

**§ 401.150 Compatible purposes.**

(a) *General.* The Privacy Act allows us to disclose information maintained in a system of records without your consent to any other party if such disclosure is pursuant to a routine use published in the system's notice of system of records. A "Routine use" must be compatible with the purpose for which SSA collected the information.

(b) *Notice of routine use disclosures.* A list of permissible routine use disclosures is included in every system of records notice published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(c) *Determining compatibility—(1) Disclosure to carry out SSA programs.* We disclose information for published routine uses necessary to carry out SSA's programs.

(2) *Disclosure to carry out programs similar to SSA programs.* We may disclose information for the administration of other government programs. These disclosures are pursuant to published routine uses where the use is compatible with the purpose for which the information was collected. These programs generally meet the following conditions:

(i) The program is clearly identifiable as a Federal, State, or local government program.

(ii) The information requested concerns eligibility, benefit amounts, or other matters of benefit status in a Social Security program and is relevant to determining the same matters in the other program. For example, we disclose information to the Railroad Retirement Board for pension and unemployment compensation programs, to the Department of Veterans Affairs for its benefit programs, to worker's compensation programs, to State general assistance programs and to other income maintenance programs at all levels of government. We also disclose for health maintenance programs like Medicaid and Medicare.

(iii) The information will be used for appropriate epidemiological or similar research purposes.

[72 FR 20941, Apr. 27, 2007]

**§ 401.155 Law enforcement purposes.**

(a) *General.* The Privacy Act allows us to disclose information for law en-

forcement purposes under certain conditions. Much of the information in our files is especially sensitive or very personal. Furthermore, participation in social security programs is mandatory, so people cannot limit what information is given to us. Therefore, we generally disclose information for law enforcement purposes only in limited situations. The Privacy Act allows us to disclose information if the head of the law enforcement agency makes a written request giving enough information to show that the conditions in paragraphs (b) or (c) of this section are met, what information is needed, and why it is needed. Paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section discuss the disclosures we generally make for these purposes.

(b) *Serious crimes.* SSA may disclose information for criminal law enforcement purposes where a violent crime such as murder or kidnapping has been committed and the individual about whom the information is being sought has been indicted or convicted of that crime.

(c) *Criminal activity involving the social security program or another program with the same purposes.* We disclose information when necessary to investigate or prosecute fraud or other criminal activity involving the social security program. We may also disclose information for investigation or prosecution of criminal activity in other income-maintenance or health-maintenance programs (e.g., other governmental pension programs, unemployment compensation, general assistance, Medicare or Medicaid) if the information concerns eligibility, benefit amounts, or other matters of benefit status in a social security program and is relevant to determining the same matters in the other program.

[62 FR 4143, Jan. 29, 1997, as amended at 72 FR 20941, Apr. 27, 2007]

**§ 401.160 Health or safety.**

The Privacy Act allows us to disclose information in compelling circumstances where an individual's health or safety is affected. For example, if we learn that someone has been exposed to an excessive amount of radiation, we may notify that person and appropriate health officials. If we learn that someone has made a threat

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against someone else, we may notify that other person and law enforcement officials. When we make these disclosures, the Privacy Act requires us to send a notice of the disclosure to the last known address of the person whose record was disclosed.

### § 401.165 Statistical and research activities.

(a) *General.* Statistical and research activities often do not require information in a format that identifies specific individuals. Therefore, whenever possible, we release information for statistical or research purposes only in the form of aggregates or individual data that cannot be associated with a particular individual. The Privacy Act allows us to release records if there are safeguards that the record will be used solely as a statistical or research record and the individual cannot be identified from any information in the record.

(b) *Safeguards for disclosure with identifiers.* The Privacy Act also allows us to disclose data for statistical and research purposes in a form allowing individual identification, pursuant to published routine use, when the purpose is compatible with the purpose for which the record was collected. We will disclose personally identifiable information for statistical and research purposes if—

(1) We determine that the requestor needs the information in an identifiable form for a statistical or research activity, will use the information only for that purpose, and will protect individuals from unreasonable and unwanted contacts;

(2) The activity is designed to increase knowledge about present or alternative Social Security programs or other Federal or State income-maintenance or health-maintenance programs; or is used for research that is of importance to the Social Security program or the Social Security beneficiaries; or an epidemiological research project that relates to the Social Security program or beneficiaries; and

(3) The recipient will keep the information as a system of statistical records, will follow appropriate safeguards, and agrees to our on-site in-

spection of those safeguards so we can be sure the information is used or redisclosed only for statistical or research purposes. No redisclosure of the information may be made without SSA's approval.

(c) *Statistical record.* A statistical record is a record in a system of records which is maintained only for statistical and research purposes, and which is not used to make any determination about an individual. We maintain and use statistical records only for statistical and research purposes. We may disclose a statistical record if the conditions in paragraph (b) of this section are met.

(d) *Compiling of records.* Where a request for information for statistical and research purposes would require us to compile records, and doing that would be administratively burdensome to ongoing SSA operations, we may decline to furnish the information.

[62 FR 4143, Jan. 29, 1997, as amended at 72 FR 20941, Apr. 27, 2007]

### § 401.170 Congress.

(a) We disclose information to either House of Congress. We also disclose information to any committee or subcommittee of either House, or to any joint committee of Congress or subcommittee of that committee, if the information is on a matter within the committee's or subcommittee's jurisdiction.

(b) We disclose to any member of Congress the information needed to respond to constituents' requests for information about themselves (including requests from parents of minors, or legal guardians). However, these disclosures are subject to the restrictions in §§ 401.35 through 401.60.

### § 401.175 Government Accountability Office.

We disclose information to the Government Accountability Office when that agency needs the information to carry out its duties.

[72 FR 20941, Apr. 27, 2007]

### § 401.180 Disclosure under court order or other legal process.

(a) *General.* The Privacy Act permits us to disclose information when we are