

Federal Trade Commission

§ 5.58

§ 5.52 Nonpublic proceedings.

Any investigation or proceedings held under this part shall be nonpublic unless the respondent specifically requests otherwise, except to the extent required by the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) or by the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. 552b). However, the presiding official's initial decision and any final decision of the Commission shall be placed on the public record, except that information may be designated *in camera* in accordance with § 3.45 of the Commission's Rules of Practice.

§ 5.53 Initiation of investigation.

(a) Investigations under this part may be initiated upon the submission by any person of a written statement to the Secretary setting forth sufficient information to indicate a possible violation of 18 U.S.C. 207 or by the Commission on its own initiative when a possible violation is indicated by information within the Commission's possession.

(b) At the direction of the Commission, the General Counsel shall investigate any alleged violation of 18 U.S.C. 207.

§ 5.54 Referral to the Office of Government Ethics and to the Department of Justice.

(a) The General Counsel shall make a preliminary determination of whether the matter appears frivolous and, if not, shall expeditiously transmit any available information to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics and to the Criminal Division, Department of Justice.

(b) Unless the Department of Justice communicates to the Commission that it does not intend to initiate criminal prosecution, the General Counsel shall coordinate any investigation or proceeding under this part with the Department of Justice in order to avoid prejudicing criminal proceedings.

§ 5.55 Conduct of investigation.

(a) The General Counsel may (1) exercise the authority granted in § 2.5 of the Commission's Rules of Practice to administer oaths and affirmations; and (2) conduct investigational hearings pursuant to part 2 of these rules. He

may also recommend that the Commission issue compulsory process in connection with an investigation under this section.

(b) Witnesses in investigations shall have the rights set forth in § 2.9 of the Commission's Rules of Practice.

§ 5.56 Disposition.

(a) Upon the conclusion of an investigation under this part, the General Counsel shall forward to the Commission a summary of the facts disclosed by the investigation along with a recommendation as to whether the Commission should issue an order to show cause pursuant to § 5.57.

(b) When the former government employee involved is an attorney, the General Counsel shall also recommend whether the matter should be referred to the disciplinary committee of the bar(s) of which the attorney is a member.

§ 5.57 Order to show cause.

(a) Upon a Commission determination that there exists reasonable cause to believe a former government employee has violated 18 U.S.C. 207, the Commission may issue an order requiring the former employee to show cause why sanctions should not be imposed.

(b) The show cause order shall contain:

(1) The statutory provisions alleged to have been violated and a clear and concise description of the acts of the former employee that are alleged to constitute the violation;

(2) Notice of the respondent's right to submit an answer and request a hearing, and the time and manner in which the request is to be made; and

(3) A statement of the sanctions that may be imposed pursuant to § 5.67 of this part.

(c) Subsequent to the issuance of an order to show cause, any communications to or from the Commission or any member of the Commission shall be governed by the *ex parte* provisions of § 4.7 of the Commission's Rules of Practice. 16 CFR 4.7.

§ 5.58 Answer and request for a hearing.

(a) An answer and request for a hearing must be filed with the Secretary of