

Growth Stock Fund, and U.S. Treasury bonds.

*Example 2:* The Secretary of Treasury sells certain stock after receiving a Certificate of Divestiture and is considering reinvesting the proceeds from the sale into U.S. Treasury securities. However, because the Secretary of the Treasury is prohibited by 31 U.S.C. 329 from being involved in buying obligations of the United States Government, the Secretary cannot reinvest the proceeds in such securities. However, she may invest the proceeds in a diversified mutual fund. See the definition of *permitted property* at §2634.1003(b).

(b) *Internal Revenue Service reporting requirements.* An eligible person who elects to defer the recognition of capital gains from the sale of property pursuant to a Certificate of Divestiture must follow Internal Revenue Service rules for reporting the sale of the property and the reinvestment transaction.

**§2634.1007 Cases in which Certificates of Divestiture will not be issued.**

The Director of the Office of Government Ethics, in his or her sole discretion, may deny a request for a Certificate of Divestiture in cases where an unfair or unintended benefit would result. Examples of such cases include:

(a) *Employee benefit plans.* The Director will not issue a Certificate of Divestiture if the property is held in a pension, profit-sharing, stock bonus, or other employee benefit plan and can otherwise be rolled over into an eligible tax-deferred retirement plan within the 60-day reinvestment period.

(b) *Tax-Deferred and Tax-Advantaged Accounts.* The Director will not issue a Certificate of Divestiture if the property is held in an Individual Retirement Account, college savings plan (529 plan), or other tax-deferred or tax-advantaged account (e.g., 401(k), 403(b), 457 plans, etc.), which allow the account holder to exchange the property for permissible property without incurring a capital gain.

(c) *Complete divestiture.* The Director will not issue a Certificate of Divestiture unless the employee agrees to divest all of the property that presents a conflict of interest, as well as other similar or related property that presents a conflict of interest under a Federal conflict of interest statute, regulation, rule, or Executive order. However,

any property that qualifies for a regulatory exemption at part 2640 of this chapter need not be divested for a Certificate of Divestiture to be issued.

*Example:* A Department of Agriculture employee owns shares of stock in Better Workspace, Inc. valued at \$25,000. As part of his official duties, the employee is assigned to evaluate bids for a contract to renovate office space at his agency. The Department's designated agency ethics official discovers that Better Workspace is one of the companies that has submitted a bid and directs the employee to sell his stock in the company. Because Better Workspace is a publicly traded security, the employee could retain up to \$15,000 of the stock under the regulatory exemption for interests in securities at §2640.202(a) of this chapter. He would be able to request a Certificate of Divestiture for the \$10,000 of Better Workspace stock that is not covered by the exemption. Alternatively, he could request a Certificate of Divestiture for the entire \$25,000 worth of stock. If he chooses to sell his stock down to an amount permitted under the regulatory exemption, the Office of Government Ethics will not issue additional Certificates of Divestiture if the value of the stock goes above \$15,000 again.

(d) *Property acquired under improper circumstances.* The Director will not issue a Certificate of Divestiture:

- (1) If the eligible person acquired the property at a time when its acquisition was prohibited by statute, regulation, rule, or Executive order; or
- (2) If circumstances would otherwise create the appearance of a conflict with the conscientious performance of Government responsibilities.

**§2634.1008 Public access to a Certificate of Divestiture.**

A Certificate of Divestiture issued pursuant to the provisions of this subpart is available to the public in accordance with the rules of §2634.603.

**PART 2635—STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 7301, 7351, 7353; 5 U.S.C. App. (Ethics in Government Act of 1978); E.O. 12674, 54 FR 15159, 3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 215, as modified by E.O. 12731, 55 FR 42547, 3 CFR, 1990 Comp., p. 306.

SOURCE: 57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

### Subpart A—General Provisions

#### § 2635.101 Basic obligation of public service.

(a) *Public service is a public trust.* Each employee has a responsibility to the United States Government and its citizens to place loyalty to the Constitution, laws and ethical principles above private gain. To ensure that every citizen can have complete confidence in the integrity of the Federal Government, each employee shall respect and adhere to the principles of ethical conduct set forth in this section, as well as the implementing standards contained in this part and in supplemental agency regulations.

(b) *General principles.* The following general principles apply to every employee and may form the basis for the standards contained in this part. Where a situation is not covered by the standards set forth in this part, employees shall apply the principles set forth in this section in determining whether their conduct is proper.

(1) Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws and ethical principles above private gain.

(2) Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.

(3) Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the

improper use of such information to further any private interest.

(4) An employee shall not, except as permitted by subpart B of this part, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or non-performance of the employee's duties.

(5) Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.

(6) Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.

(7) Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

(8) Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

(9) Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

(10) Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.

(11) Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.

(12) Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those—such as Federal, State, or local taxes—that are imposed by law.

