; or

(2) A congressional committee requires divestiture as a condition of confirmation.

(b) The Director of the Office of Government Ethics cannot issue a Certificate of Divestiture for property that already has been sold.

Example 1 to § 2634.1004: An employee is directed to divest shares of stock, a limited partnership interest, and foreign currencies. If the sale of these assets will result in capital gains under the Internal Revenue Code, the employee may request and receive a Certificate of Divestiture.

Example 2 to § 2634.1004: An employee of the Department of Commerce is directed to divest his shares of XYZ stock acquired through the exercise of options held in an employee benefit plan. His gain from the sale of the stock will be treated as ordinary income. Because only capital gains realized under Federal tax law are eligible for deferral under section 1043, a Certificate of Divestiture cannot be issued for the sale of the XYZ stock.

Example 3 to § 2634.1004: During her Senate confirmation hearing, a nominee to a Department of Defense (DOD) position is directed to divest stock in a DOD contractor as a condition of her confirmation. Eager to

comply with the order to divest, the nominee sells her stock immediately after the hearing and prior to being confirmed by the Senate. Once she is a DOD employee, she requests a Certificate of Divestiture for the stock. Because the Office of Government Ethics cannot issue a Certificate of Divestiture for property that has already been divested, the employee's request for a Certificate of Divestiture will be denied.

Example 4 to § 2634.1004: After receiving a Certificate of Divestiture, the spouse of a Food and Drug Administration employee sold stock in a regulated company. Between the time of the request for the Certificate of Divestiture and the sale of the stock, the stock price dropped and the spouse sold the stock at a loss. Because the sale of the stock did not result in capital gains, the spouse has no need for the Certificate of Divestiture and cannot submit it to the Internal Revenue Service for deferral of gains. No further action need be taken by the employee or the employee's spouse in connection with the Certificate of Divestiture.

§ 2634.1005 How to obtain a Certificate of Divestiture.

(a) *Employee's request to the designated agency ethics official.* An employee seeking a Certificate of Divestiture must submit a written request to the designated agency ethics official at his or her agency. The request must contain:

(1) A full and specific description of the property that will be divested. For example, if the property is corporate stock, the request must include the number of shares for which the eligible person seeks a Certificate of Divestiture;

(2) A brief description of how the eligible person acquired the property;

(3) A statement that the eligible person holding the property has agreed to divest the property; and

(4)(i) The date that the requirement to divest first applied; or

(ii) The date the employee first agreed that the eligible person would divest the property in order to comply with conflict of interest requirements.

(b) *Designated agency ethics official's submission to the Office of Government Ethics.* The designated agency ethics official must forward to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics the employee's written request described in paragraph (a) of this section. In addition, the designated agency ethics official must submit:

(1) A copy of the employee's latest financial disclosure report. If the employee is not required to file a financial disclosure report, the designated agency ethics official must obtain from the employee, and submit to the Office of Government Ethics, a listing of the employee's interests that would be required to be disclosed on a confidential financial disclosure report excluding gifts and travel reimbursements. For purposes of this listing, the reporting period is the preceding twelve months from the date the requirement to divest first applied or the date the employee first agreed that the eligible person would divest the property;

(2) An opinion that describes why divestiture of the property is reasonably necessary to comply with 18 U.S.C. 208, or any other Federal conflict of interest statute, regulation, rule, or Executive order; and

(3) A brief description of the employee's position or a citation to a statute that sets forth the duties of the position.

(c) *Divestitures required by a congressional committee.* In the case of a divestiture required by a congressional committee as a condition of confirmation, the designated agency ethics official must submit appropriate evidence that the committee requires the divestiture. A transcript of congressional testimony or a written statement from the designated agency ethics official concerning the committee's custom regarding divestiture are examples of evidence of the committee's requirements.

