

§ 504.1

22 CFR Ch. V (4–1–09 Edition)

Subpart D—Penalties

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AUTHORITY: 22 U.S.C. 6204.

SOURCE: 72 FR 19798, Apr. 20, 2007, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General Provisions

§ 504.1 Scope and purpose.

(a) These regulations in this subpart establish policy, assign responsibilities and prescribe procedures with respect to:

(1) The production or disclosure of official information or records by BBG employees, and

(2) The testimony of current and former BBG employees, relating to official information, official duties, or the BBG's records, in connection with federal or state litigation in which the BBG is not a party.

(b) The BBG intends these provisions to:

(1) Conserve the time of BBG employees for conducting official business;

(2) Minimize the involvement of BBG employees in issues unrelated to BBG's mission;

(3) Maintain the impartiality of BBG employees in disputes between private litigants; and

(4) Protect sensitive, confidential information and the deliberative processes of the BBG.

(c) In providing for these requirements, the BBG does not waive the sovereign immunity of the United States.

(d) This part provides guidance for the internal operations of BBG. It does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, that a party may rely upon in any legal proceeding against the United States.

§ 504.2 Applicability.

This part applies to demands and requests to current and former employees for factual or expert testimony relating to official information or official duties or for production of official records or information, in legal proceedings in which the BBG is not a named party. This part does not apply to:

(a) Demands upon or requests for a BBG employee to testify as to facts or events that are unrelated to his or her

official duties or that are unrelated to the functions of the BBG;

(b) Demands upon or requests for a former BBG employee to testify as to matters in which the former employee was not directly or materially involved while at the BBG;

(c) Requests for the release of records under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552, or the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a; or

(d) Congressional demands and requests for testimony, records or information.

§ 504.3 Definitions.

The following definitions apply to this part:

(a) Demand means an order, subpoena, or other command of a court or other competent authority for the production, disclosure, or release of records or for the appearance and testimony of a BBG employee in a legal proceeding.

(b) General Counsel means the General Counsel of the BBG or a person to whom the General Counsel has delegated authority under this part.

(c) Legal proceeding means any matter before a court of law, administrative board or tribunal, commission, administrative law judge, hearing officer or other body that conducts a legal or administrative proceeding. Legal proceeding includes all phases of litigation.

(d) BBG means the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

(e) BBG employee means:

(1) Any current or former employee of the BBG.

(2) This definition does not include persons who are no longer employed by the BBG and who agree to testify about general matters, matters available to the public, or matters with which they had no specific involvement or responsibility during their employment with the BBG.

(f) Records or official records and information means all information in the custody and control of the BBG, relating to information in the custody and control of the BBG, or acquired by a BBG employee in the performance of his or her official duties or because of his or her official status, while the individual was employed by the BBG.

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(g) Request means any informal request, by whatever method, for the production of records and information or for testimony which has not been ordered by a court or other competent authority.

(h) Testimony means any written or oral statements, including depositions, answers to interrogatories, affidavits, declarations, interviews, and statements made by an individual in connection with a legal proceeding.

Subpart B—Demands or Requests for Testimony and Production of Documents

§ 504.4 General prohibition.

(a) In any United States federal, state, and local proceeding or administrative action, or proceeding or administrative action conducted in a foreign country, in which the BBG is not a party, no BBG employee shall, in response to a demand or request for official records or information, furnish or produce documents or testimony as to any material contained in BBG files, any information relating to or based upon material contained in BBG files, or any information or material acquired as part of the performance of that person's official duties (or because of that person's official status) without the prior written approval of the General Counsel.

(b) Whenever a request or demand for information is made upon a BBG employee, the employee, wherever located, shall immediately prepare a report that specifically describes the testimony or documents sought and immediately notify the General Counsel. The BBG employee shall then await instructions from the General Counsel concerning a response to the request or demand. The failure of any BBG employee to follow the procedures specified in this subpart neither creates nor confers any rights, privileges, or benefits on any person or party.

§ 504.5 Factors the BBG will consider.

The General Counsel, in his or her sole discretion, may grant an employee permission to testify on matters relating to official information, or produce official records and information, in re-

sponse to a demand or request. Among the relevant factors that the General Counsel may consider in making this decision are whether:

(a) The purposes of this part are met;

(b) Allowing such testimony or production of records would be necessary to prevent a miscarriage of justice;

(c) Allowing such testimony or production of records would assist or hinder the BBG in performing its statutory duties;

(d) Allowing such testimony or production of records would be in the best interest of the BBG or the United States;

(e) The records or testimony can be obtained from other sources;

(f) The demand or request is unduly burdensome or otherwise inappropriate under the applicable rules of discovery or the rules of procedure governing the case or matter in which the demand or request arose;

(g) Disclosure would violate a statute, Executive Order or regulation;

(h) Disclosure would reveal confidential, sensitive, or privileged information, trade secrets or similar, confidential or financial information, otherwise protected information, or information which would otherwise be inappropriate for release;

(i) Disclosure would impede or interfere with an ongoing law enforcement investigation or proceeding, or compromise constitutional rights or national security interests;

(j) Disclosure would result in the BBG appearing to favor one litigant over another;

(k) The request was served before the demand;

(l) A substantial Government interest is implicated;

(m) The demand or request is within the authority of the party making it; and

(n) The demand or request is sufficiently specific to be answered and/or can be limited to information to that which would be consistent with the factors specified herein.