(13) Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

(14) Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or the ethical standards set forth in this part. Whether particular circumstances create an appearance that the law or these standards have been violated shall be determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts.

(c) *Related statutes.* In addition to the standards of ethical conduct set forth in this part, there are conflict of interest statutes that prohibit certain conduct. Criminal conflict of interest statutes of general applicability to all employees, 18 U.S.C. 201, 203, 205, 208, and 209, are summarized in the appropriate subparts of this part and must be taken into consideration in determining whether conduct is proper. Citations to other generally applicable statutes relating to employee conduct are set forth in subpart I and employees are further cautioned that there may be additional statutory and regulatory restrictions applicable to them generally or as employees of their specific agencies. Because an employee is considered to be on notice of the requirements of any statute, an employee should not rely upon any description or synopsis of a statutory restriction, but should refer to the statute itself and obtain the advice of an agency ethics official as needed.

#### § 2635.102 Definitions.

The definitions listed below are used throughout this part. Additional definitions appear in the subparts or sections of subparts to which they apply. For purposes of this part:

(a) *Agency* means an executive agency as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105 and the Postal Service and the Postal Rate Commission. It does not include the General Accounting Office or the Government of the District of Columbia.

(b) *Agency designee* refers to any employee who, by agency regulation, instruction, or other issuance, has been delegated authority to make any determination, give any approval, or take any other action required or permitted by this part with respect to another employee. An agency may delegate these authorities to any number of agency designees necessary to ensure that determinations are made, approvals are given, and other actions are taken in a timely and responsible manner. Any provision that requires a determination, approval, or other action by the agency designee shall, where the conduct in issue is that of the agency head, be deemed to require that such determination, approval or action be made or taken by the agency head in

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consultation with the designated agency ethics official.

(c) *Agency ethics official* refers to the designated agency ethics official or to the alternate designated agency ethics official, referred to in § 2638.202(b) of this chapter, and to any deputy ethics official, described in § 2638.204 of this chapter, who has been delegated authority to assist in carrying out the responsibilities of the designated agency ethics official.

(d) *Agency programs or operations* refers to any program or function carried out or performed by an agency, whether pursuant to statute, Executive order, or regulation.

(e) *Corrective action* includes any action necessary to remedy a past violation or prevent a continuing violation of this part, including but not limited to restitution, change of assignment, disqualification, divestiture, termination of an activity, waiver, the creation of a qualified diversified or blind trust, or counseling.

(f) *Designated agency ethics official* refers to the official designated under § 2638.201 of this chapter.

(g) *Disciplinary action* includes those disciplinary actions referred to in Office of Personnel Management regulations and instructions implementing provisions of title 5 of the United States Code or provided for in comparable provisions applicable to employees not subject to title 5, including but not limited to reprimand, suspension, demotion, and removal. In the case of a military officer, comparable provisions may include those in the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

(h) *Employee* means any officer or employee of an agency, including a special Government employee. It includes officers but not enlisted members of the uniformed services. It includes employees of a State or local government or other organization who are serving on detail to an agency, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3371, *et seq.* For purposes other than subparts B and C of this part, it does not include the President or Vice President. Status as an employee is unaffected by pay or leave status or, in the case of a special Government employee, by the fact that the individual does not perform official duties on a given day.

(i) *Head of an agency* means, in the case of an agency headed by more than one person, the chair or comparable member of such agency.

(j) *He, his, and him* include she, hers and her.

(k) *Person* means an individual, corporation and subsidiaries it controls, company, association, firm, partnership, society, joint stock company, or any other organization or institution, including any officer, employee, or agent of such person or entity. For purposes of this part, a corporation will be deemed to control a subsidiary if it owns 50 percent or more of the subsidiary's voting securities. The term is all-inclusive and applies to commercial ventures and nonprofit organizations as well as to foreign, State, and local governments, including the Government of the District of Columbia. It does not include any agency or other entity of the Federal Government or any officer or employee thereof when acting in his official capacity on behalf of that agency or entity.

(l) *Special Government employee* means those executive branch officers or employees specified in 18 U.S.C. 202(a). A special Government employee is retained, designated, appointed, or employed to perform temporary duties either on a full-time or intermittent basis, with or without compensation, for a period not to exceed 130 days during any consecutive 365-day period.

(m) *Supplemental agency regulation* means a regulation issued pursuant to § 2635.105.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 45736, Aug. 10, 2006]

**§ 2635.103 Applicability to members of the uniformed services.**

The provisions of this part, except this section, are not applicable to enlisted members of the uniformed services. Each agency with jurisdiction over enlisted members of the uniformed services shall issue regulations defining the ethical conduct obligations of enlisted members under its jurisdiction. Those regulations shall be consistent with Executive Order 12674, April 12, 1989, as modified, and may prescribe the full range of statutory and regulatory sanctions, including those available under the Uniform Code

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of Military Justice, for failure to comply with such regulations.