(d) *Divestitures for property held in a trust.* In the case of divestiture of property held in a trust, the employee must submit a copy of the trust instrument, as well as a list of the trust's current holdings, unless the holdings are listed on the employee's most recent financial disclosure report. In certain cases involving divestiture of property held in a trust, the Director may not issue a Certificate of Divestiture unless the parties take actions which, in the opinion of the Director, are appropriate to exclude, to the extent practicable, parties other than eligible persons from benefitting from the deferral of capital gains. Such actions may include, as

permitted by applicable State law, division of the trust into separate portfolios, special distributions, dissolution of the trust, or anything else deemed feasible by the Director, in his or her sole discretion.

Example 1 to paragraph (d): An employee has a 90% beneficial interest in an irrevocable trust created by his grandfather. His four adult children have the remaining 10% beneficial interest in the trust. A number of the assets held in the trust must be sold to comply with conflicts of interest requirements. Due to State law, no action can be taken to separate the trust assets. Because the adult children have a small interest in the trust and the assets cannot be separated, the Director may consider issuing a Certificate of Divestiture to the trustee for the sale of all of the conflicting assets.

(e) *Time requirements.* A request for a Certificate of Divestiture does not extend the time in which an employee otherwise must divest property required to be divested pursuant to an ethics agreement, or prohibited by statute, regulation, rule, or Executive order. Therefore, an employee must submit his or her request for a Certificate of Divestiture as soon as possible once the requirement to divest becomes applicable. The Office of Government Ethics will consider requests submitted beyond the applicable time period for divestiture. If the designated agency ethics official submits a request to the Office of Government Ethics beyond the applicable time period for divestiture, he must explain the reason for the delay. (See 5 CFR 2634.802 and 2635.403 for rules relating to the time requirements for divestiture.)

(f) *Response by the Office of Government Ethics.* After reviewing the materials submitted by the employee and the designated agency ethics official, and making a determination that all requirements have been met, the Director will issue a Certificate of Divestiture. The certificate will be sent to the designated agency ethics official who will then forward it to the employee.

§ 2634.1006 Rollover into permitted property.

(a) *Reinvestment of proceeds.* In order to qualify for deferral of capital gains, an eligible person must reinvest the proceeds from the sale of the property divested pursuant to a Certificate of

Divestiture into permitted property during the 60-day period beginning on the date of the sale. The proceeds may be reinvested into one or more types of permitted property.

Example 1 to paragraph (a): A recently hired employee of the Department of Transportation receives a Certificate of Divestiture for the sale of a large block of stock in an airline. He may split the proceeds of the sale and reinvest them in an S&P Index Fund, a diversified Growth Stock Fund, and U.S. Treasury bonds.

Example 2 to paragraph (a): The Secretary of Treasury sells certain stock after receiving a Certificate of Divestiture and is considering reinvesting the proceeds from the sale into U.S. Treasury securities. However, because the Secretary of the Treasury is prohibited by 31 U.S.C. 329 from being involved in buying obligations of the United States Government, the Secretary cannot reinvest the proceeds in such securities. However, she may invest the proceeds in a diversified mutual fund. See the definition of *permitted property* at § 2634.1003.

(b) *Internal Revenue Service reporting requirements.* An eligible person who elects to defer the recognition of capital gains from the sale of property pursuant to a Certificate of Divestiture must follow Internal Revenue Service rules for reporting the sale of the property and the reinvestment transaction.

§ 2634.1007 Cases in which Certificates of Divestiture will not be issued.

The Director of the Office of Government Ethics, in his or her sole discretion, may deny a request for a Certificate of Divestiture in cases where an unfair or unintended benefit would result. Examples of such cases include:

(a) *Employee benefit plans.* The Director will not issue a Certificate of Divestiture if the property is held in a pension, profit-sharing, stock bonus, or other employee benefit plan and can otherwise be rolled over into an eligible tax-deferred retirement plan within the 60-day reinvestment period.

(b) *Complete divestiture.* The Director will not issue a Certificate of Divestiture unless the employee agrees to divest all of the property that presents a conflict of interest, as well as other similar or related property that presents a conflict of interest under a Federal conflict of interest statute, regulation, rule, or Executive order. However,

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any property that qualifies for a regulatory exemption at 5 CFR part 2640 need not be divested for a Certificate of Divestiture to be issued.

