

Ethics in Government Act of 1978. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 101 of this Appendix and Tables.

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 707 of Title 2, The Congress.

AMENDMENTS

1989—Pub. L. 101-194 amended section generally, substituting provisions relating to confidential reports and other additional requirements for provisions setting forth definitions for purposes of title I of Pub. L. 95-521. See section 109 of this Appendix.

1979—Par. (1). Pub. L. 96-19, §9(d), substituted “gross income derived from business (and net income if the individual elects to include it)” for “net and gross income derived from business”.

Par. (16). Pub. L. 96-19, §9(g), inserted quotation marks after “designated committee of the House of Representatives” and before “designated committee of the Senate”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1989 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101-194 effective Jan. 1, 1991, see section 204 of Pub. L. 101-194, set out as a note under section 101 of this Appendix.

§ 108. Authority of Comptroller General

(a) The Comptroller General shall have access to financial disclosure reports filed under this title for the purposes of carrying out his statutory responsibilities.

(b) No later than December 31, 1992, and regularly thereafter, the Comptroller General shall conduct a study to determine whether the provisions of this title are being carried out effectively.

(Pub. L. 95-521, title I, §108, Oct. 26, 1978, 92 Stat. 1835; Pub. L. 96-19, §9(t), June 13, 1979, 93 Stat. 44; Pub. L. 101-194, title II, §202, Nov. 30, 1989, 103 Stat. 1741.)

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 708 of Title 2, The Congress.

AMENDMENTS

1989—Pub. L. 101-194 amended section generally, substituting provisions relating to authority of Comptroller General for provision relating to preemption of State laws.

1979—Pub. L. 96-19 inserted “holding the office of Member or” after “financial disclosure by reason of”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1989 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101-194 effective Jan. 1, 1991, see section 204 of Pub. L. 101-194, set out as a note under section 101 of this Appendix.

§ 109. Definitions

For the purposes of this title, the term—

(1) “congressional ethics committees” means the Select Committee on Ethics of the Senate and the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct of the House of Representatives;

(2) “dependent child” means, when used with respect to any reporting individual, any individual who is a son, daughter, stepson, or stepdaughter and who—

(A) is unmarried and under age 21 and is living in the household of such reporting individual; or

(B) is a dependent of such reporting individual within the meaning of section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 [26 U.S.C. 152];

(3) “designated agency ethics official” means an officer or employee who is designated to administer the provisions of this title within an agency;

(4) “executive branch” includes each Executive agency (as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code), other than the Government Accountability Office, and any other entity or administrative unit in the executive branch;

(5) “gift” means a payment, advance, forbearance, rendering, or deposit of money, or any thing of value, unless consideration of equal or greater value is received by the donor, but does not include—

(A) bequest and other forms of inheritance;

(B) suitable mementos of a function honoring the reporting individual;

(C) 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;

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

(E) communications to the offices of a reporting individual, including subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals; or

(F) consumable products provided by home-State businesses to the offices of a reporting individual who is an elected official, if those products are intended for consumption by persons other than such reporting individual;

(6) “honoraria” has the meaning given such term in section 505 of this Act;

(7) “income” means all income from whatever source derived, including but not limited to the following items: compensation for services, including fees, commissions, and similar items; gross income derived from business (and net income if the individual elects to include it); gains derived from dealings in property; interest; rents; royalties; dividends; annuities; income from 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;

(8) “judicial employee” means any employee of the judicial branch of the Government, of the United States Sentencing Commission, of the Tax Court, of the Court of Federal Claims, of the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, or of the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, who is not a judicial officer and who is authorized to perform adjudicatory functions with respect to proceedings in the judicial branch, or who occupies a position for which the rate of basic pay is equal to or greater than 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule;

(9) “Judicial Conference” means the Judicial Conference of the United States; or

(10) “judicial officer” means the Chief Justice of the United States, the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, and the judges of the United States courts of appeals, United States district courts, including the district courts in Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands, Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, Court of International Trade, Tax Court, Court of Federal Claims, Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, and any court created by Act of Congress, the judges of which are entitled to hold office during good behavior;

(11) “legislative branch” includes—

- (A) the Architect of the Capitol;
- (B) the Botanic Gardens;
- (C) the Congressional Budget Office;
- (D) the Government Accountability Office;
- (E) the Government Printing Office;
- (F) the Library of Congress;
- (G) the United States Capitol Police;
- (H) the Office of Technology Assessment; and
- (I) any other agency, entity, office, or commission established in the legislative branch;

(12) “Member of Congress” means a United States Senator, a Representative in Congress, a Delegate to Congress, or the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico;

(13) “officer or employee of the Congress” means—

(A) any individual described under subparagraph (B), other than a Member of Congress or the Vice President, whose compensation is disbursed by the Secretary of the Senate or the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives;