### § 2635.104 Applicability to employees on detail.

(a) *Details to other agencies.* Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, an employee on detail, including a uniformed officer on assignment, from his employing agency to another agency for a period in excess of 30 calendar days shall be subject to any supplemental agency regulations of the agency to which he is detailed rather than to any supplemental agency regulations of his employing agency.

(b) *Details to the legislative or judicial branch.* An employee on detail, including a uniformed officer on assignment, from his employing agency to the legislative or judicial branch for a period in excess of 30 calendar days shall be subject to the ethical standards of the branch or entity to which detailed. For the duration of any such detail or assignment, the employee shall not be subject to the provisions of this part, except this section, or, except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, to any supplemental agency regulations of his employing agency, but shall remain subject to the conflict of interest prohibitions in title 18 of the United States Code.

(c) *Details to non-Federal entities.* Except to the extent exempted in writing pursuant to this paragraph, an employee detailed to a non-Federal entity remains subject to this part and to any supplemental agency regulation of his employing agency. When an employee is detailed pursuant to statutory authority to an international organization or to a State or local government for a period in excess of six months, the designated agency ethics official may grant a written exemption from subpart B of this part based on his determination that the entity has adopted written ethical standards covering solicitation and acceptance of gifts which will apply to the employee during the detail and which will be appropriate given the purpose of the detail.

(d) *Applicability of special agency statutes.* Notwithstanding paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, an employee who is subject to an agency statute which restricts his activities or finan-

cial holdings specifically because of his status as an employee of that agency shall continue to be subject to any provisions in the supplemental agency regulations of his employing agency that implement that statute.

### § 2635.105 Supplemental agency regulations.

In addition to the regulations set forth in this part, an employee shall comply with any supplemental agency regulations issued by his employing agency under this section.

(a) An agency that wishes to supplement this part shall prepare and submit to the Office of Government Ethics, for its concurrence and joint issuance, any agency regulations that supplement the regulations contained in this part. Supplemental agency regulations which the agency determines are necessary and appropriate, in view of its programs and operations, to fulfill the purposes of this part shall be:

(1) In the form of a supplement to the regulations in this part; and

(2) In addition to the substantive provisions of this part.

(b) After concurrence and co-signature by the Office of Government Ethics, the agency shall submit its supplemental agency regulations to the FEDERAL REGISTER for publication and codification at the expense of the agency in title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Supplemental agency regulations issued under this section are effective only after concurrence and co-signature by the Office of Government Ethics and publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(c) This section applies to any supplemental agency regulations or amendments thereof issued under this part. It does not apply to:

(1) A handbook or other issuance intended merely as an explanation of the standards contained in this part or in supplemental agency regulations;

(2) An instruction or other issuance the purpose of which is to:

(i) Delegate to an agency designee authority to make any determination, give any approval or take any other action required or permitted by this part or by supplemental agency regulations; or

(ii) Establish internal agency procedures for documenting or processing any determination, approval or other action required or permitted by this part or by supplemental agency regulations, or by retaining any such documentation; or

(3) Regulations or instructions that an agency has authority, independent of this part, to issue, such as regulations implementing an agency's gift acceptance statute, protecting categories of nonpublic information or establishing standards for use of Government vehicles. Where the content of any such regulations or instructions was included in the agency's standards of conduct regulations issued pursuant to Executive Order 11222 and the Office of Government Ethics concurs that they need not be issued as part of an agency's supplemental agency regulations, those regulations or instructions may be promulgated separately from the agency's supplemental agency regulations.

(d) Employees of a State or local government or other organization who are serving on detail to an agency, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3371, *et seq.*, are subject to any requirements, in addition to those in this part, established by a supplemental agency regulation issued under this section to the extent that such regulation expressly provides.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 71 FR 45736, Aug. 10, 2006]

**§ 2635.106 Disciplinary and corrective action.**

(a) Except as provided in § 2635.107, a violation of this part or of supplemental agency regulations may be cause for appropriate corrective or disciplinary action to be taken under applicable Governmentwide regulations or agency procedures. Such action may be in addition to any action or penalty prescribed by law.

(b) It is the responsibility of the employing agency to initiate appropriate disciplinary or corrective action in individual cases. However, corrective action may be ordered or disciplinary action recommended by the Director of the Office of Government Ethics under the procedures at part 2638 of this chapter.