Example 1 to paragraph (b): A Department of Agriculture employee owns shares of stock in Better Workspace, Inc. valued at \$25,000. As part of his official duties, the employee is assigned to evaluate bids for a contract to renovate office space at his agency. The Department's designated agency ethics official discovers that Better Workspace is one of the companies that has submitted a bid and directs the employee to sell his stock in the company. Because Better Workspace is a publicly traded security, the employee could retain up to \$15,000 of the stock under the regulatory exemption for interests in securities at 5 CFR 2640.202(a). He would be able to request a Certificate of Divestiture for the \$10,000 of Better Workspace stock that is not covered by the exemption. Alternatively, he could request a Certificate of Divestiture for the entire \$25,000 worth of stock. If he chooses to sell his stock down to an amount permitted under the regulatory exemption, the Office of Government Ethics will not issue additional Certificates of Divestiture if the value of the stock goes above \$15,000 again.

(c) Property acquired under improper circumstances. The Director will not issue a Certificate of Divestiture:

- (1) If the eligible person acquired the property at a time when its acquisition was prohibited by statute, regulation, rule, or Executive order; or
(2) If circumstances would otherwise create the appearance of a conflict with the conscientious performance of Government responsibilities.

§ 2634.1008 Public access to a Certificate of Divestiture.

A Certificate of Divestiture issued pursuant to the provisions of this subpart is available to the public in accordance with the rules of § 2634.603 of this part.

APPENDIX A TO PART 2634—CERTIFICATE OF INDEPENDENCE (FORM APPROVED: OMB CONTROL NO. 3209-0007)

The Certificate of Independence required by § 2634.405(d)(2) shall be executed as follows:

CERTIFICATE OF INDEPENDENCE

With respect to the trust of _____ (Settlor), which has been submitted to the Office

of Government Ethics for certification pursuant to the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (Pub. L. 95-521, as amended), the undersigned proposed [Trustee] [_____] of such trust is a financial institution which is eligible to serve in such fiduciary capacity in accordance with section 102(f)(3)(A) of such Act:

FIRST: The undersigned is (check one)—

- () a bank, as defined in 12 U.S.C. 1841(c), or
() an investment adviser, as defined in 15 U.S.C. 80b-2(a)(11), not more than 10 percent of which is owned or controlled by a single individual.

SECOND: The undersigned—

- (1) Is independent of and unassociated with any interested party so that the undersigned cannot be controlled or influenced in the administration of the trust by any interested party; and
(2) is not and has not been affiliated with any interested party, and is not a partner of, or involved in any joint venture or other investment or business with any interested party.

THIRD: Any director, officer, or employee of the undersigned—

- (1) Is independent of and unassociated with any interested party so that such director, officer, or employee cannot be controlled or influenced in the administration of the trust by any interested party;
(2) Is not and has not been employed by any interested party, nor a director, officer, or employee of any organization affiliated with any interested party, and is not and has not been a partner of, or involved in any joint venture or other investment or business with, any interested party; and
(3) Is not a relative of any interested party.

FOURTH: The undersigned certifies that the statements contained herein are true, complete and correct to the best of such undersigned's knowledge and belief.

Date _____
(firm) _____
By: _____
(title) _____

NOTE: See Appendix C of this part for Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act notices.

[57 FR 11829, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 63 FR 58620, Nov. 2, 1998; 77 FR 39150, July 2, 2012]

APPENDIX B TO PART 2634—CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE (FORM APPROVED: OMB CONTROL NO. 3209-0007)

The Certificate of Compliance required by § 2634.408(d)(4) shall be executed as follows:

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

With respect to the qualified blind trust (qualified diversified trust) of _____ (Settlor),

the undersigned, the approved [Trustee] [] of such trust, pursuant to 5 CFR 2634.405, has served in such fiduciary capacity during the calendar year [or for the period beginning _____ and ending _____] and is eligible to continue in such capacity by virtue of the following:

FIRST: The undersigned (and any director, officer, or employee) has not knowingly or negligently, and will not—

(A) disclose any information to an interested party with respect to the trust that may not be disclosed pursuant to title I of the Act, the implementing regulations (including 5 CFR 2634.408(d)(1)(i)), or the trust instrument;

(B) acquire any holding the ownership of which is prohibited by, or not in accordance with, applicable statute, regulation, or the terms of the trust instrument;

(C) solicit advice from any interested party with respect to such trust, which solicitation is prohibited by title I of the Act, the implementing regulations (including 5 CFR 2634.408(d)(1)(iii)), or the trust instrument;

(D) fail to file any document required by title I of the Act, the implementing regulations (5 CFR 2634.408), or the trust instrument; or

(E) violate or fail to comply with any provision or requirement of title I of the Act, the implementing regulations, or the trust instrument.