(B)(i) each officer or employee of the legislative branch (except any officer or employee of the Government Accountability Office) who, for at least 60 days, occupies a position for which the rate of basic pay is equal to or greater than 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule;

(ii) each officer or employee of the Government Accountability Office who, for at least 60 consecutive days, occupies a position for which the rate of basic pay, minus the amount of locality pay that would have been authorized under section 5304 of title 5, United States Code (had the officer or employee been paid under the General Schedule) for the locality within which the position of such officer or employee is located (as determined by the Comptroller General), is equal to or greater than 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule; and

(iii) at least one principal assistant designated for purposes of this paragraph by each Member who does not have an employee who occupies a position for which the rate of basic pay is equal to or greater than 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule;

(14) “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 that individual or his family or on property or facilities owned by that individual or his family;

(15) “reimbursement” means any payment or other thing of value received by the reporting individual, other than gifts, to cover travel-related expenses of such individual other than those which are—

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

(B) required to be reported by the reporting individual under section 7342 of title 5, United States Code; or

(C) required to be reported under section 304 of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 434);

(16) “relative” means an individual who is related to the reporting individual, as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, great aunt, great uncle, 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;

(17) “Secretary concerned” has the meaning set forth in section 101(a)(9) of title 10, United States Code, and, in addition, means—

(A) the Secretary of Commerce, with respect to matters concerning the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

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

(C) the Secretary of State, with respect to matters concerning the Foreign Service;

(18) “supervising ethics office” means—

(A) the Select Committee on Ethics of the Senate, for Senators, officers and employees of the Senate, and other officers or employees of the legislative branch required to file financial disclosure reports with the Secretary of the Senate pursuant to section 103(h) of this title;

(B) the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct of the House of Representatives, for Members, officers and employees of the House of Representatives and other officers or employees of the legislative branch required to file financial disclosure reports with the Clerk of the House of Representatives pursuant to section 103(h) of this title;

(C) the Judicial Conference for judicial officers and judicial employees; and

(D) the Office of Government Ethics for all executive branch officers and employees; and

(19) “value” means a good faith estimate of the dollar value if the exact value is neither known nor easily obtainable by the reporting individual.

(Pub. L. 95-521, title I, § 109, Oct. 26, 1978, 92 Stat. 1836; Pub. L. 101-194, title II, § 202, Nov. 30, 1989,

103 Stat. 1741; Pub. L. 101-280, §3(1), (8), May 4, 1990, 104 Stat. 152, 155; Pub. L. 102-378, §4(a)(2), Oct. 2, 1992, 106 Stat. 1357; Pub. L. 102-572, title IX, §902(b)(2), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4516; Pub. L. 103-160, div. A, title XI, §1182(d)(3), Nov. 30, 1993, 107 Stat. 1773; Pub. L. 103-337, div. A, title IX, §924(d)(3), Oct. 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 2832; Pub. L. 104-186, title II, §216(2), Aug. 20, 1996, 110 Stat. 1747; Pub. L. 105-368, title V, §512(b)(1)(D), Nov. 11, 1998, 112 Stat. 3342; Pub. L. 108-271, §8(b), July 7, 2004, 118 Stat. 814; Pub. L. 110-323, §7, Sept. 22, 2008, 122 Stat. 3547.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The General Schedule, referred to in pars. (8) and (13)(B), is set out under section 5332 of this title.

CODIFICATION

Section was formerly classified to section 709 of Title 2, The Congress.

AMENDMENTS

2008—Par. (13)(B)(i). Pub. L. 110-323, §7(1), inserted “(except any officer or employee of the Government Accountability Office)” after “legislative branch” and struck out “and” after semicolon.

Par. (13)(B)(ii), (iii). Pub. L. 110-323, §7(2), (3), added cl. (ii) and redesignated former cl. (ii) as (iii).

2004—Pars. (4), (11)(D). Pub. L. 108-271 substituted “Government Accountability Office” for “General Accounting Office”.

1998—Pars. (8), (10). Pub. L. 105-368 substituted “Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims” for “Court of Veterans Appeals”.

1996—Par. (13)(A). Pub. L. 104-186 substituted “Chief Administrative Officer” for “Clerk”.

1994—Pars. (8), (10). Pub. L. 103-337 substituted “Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces” for “Court of Military Appeals”.

1993—Par. (17). Pub. L. 103-160 substituted “section 101(a)(9) of title 10” for “section 101(8) of title 10” in introductory provisions.

1992—Par. (8). Pub. L. 102-572 substituted “Court of Federal Claims” for “Claims Court”.

Pub. L. 102-378, §4(a)(2)(A), substituted “who occupies a position for which the rate of basic pay is equal to or greater than 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule” for “who is paid at a rate of basic pay equal to or greater than the minimum rate of basic pay in effect for grade GS-16 of the General Schedule”.