(c) A violation of this part or of supplemental agency regulations, as such, does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by any person against the United States, its agencies, its officers or employees, or any other person. Thus, for example, an individual who alleges that an employee has failed to adhere to laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap is required to follow applicable statutory and regulatory procedures, including those of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

**§ 2635.107 Ethics advice.**

(a) As required by §§ 2638.201 and 2638.202(b) of this chapter, each agency has a designated agency ethics official who, on the agency's behalf, is responsible for coordinating and managing the agency's ethics program, as well as an alternate. The designated agency ethics official has authority under § 2638.204 of this chapter to delegate certain responsibilities, including that of providing ethics counseling regarding the application of this part, to one or more deputy ethics officials.

(b) Employees who have questions about the application of this part or any supplemental agency regulations to particular situations should seek advice from an agency ethics official. Disciplinary action for violating this part or any supplemental agency regulations will not be taken against an employee who has engaged in conduct in good faith reliance upon the advice of an agency ethics official, provided that the employee, in seeking such advice, has made full disclosure of all relevant circumstances. Where the employee's conduct violates a criminal statute, reliance on the advice of an agency ethics official cannot ensure that the employee will not be prosecuted under that statute. However, good faith reliance on the advice of an agency ethics official is a factor that may be taken into account by the Department of Justice in the selection of cases for prosecution. Disclosures made by an employee to an agency ethics official are not protected by an attorney-

client privilege. An agency ethics official is required by 28 U.S.C. 535 to report any information he receives relating to a violation of the criminal code, title 18 of the United States Code.

### Subpart B— Gifts From Outside Sources

SOURCE: 81 FR 81648, Nov. 18, 2016, unless otherwise noted.

#### § 2635.201 Overview and considerations for declining otherwise permissible gifts.

(a) *Overview.* This subpart contains standards that prohibit an employee from soliciting or accepting any gift from a prohibited source or any gift given because of the employee's official position, unless the item is excluded from the definition of a gift or falls within one of the exceptions set forth in this subpart.

(b) *Considerations for declining otherwise permissible gifts.* (1) Every employee has a fundamental responsibility to the United States and its citizens to place loyalty to the Constitution, laws, and ethical principles above private gain. An employee's actions should promote the public's trust that this responsibility is being met. For this reason, employees should consider declining otherwise permissible gifts if they believe that a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts would question the employee's integrity or impartiality as a result of accepting the gift.

(2) An employee who is considering whether acceptance of a gift would lead a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question his or her integrity or impartiality may consider, among other relevant factors, whether:

- (i) The gift has a high market value;
- (ii) The timing of the gift creates the appearance that the donor is seeking to influence an official action;
- (iii) The gift was provided by a person who has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's official duties; and
- (iv) Acceptance of the gift would provide the donor with significantly disproportionate access.

(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (b)(1) of this section, an employee who accepts a gift that qualifies for an exception under § 2635.204 does not violate this subpart or the Principles of Ethical Conduct set forth in § 2635.101(b).

(4) Employees who have questions regarding this subpart, including whether the employee should decline a gift that would otherwise be permitted under an exception found in § 2635.204, should seek advice from an agency ethics official.

*Example 1 to paragraph (b):* An employee of the Peace Corps is in charge of making routine purchases of office supplies. After a promotional presentation to highlight several new products, a vendor offers to buy the employee lunch, which costs less than \$20. The employee is concerned that a reasonable person may question her impartiality in accepting the free lunch, as the timing of the offer indicates that the donor may be seeking to influence an official action and the company has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties. As such, although acceptance of the gift may be permissible under § 2635.204(a), the employee decides to decline the gift.

#### § 2635.202 General prohibition on solicitation or acceptance of gifts.

(a) *Prohibition on soliciting gifts.* Except as provided in this subpart, an employee may not, directly or indirectly:

- (1) Solicit a gift from a prohibited source; or
- (2) Solicit a gift to be given because of the employee's official position.

(b) *Prohibition on accepting gifts.* Except as provided in this subpart, an employee may not, directly or indirectly:

- (1) Accept a gift from a prohibited source; or
- (2) Accept a gift given because of the employee's official position.

(c) *Relationship to illegal gratuities statute.* A gift accepted pursuant to an exception found in this subpart will not constitute an illegal gratuity otherwise prohibited by 18 U.S.C. 201(c)(1)(B), unless it is accepted in return for being influenced in the performance of an official act. As more fully described in § 2635.205(d)(1), an employee may not solicit or accept a gift if to do so would be prohibited by the Federal bribery statute, 18 U.S.C. 201(b).

*Example 1 to paragraph (c):* A Government contractor who specializes in information technology software has offered an employee of the Department of Energy’s information technology acquisition division a \$15 gift card to a local restaurant if the employee will recommend to the agency’s contracting officer that she select the contractor’s products during the next acquisition. Even though the gift card is less than \$20, the employee may not accept the gift under § 2635.204(a) because it is conditional upon official action by the employee. Pursuant to §§ 2635.202(c) and 2635.205(a), notwithstanding any exception to the rule, an employee may not accept a gift in return for being influenced in the performance of an official act.