SECOND: The undersigned (and any director, officer, or employee) will not knowingly or negligently engage in the above-mentioned activities.

THIRD: The undersigned certifies that the statements contained herein are true, complete and correct to the best of such undersigned's knowledge and belief.

Date _____
(firm) _____
By: _____
(title) _____

NOTE: See appendix C of this part for Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act notices.

[57 FR 11830, Apr. 7, 1992; 57 FR 21855, May 22, 1992, as amended at 77 FR 39150, July 2, 2012]

APPENDIX C TO PART 2634—PRIVACY ACT AND PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICES FOR APPENDIXES A AND B

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Section 102(f) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 as amended (the "Ethics Act") (5 U.S.C. App.) and subpart D of 5 CFR part 2634 of the regulations of the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) require the reporting of this information for the administration of qualified trusts under the Ethics Act. The primary use of the information on this certificate is for review by Government officials

of OGE and the agency of the Government employee for whom the trust is established to determine compliance with applicable Federal laws and regulations as regards qualified trusts. Additional disclosures of the information on this certificate may be made:

(1) to any requesting person in accordance with the access provisions of section 105 of the Ethics Act;

(2) to a Federal, State or local law enforcement agency if the disclosing agency becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation;

(3) to a court or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the Government is a party or in order to comply with a judge-issued subpoena;

(4) to a source when necessary to obtain information relevant to a conflict of interest issue;

(5) to the National Archives and Records Administration or the General Services Administration in records management inspections;

(6) to the Office of Management and Budget during legislative coordination on private relief legislation; and

(7) in response to a discovery request or for the appearance of a witness in a pending judicial or administrative proceeding, if the information is relevant to the subject matter.

Knowing or willful falsification of information on this certificate or failure to file or report information required to be reported under title I of the Ethics Act and 5 CFR part 2634 of the OGE regulations may lead to disqualification as a trustee or other fiduciary as well as possible disqualification of the underlying trust itself. Knowing and willful falsification of information required under the Ethics Act and the regulations may also subject you to criminal prosecution.

PUBLIC BURDEN INFORMATION AND PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT

This collection of information is estimated to take an average of twenty minutes per response. You can send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Deputy Director for Administration and Information Management, U.S. Office of Government Ethics, Suite 500, 1201 New York Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20005-3917. *Do not* send your completed certificate to that official; rather, send it to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics at that address as provided in the part 2634 regulation.

Pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number (that number, 3209-0007, is displayed here and

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in the headings of the OGE model qualified trust certificates of independence and compliance, appendixes A and B to this part 2634).

[57 FR 11830, Apr. 7, 1992, as amended at 63 FR 58620, Nov. 2, 1998; 67 FR 22349, May 3, 2002]

PART 2635—STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

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Subpart I—Related Statutory Authorities

- 2635.901 General.
- 2635.902 Related statutes.

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 7301, 7351, 7353; 5 U.S.C. App. (Ethics in Government Act of 1978); E.O. 12674, 54 FR 15159, 3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 215, as modified by E.O. 12731, 55 FR 42547, 3 CFR, 1990 Comp., p. 306.

SOURCE: 57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General Provisions

§ 2635.101 Basic obligation of public service.

(a) *Public service is a public trust.* Each employee has a responsibility to the United States Government and its citizens to place loyalty to the Constitution, laws and ethical principles above private gain. To ensure that every citizen can have complete confidence in the integrity of the Federal Government, each employee shall respect and adhere to the principles of ethical conduct set forth in this section, as well as the implementing standards contained