Par. (10). Pub. L. 102-572 substituted “Court of Federal Claims” for “Claims Court”.

Par. (13)(B)(i). Pub. L. 102-378, §4(a)(2)(B), substituted “who, for at least 60 days, occupies a position for which the rate of basic pay is equal to or greater than 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule” for “who is compensated for at least 60 days at a rate of basic pay equal to or greater than the annual rate of basic pay in effect for grade GS-16 of the General Schedule”.

Par. (13)(B)(ii). Pub. L. 102-378, §4(a)(2)(C), substituted “who occupies a position for which the rate of basic pay is equal to or greater than 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay payable for GS-15 of the General Schedule” for “compensated at a rate equal to or in excess of the annual rate of basic pay in effect for grade GS-16 of the General Schedule”.

1990—Par. (1). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(A), substituted “Select Committee on Ethics of the Senate” for “Senate Select Committee on Ethics”.

Par. (4). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(B), inserted “, other than the General Accounting Office,” after “Code”.

Par. (5)(C). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(C)(i), inserted “, the District of Columbia, or a State or local government or political subdivision thereof” after “United States Government”.

Par. (5)(D). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(C)(ii), amended subpar. (D) generally. Prior to amendment, subpar. (D)

read as follows: “food and beverages consumed at banquets, receptions, or similar events; or”.

Par. (5)(E). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(C)(iii), substituted “individual,” for “individual” and inserted “or” after semicolon at end.

Par. (5)(F). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(C)(iv), added subpar. (F).

Par. (8). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(D), substituted “United States Sentencing Commission, of the Tax Court, of the Claims Court,” for “Tax Court,” and “who is paid at a rate of basic pay equal to or greater than the minimum rate of basic pay in effect for grade GS-16 of the General Schedule” for “who receives compensation at a rate at or in excess of the minimum rate prescribed for grade 16 of the General Schedule under section 5332 of title 5, United States Code;”.

Par. (10). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(E), substituted “Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands,” for “the Canal Zone, Guam,” struck out “Court of Claims,” after “Virgin Islands,” and inserted “Claims Court, Court of Veterans Appeals,” after “Tax Court,”.

Par. (13)(B)(i). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(F), substituted “at least 60” for “60 consecutive” and “of basic pay equal to or greater than” for “equal to or in excess of”.

Par. (15)(A). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(G), inserted “, the District of Columbia, or a State or local government or political subdivision thereof” after “Government”.

Par. (17)(C). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(H), added subpar. (C).

Par. (18)(A). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(I)(i), substituted “the Secretary of the Senate” for “such committee”.

Par. (18)(B). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(I)(ii), substituted “the Clerk of the House of Representatives” for “such committee”.

Par. (18)(C). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(1), struck out “of the United States” after “Judicial Conference”.

Par. (18)(D). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(8)(I)(iii), inserted “of officers and” after “branch”.

1989—Pub. L. 101-194 amended section generally, substituting provisions setting forth definitions for purposes of title I of Pub. L. 95-521 for provisions relating to a study by the Comptroller General.

CHANGE OF NAME

Committee on Standards of Official Conduct of House of Representatives changed to Committee on Ethics of House of Representatives by House Resolution No. 5, One Hundred Twelfth Congress, Jan. 5, 2011.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1998 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 105-368 effective on first day of first month beginning more than 90 days after Nov. 11, 1998, see section 513 of Pub. L. 105-368, set out as a note under section 7251 of Title 38, Veterans’ Benefits.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1992 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 102-572 effective Oct. 29, 1992, see section 911 of Pub. L. 102-572, set out as a note under section 171 of Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1989 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 101-194 effective Jan. 1, 1991, see section 204 of Pub. L. 101-194, set out as a note under section 101 of this Appendix.

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

Statutory functions, duties, or authority of Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives or Secretary of the Senate as disbursing officers for the Capitol Police transferred to Chief of the Capitol Police, and references in any law or resolution before Feb. 20, 2003, to funds paid or disbursed by Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives and Secretary of the Senate relating to pay and allowances of Capitol Police employees deemed to refer to Chief of the Capitol Police. See section 1907(a) of Title 2, The Congress.

§ 110. Notice of actions taken to comply with ethics agreements

(a) In any case in which an individual agrees with that individual's designated agency ethics official, the Office of Government Ethics, a Senate confirmation committee, a congressional ethics committee, or the Judicial Conference, to take any action to comply with this Act or any other law or regulation governing conflicts of interest of, or establishing standards of conduct applicable with respect to, officers or employees of the Government, that individual shall notify in writing the designated agency ethics official, the Office of Government Ethics, the appropriate committee of the Senate, the congressional ethics committee, or the Judicial Conference, as the case may be, of any action taken by the individual pursuant to that agreement. Such notification shall be made not later than the date specified in the agreement by which action by the individual must be taken, or not later than three months after the date of the agreement, if no date for action is so specified.