**§ 2635.203 Definitions.**

For purposes of this subpart, the following definitions apply:

(a) *Agency* has the meaning set forth in § 2635.102(a). However, for purposes of this subpart, an executive department, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 101, may, by supplemental agency regulation, designate as a separate agency any component of that department which the department determines exercises distinct and separate functions.

(b) *Gift* includes any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, or other item having monetary value. It includes services as well as gifts of training, transportation, local travel, lodgings and meals, whether provided in-kind, by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred. The term excludes the following:

(1) Modest items of food and non-alcoholic refreshments, such as soft drinks, coffee and donuts, offered other than as part of a meal;

(2) Greeting cards and items with little intrinsic value, such as plaques, certificates, and trophies, which are intended primarily for presentation;

*Example 1 to paragraph (b)(2):* After giving a speech at the facility of a pharmaceutical company, a Government employee is presented with a glass paperweight in the shape of a pill capsule with the name of the company’s latest drug and the date of the speech imprinted on the side. The employee may accept the paperweight because it is an item with little intrinsic value which is intended primarily for presentation.

*Example 2 to paragraph (b)(2):* After participating in a panel discussion hosted by an international media company, a Government

employee is presented with an inexpensive portable music player emblazoned with the media company’s logo. The portable music player has a market value of \$25. The employee may not accept the portable music player as it has a significant independent use as a music player rather than being intended primarily for presentation.

*Example 3 to paragraph (b)(2):* After giving a speech at a conference held by a national association of miners, a Department of Commerce employee is presented with a block of granite that is engraved with the association’s logo, a picture of the Appalachian Mountains, the date of the speech, and the employee’s name. The employee may accept this item because it is similar to a plaque, is designed primarily for presentation, and has little intrinsic value.

(3) Loans from banks and other financial institutions on terms generally available to the public;

(4) Opportunities and benefits, including favorable rates and commercial discounts, available to the public or to a class consisting of all Government employees or all uniformed military personnel, whether or not restricted on the basis of geographic considerations;

(5) Rewards and prizes given to competitors in contests or events, including random drawings, open to the public unless the employee’s entry into the contest or event is required as part of the employee’s official duties;

*Example 1 to paragraph (b)(5):* A Government employee is attending a free trade show on official time. The trade show is held in a public shopping area adjacent to the employee’s office building. The employee voluntarily enters a drawing at an individual vendor’s booth which is open to the public. She fills in an entry form on the vendor’s display table and drops it into the contest box. The employee may accept the resulting prize because entry into the contest was not required by or related to her official duties.

*Example 2 to paragraph (b)(5):* Attendees at a conference, which is not open to the public, are entered in a drawing for a weekend getaway to Bermuda as a result of being registered for the conference. A Government employee who attends the conference in his official capacity could not accept the prize under paragraph (b)(5) of this section, as the event is not open to the public.

(6) Pension and other benefits resulting from continued participation in an employee welfare and benefits plan maintained by a current or former employer;



(7) Anything which is paid for by the Government or secured by the Government under Government contract;

*Example 1 to paragraph (b)(7):* An employee at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration is assigned to travel away from her duty station to conduct an investigation of a collapse at a construction site. The employee's agency is paying for her travel expenses, including her airfare. The employee may accept and retain travel promotional items, such as frequent flyer miles, received as a result of her official travel, to the extent permitted by 5 U.S.C. 5702, note, and 41 CFR part 301-53.

(8) Free attendance to an event provided by the sponsor of the event to:

(i) An employee who is assigned to present information on behalf of the agency at the event on any day when the employee is presenting;

(ii) An employee whose presence on any day of the event is deemed to be essential by the agency to the presenting employee's participation in the event, provided that the employee is accompanying the presenting employee; and

(iii) The spouse or one other guest of the presenting employee on any day when the employee is presenting, provided that others in attendance will generally be accompanied by a spouse or other guest, the offer of free attendance for the spouse or other guest is unsolicited, and the agency designee, orally or in writing, has authorized the presenting employee to accept;

*Example 1 to paragraph (b)(8):* An employee of the Department of the Treasury who is assigned to participate in a panel discussion of economic issues as part of a one-day conference may accept the sponsor's waiver of the conference fee. Under the separate authority of § 2635.204(a), the employee may accept a token of appreciation that has a market value of \$20 or less.

*Example 2 to paragraph (b)(8):* An employee of the Securities and Exchange Commission is assigned to present the agency's views at a roundtable discussion of an ongoing working group. The employee may accept free attendance to the meeting under paragraph (b)(8) of this section because the employee has been assigned to present information at the meeting on behalf of the agency. If it is determined by the agency that it is essential that another employee accompany the presenting employee to the roundtable discussion, the accompanying employee may also accept free attendance to the meeting under paragraph (b)(8)(ii) of this section.

