

## Office of Independent Counsel

## § 700.31

compliance with the provisions of the Privacy Act.

### § 700.27 Other rights and services.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

which is not strictly relevant or necessary to a specific investigation. In the interests of effective law enforcement, it is appropriate and necessary to retain all information that may aid in establishing patterns of criminal activity. Moreover, it would impede the specific investigative process if it were necessary to ensure the relevance, accuracy, timeliness and completeness of all information obtained. In particular, this would restrict the ability of trained investigators, intelligence analysts, and government attorneys to exercise their judgment in reporting on information and investigations.

(5) From subsection (e)(2) because, in a criminal or other law-enforcement investigation, the requirement that information be collected to the greatest extent possible from the subject individual would present a serious impediment to law enforcement. In such circumstances, the subject of the investigation or prosecution would be informed of the existence of the investigation and would therefore be able to avoid detection, apprehension, or legal obligations or duties, as well as to influence witnesses improperly, to destroy evidence, or to fabricate testimony.

(6) From subsection (e)(3) because compliance with the requirements of this subsection during the course of an investigation could impede the information-gathering process, thus hampering the investigation. Furthermore, such requirements could compromise the existence of a confidential investigation or reveal the identity of witnesses or confidential informants.

(7) From subsections (e)(4) (G) and (H) because this system is exempt from the individual-access provisions of subsection (d) pursuant to subsections (j) and (k) of the Privacy Act.

(8) From subsection (e)(4)(I) because the categories of sources of records in this system have been published in the FEDERAL REGISTER in broad generic terms in the belief that this is all that subsection (e)(4)(I) of the Act requires. In the event, however, that this subsection should be interpreted to require more detail as to the identity of sources of the records in these systems, exemption from this provision is necessary in order to protect the confiden-

tiality of the sources of criminal and other law-enforcement information. Such exemption is further necessary to protect the privacy and physical safety of witnesses and informants.

(9) From subsection (e)(8) because the individual-notice requirements of subsection (e)(8) could present a serious impediment to law enforcement through interference with the Office of Independent Counsel's ability to issue subpoenas and the disclosure of its investigative techniques and procedures.

(10) From subsection (f) because this system is exempt from the individual-access provisions of subsection (d) pursuant to subsections (j) and (k) of the Privacy Act. Furthermore, such notice to an individual would be detrimental to the successful conduct and/or completion of an investigation or prosecution pending or future.

(11) From subsection (g) because this system is exempt from the individual-access and amendment provisions of subsection (d) and the provisions of subsection (f) pursuant to subsections (j) and (k) of the Privacy Act.

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

(1) Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act Files (OIC/002). These exemptions apply to the extent that information in this system is subject to exemption pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(j)(2), (k)(1), (k)(2), and (k)(5).

(d) Because this system contains Office of Independent Counsel criminal law-enforcement investigatory records, exemptions from the particular subsections are justified for the following reasons:

(1) From subsection (c)(3) because the release of the disclosure accounting would permit the subject(s) of criminal investigations under investigation or in litigation to obtain valuable information concerning the nature of that investigation, matter or case and present a serious impediment to law-enforcement activities.

(2) From subsection (c)(4) because an exemption is being claimed for subsection (d) of the Act, rendering this subsection inapplicable to the extent that this system of records is exempted from subsection (d).

(3) From subsection (d) because access to the records contained in this system would inform the subject of criminal investigation or case of the existence of such, and provide the subject with information that might enable him to avoid detection, apprehension or legal obligations, and present a serious impediment to law enforcement and other civil remedies. Amendment of the records would interfere with ongoing criminal law-enforcement proceedings and impose an impossible administrative burden.

(4) From subsection (e)(1) because in the courses of criminal investigations, matters or cases, the Office of Independent Counsel often obtains information concerning the violation of laws other than those relating to an active case, matter, or investigation. In the interests of effective law enforcement and criminal litigation, it is necessary that the Office of Independent Counsel retain this information since it can aid in establishing patterns of activity and provide valuable leads for future cases that may be brought within the Office of Independent Counsel.

(5) From subsection (e)(2) because collecting information to the greatest extent possible from the subject individual of a criminal investigation or prosecution would present a serious impediment to law enforcement. In such circumstances, the subject of the investigation would be placed on notice of the existence of the investigation and would therefore be able to avoid detection, apprehension, or legal obligations and duties.

(6) From subsection (e)(3) because providing individuals supplying information with a form stating the requirements of subsection (e)(3) would constitute a serious impediment to law enforcement. In those circumstances, it could compromise the existence of a confidential investigation, reveal the identity of confidential sources of information, and endanger the life and physical safety of confidential informants.

(7) From subsection (e)(4) (G), (H) and (I) because this system of records is exempt from the individual-access and amendment provisions of subsection (d) and the rules provisions of subsection (f).

(8) From subsection (e)(5) because, in the collection of information for law-enforcement purposes, it is impossible to determine in advance what information is accurate, relevant, timely, and complete. With the passage of time, seemingly irrelevant or untimely information may acquire new significance as further investigation brings new details to light and the accuracy of such information can only be determined in a court of law. The restrictions of subsection (e)(5) would inhibit the ability of trained investigators and intelligence analysts to exercise their judgment in reporting on investigations and impede the development of intelligence necessary for effective law enforcement.

(9) From subsection (e)(8) because the individual-notice requirements of subsection (e)(8) could present a serious impediment to law enforcement, i.e., this could interfere with the Office of Independent Counsel's ability to issue subpoenas and could reveal investigative techniques and procedures.

(10) From subsection (f) because this system has been exempted from the individual-access and amendment provisions of subsection (d).

(11) From subsection (g) because the records in this system are generally compiled for law-enforcement purposes and are exempt from the individual-access and amendment provisions of subsections (d) and (f), this rendering subsection (g) inapplicable.

## **PART 701—PROCEDURES FOR DISCLOSURE OF RECORDS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

### **Sec.**

- 701.10 General provisions.
- 701.11 Requirements pertaining to requests.
- 701.12 Responses by the Office to requests.
- 701.13 Form and content of Office responses.
- 701.14 Classified information.
- 701.15 Business information.
- 701.16 Appeals.
- 701.17 Preservation of records.
- 701.18 Fees.
- 701.19 Other rights and services.

**AUTHORITY:** 5 U.S.C. 552.

**SOURCE:** 53 FR 8895, Mar. 18, 1988, unless otherwise noted.