(b) If an agreement described in subsection (a) requires that the individual recuse himself or herself from particular categories of agency or other official action, the individual shall reduce to writing those subjects regarding which the recusal agreement will apply and the process by which it will be determined whether the individual must recuse himself or herself in a specific instance. An individual shall be considered to have complied with the requirements of subsection (a) with respect to such recusal agreement if such individual files a copy of the document setting forth the information described in the preceding sentence with such individual's designated agency ethics official or the appropriate supervising ethics office within the time prescribed in the last sentence of subsection (a).

(Pub. L. 95-521, title I, §110, as added Pub. L. 101-194, title II, §202, Nov. 30, 1989, 103 Stat. 1744; amended Pub. L. 101-280, §3(1), May 4, 1990, 104 Stat. 152.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsec. (a), is Pub. L. 95-521, Oct. 26, 1978, 92 Stat. 1824, as amended, known as the Ethics in Government Act of 1978. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 101 of this Appendix and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

1990—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 101-280 struck out “of the United States” after “Judicial Conference” wherever appearing.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Jan. 1, 1991, see section 204 of Pub. L. 101-194, set out as an Effective Date of 1989 Amendment note under section 101 of this Appendix.

§ 111. Administration of provisions

The provisions of this title shall be administered by—

(1) the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, the designated agency ethics official, or the Secretary concerned, as appropriate, with regard to officers and employees described in paragraphs (1) through (8) of section 101(f);

(2) the Select Committee on Ethics of the Senate and the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct of the House of Representatives, as appropriate, with regard to officers and employees described in paragraphs (9) and (10) of section 101(f); and

(3) the Judicial Conference in the case of an officer or employee described in paragraphs (11) and (12) of section 101(f).

The Judicial Conference may delegate any authority it has under this title to an ethics committee established by the Judicial Conference.

(Pub. L. 95-521, title I, §111, as added Pub. L. 101-194, title II, §202, Nov. 30, 1989, 103 Stat. 1744; amended Pub. L. 101-280, §3(1), (9), May 4, 1990, 104 Stat. 152, 157.)

AMENDMENTS

1990—Pub. L. 101-280, §3(9)(C), inserted sentence at end authorizing Judicial Conference to delegate its authority to an ethics committee.

Par. (2). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(9)(A), substituted “Select Committee on Ethics of the Senate” for “Senate Select Committee on Ethics”.

Par. (3). Pub. L. 101-280, §3(9)(B), struck out “and clerk of the applicable court, as appropriate,” before “in the case of”.

Pub. L. 101-280, §3(1), struck out “of the United States” after “Judicial Conference”.

CHANGE OF NAME

Committee on Standards of Official Conduct of House of Representatives changed to Committee on Ethics of House of Representatives by House Resolution No. 5, One Hundred Twelfth Congress, Jan. 5, 2011.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Jan. 1, 1991, see section 204 of Pub. L. 101-194, set out as an Effective Date of 1989 Amendment note under section 101 of this Appendix.

TRANSMITTAL OF FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REPORTS

Section 902 of Pub. L. 101-194 provided that:

“(a) The Select Committee on Ethics shall transmit a copy of each report filed with it under title I of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 [section 101 et seq. of Pub. L. 95-521, set out in this Appendix] (other than a report filed by a Member of Congress) to the head of the employing office of the individual filing the report.

“(b) For purposes of this section, the head of the employing office shall be—

“(A) in the case of an employee of a Member, the Member by whom that person is employed;

“(B) in the case of an employee of a Committee, the chairman and ranking minority member of such Committee;

“(C) in the case of an employee on the leadership staff, the Member of the leadership on whose staff such person serves; and

“(D) in the case of any other employee of the legislative branch, the head of the office in which such individual serves.”

[§ 112. Repealed. Pub. L. 101-280, §3(10)(A), May 4, 1990, 104 Stat. 157]

Section, Pub. L. 95-521, title I, §112, as added Pub. L. 101-194, title II, §202, Nov. 30, 1989, 103 Stat. 1744, provided that the provisions made by title I of Pub. L. 95-521 take effect on Jan. 1, 1990, and be applicable to reports filed under such title after Jan. 1, 1991. See section 3(10)(C) of Pub. L. 101-280 and section 204 of Pub. L. 101-194, set out as an Effective Date of 1989 Amendment note under section 101 of this Appendix.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF REPEAL

Repeal effective May 4, 1990, see section 11 of Pub. L. 101-280, set out as an Effective Date of 1990 Amendment note under section 101 of this Appendix.