*Example 3 to paragraph (b)(8):* An employee of the United States Trade and Development Agency is invited to attend a cocktail party hosted by a prohibited source. The employee believes that he will have an opportunity to discuss official matters with other attendees while at the event. Although the employee may voluntarily discuss official matters with other attendees, the employee has not been assigned to present information on behalf of the agency. The employee may not accept free attendance to the event under paragraph (b)(8) of this section.

(9) Any gift accepted by the Government under specific statutory authority, including:

(i) Travel, subsistence, and related expenses accepted by an agency under the authority of 31 U.S.C. 1353 in connection with an employee's attendance at a meeting or similar function relating to the employee's official duties which take place away from the employee's duty station, provided that the agency's acceptance is in accordance with the implementing regulations at 41 CFR chapter 304; and

(ii) Other gifts provided in-kind which have been accepted by an agency under its agency gift acceptance statute; and

(10) Anything for which market value is paid by the employee.

(c) *Market value* means the cost that a member of the general public would reasonably expect to incur to purchase the gift. An employee who cannot ascertain the market value of a gift may estimate its market value by reference to the retail cost of similar items of like quality. The market value of a gift of a ticket entitling the holder to food, refreshments, entertainment, or any other benefit is deemed to be the face value of the ticket.

*Example 1 to paragraph (c):* An employee who has been given a watch inscribed with the corporate logo of a prohibited source may determine its market value based on her observation that a comparable watch, not inscribed with a logo, generally sells for about \$50.

*Example 2 to paragraph (c):* During an official visit to a factory operated by a well-known athletic footwear manufacturer, an employee of the Department of Labor is offered a commemorative pair of athletic shoes manufactured at the factory. Although the cost incurred by the donor to manufacture the shoes was \$17, the market value of the shoes would be the \$100 that the employee

would have to pay for the shoes on the open market.

*Example 3 to paragraph (c):* A prohibited source has offered a Government employee a ticket to a charitable event consisting of a cocktail reception to be followed by an evening of chamber music. Even though the food, refreshments, and entertainment provided at the event may be worth only \$20, the market value of the ticket is its \$250 face value.

*Example 4 to paragraph (c):* A company offers an employee of the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) free attendance for two to a private skybox at a ballpark to watch a major league baseball game. The skybox is leased annually by the company, which has business pending before the FCC. The skybox tickets provided to the employee do not have a face value. To determine the market value of the tickets, the employee must add the face value of two of the most expensive publicly available tickets to the game and the market value of any food, parking or other tangible benefits provided in connection with the gift of attendance that are not already included in the cost of the most expensive publicly available tickets.

*Example 5 to paragraph (c):* An employee of the Department of Agriculture is invited to a reception held by a prohibited source. There is no entrance fee to the reception event or to the venue. To determine the market value of the gift, the employee must add the market value of any entertainment, food, beverages, or other tangible benefit provided to attendees in connection with the reception, but need not consider the cost incurred by the sponsor to rent or maintain the venue where the event is held. The employee may rely on a per-person cost estimate provided by the sponsor of the event, unless the employee or an agency designee has determined that a reasonable person would find that the estimate is clearly implausible.

(d) *Prohibited source* means any person who:

- (1) Is seeking official action by the employee's agency;
- (2) Does business or seeks to do business with the employee's agency;
- (3) Conducts activities regulated by the employee's agency;
- (4) Has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's official duties; or
- (5) Is an organization a majority of whose members are described in paragraphs (d)(1) through (4) of this section.

(e) *Given because of the employee's official position.* A gift is given because of

the employee's official position if the gift is from a person other than an employee and would not have been given had the employee not held the status, authority, or duties associated with the employee's Federal position.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (e): Gifts between employees are subject to the limitations set forth in subpart C of this part.

*Example 1 to paragraph (e):* Where free season tickets are offered by an opera guild to all members of the Cabinet, the gift is offered because of their official positions.

*Example 2 to paragraph (e):* Employees at a regional office of the Department of Justice (DOJ) work in Government-leased space at a private office building, along with various private business tenants. A major fire in the building during normal office hours causes a traumatic experience for all occupants of the building in making their escape, and it is the subject of widespread news coverage. A corporate hotel chain, which does not meet the definition of a prohibited source for DOJ, seizes the moment and announces that it will give a free night's lodging to all building occupants and their families, as a public goodwill gesture. Employees of DOJ may accept, as this gift is not being given because of their Government positions. The donor's motivation for offering this gift is unrelated to the DOJ employees' status, authority, or duties associated with their Federal position, but instead is based on their mere presence in the building as occupants at the time of the fire.

(f) *Indirectly solicited or accepted.* A gift which is solicited or accepted indirectly includes a gift:

(1) Given with the employee's knowledge and acquiescence to the employee's parent, sibling, spouse, child, dependent relative, or a member of the employee's household because of that person's relationship to the employee; or

(2) Given to any other person, including any charitable organization, on the basis of designation, recommendation, or other specification by the employee, except the employee has not indirectly solicited or accepted a gift by the raising of funds or other support for a charitable organization if done in accordance with §2635.808.

*Example 1 to paragraph (f)(2):* An employee who must decline a gift of a personal computer pursuant to this subpart may not suggest that the gift be given instead to one of five charitable organizations whose names are provided by the employee.

(g) *Free attendance* includes waiver of all or part of the fee for an event or the provision of food, refreshments, entertainment, instruction or materials furnished to all attendees as an integral part of the event. It does not include travel expenses, lodgings, or entertainment collateral to the event. It does not include meals taken other than in a group setting with all other attendees, unless the employee is a presenter at the event and is invited to a separate meal for participating presenters that is hosted by the sponsor of the event. Where the offer of free attendance has been extended to an accompanying spouse or other guest, the market value of the gift of free attendance includes the market value of free attendance by both the employee and the spouse or other guest.

**§ 2635.204 Exceptions to the prohibition for acceptance of certain gifts.**

Subject to the limitations in § 2635.205, this section establishes exceptions to the prohibitions set forth in § 2635.202(a) and (b). Even though acceptance of a gift may be permitted by one of the exceptions contained in this section, it is never inappropriate and frequently prudent for an employee to decline a gift if acceptance would cause a reasonable person to question the employee's integrity or impartiality. Section 2635.201(b) identifies considerations for declining otherwise permissible gifts.

(a) *Gifts of \$20 or less.* An employee may accept unsolicited gifts having an aggregate market value of \$20 or less per source per occasion, provided that the aggregate market value of individual gifts received from any one person under the authority of this paragraph (a) does not exceed \$50 in a calendar year. This exception does not apply to gifts of cash or of investment interests such as stock, bonds, or certificates of deposit. Where the market value of a gift or the aggregate market value of gifts offered on any single occasion exceeds \$20, the employee may not pay the excess value over \$20 in order to accept that portion of the gift or those gifts worth \$20. Where the aggregate value of tangible items offered on a single occasion exceeds \$20, the employee may decline any distinct and

separate item in order to accept those items aggregating \$20 or less.

*Example 1 to paragraph (a):* An employee of the Securities and Exchange Commission and his spouse have been invited by a representative of a regulated entity to a community theater production, tickets to which have a face value of \$30 each. The aggregate market value of the gifts offered on this single occasion is \$60, \$40 more than the \$20 amount that may be accepted for a single event or presentation. The employee may not accept the gift of the evening of entertainment. He and his spouse may attend the play only if he pays the full \$60 value of the two tickets.

*Example 2 to paragraph (a):* An employee of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency has been invited by an association of cartographers to speak about her agency's role in the evolution of missile technology. At the conclusion of her speech, the association presents the employee a framed map with a market value of \$18 and a ceramic mug that has a market value of \$15. The employee may accept the map or the mug, but not both, because the aggregate value of these two tangible items exceeds \$20.

*Example 3 to paragraph (a):* On four occasions during the calendar year, an employee of the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) was given gifts worth \$10 each by four employees of a corporation that is a DLA contractor. For purposes of applying the yearly \$50 limitation on gifts of \$20 or less from any one person, the four gifts must be aggregated because a person is defined at § 2635.102(k) to mean not only the corporate entity, but its officers and employees as well. However, for purposes of applying the \$50 aggregate limitation, the employee would not have to include the value of a birthday present received from his cousin, who is employed by the same corporation, if he can accept the birthday present under the exception at paragraph (b) of this section for gifts based on a personal relationship.

*Example 4 to paragraph (a):* Under the authority of 31 U.S.C. 1353 for agencies to accept payments from non-Federal sources in connection with attendance at certain meetings or similar functions, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has accepted an association's gift of travel expenses and conference fees for an employee to attend a conference on the long-term effect of radon exposure. While at the conference, the employee may accept a gift of \$20 or less from the association or from another person attending the conference even though it was not approved in advance by the EPA. Although 31 U.S.C. 1353 is the authority under which the EPA accepted the gift to the agency of travel expenses and conference fees, a gift of \$20 or less accepted under paragraph

(a) of this section is a gift to the employee rather than to her employing agency.

*Example 5 to paragraph (a):* During off-duty time, an employee of the Department of Defense (DoD) attends a trade show involving companies that are DoD contractors. He is offered software worth \$15 at X Company's booth, a calendar worth \$12 at Y Company's booth, and a deli lunch worth \$8 from Z Company. The employee may accept all three of these items because they do not exceed \$20 per source, even though they total more than \$20 at this single occasion.

*Example 6 to paragraph (a):* An employee of the Department of Defense (DoD) is being promoted to a higher level position in another DoD office. Six individuals, each employed by a different defense contractor, who have worked with the DoD employee over the years, decide to act in concert to pool their resources to buy her a nicer gift than each could buy her separately. Each defense contractor employee contributes \$20 to buy a desk clock for the DoD employee that has a market value of \$120. Although each of the contributions does not exceed the \$20 limit, the employee may not accept the \$120 gift because it is a single gift that has a market value in excess of \$20.

*Example 7 to paragraph (a):* During a holiday party, an employee of the Department of State is given a \$15 store gift card to a national coffee chain by an agency contractor. The employee may accept the card as the market value is less than \$20. The employee could not, however, accept a gift card that is issued by a credit card company or other financial institution, because such a card is equivalent to a gift of cash.

(b) *Gifts based on a personal relationship.* An employee may accept a gift given by an individual under circumstances which make it clear that the gift is motivated by a family relationship or personal friendship rather than the position of the employee. Relevant factors in making such a determination include the history and nature of the relationship and whether the family member or friend personally pays for the gift.

*Example 1 to paragraph (b):* An employee of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) has been dating an accountant employed by a member bank. As part of its "Work-Life Balance" program, the bank has given each employee in the accountant's division two tickets to a professional basketball game and has urged each to invite a family member or friend to share the evening of entertainment. Under the circumstances, the FDIC employee may accept the invitation to attend the game. Even though the tickets were initially purchased

by the member bank, they were given without reservation to the accountant to use as she wished, and her invitation to the employee was motivated by their personal friendship.

*Example 2 to paragraph (b):* Three partners in a law firm that handles corporate mergers have invited an employee of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to join them in a golf tournament at a private club at the firm's expense. The entry fee is \$500 per foursome. The employee cannot accept the gift of one-quarter of the entry fee even though he and the three partners have developed an amicable relationship as a result of the firm's dealings with the FTC. As evidenced in part by the fact that the fees are to be paid by the firm, it is not a personal friendship but a business relationship that is the motivation behind the partners' gift.

*Example 3 to paragraph (b):* A Peace Corps employee enjoys using a social media site on the internet in his personal capacity outside of work. He has used the site to keep in touch with friends, neighbors, coworkers, professional contacts, and other individuals he has met over the years through both work and personal activities. One of these individuals works for a contractor that provides language services to the Peace Corps. The employee was acting in his official capacity when he met the individual at a meeting to discuss a matter related to the contract between their respective employers. Thereafter, the two communicated occasionally regarding contract matters. They later also granted one another access to join their social media networks through their respective social media accounts. However, they did not communicate further in their personal capacities, carry on extensive personal interactions, or meet socially outside of work. One day, the individual, whose employer continues to serve as a Peace Corps contractor, contacts the employee to offer him a pair of concert tickets worth \$30 apiece. Although the employee and the individual are connected through social media, the circumstances do not demonstrate that the gift was clearly motivated by a personal relationship, rather than the position of the employee, and therefore the employee may not accept the gift pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section.

(c) *Discounts and similar benefits.* In addition to those opportunities and benefits excluded from the definition of a gift by § 2635.203(b)(4), an employee may accept:

(1) A reduction or waiver of the fees for membership or other fees for participation in organization activities offered to all Government employees or all uniformed military personnel by professional organizations if the only

restrictions on membership relate to professional qualifications; and

(2) Opportunities and benefits, including favorable rates, commercial discounts, and free attendance or participation not precluded by paragraph (c)(3) of this section:

(i) Offered to members of a group or class in which membership is unrelated to Government employment;

(ii) Offered to members of an organization, such as an employees' association or agency credit union, in which membership is related to Government employment if the same offer is broadly available to large segments of the public through organizations of similar size; or

(iii) Offered by a person who is not a prohibited source to any group or class that is not defined in a manner that specifically discriminates among Government employees on the basis of type of official responsibility or on a basis that favors those of higher rank or rate of pay.

*Example 1 to paragraph (c)(2):* A computer company offers a discount on the purchase of computer equipment to all public and private sector computer procurement officials who work in organizations with over 300 employees. An employee who works as the computer procurement official for a Government agency could not accept the discount to purchase the personal computer under the exception in paragraph (c)(2)(i) of this section. Her membership in the group to which the discount is offered is related to Government employment because her membership is based on her status as a procurement official with the Government.

*Example 2 to paragraph (c)(2):* An employee of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) may accept a discount of \$50 on a microwave oven offered by the manufacturer to all members of the CPSC employees' association. Even though the CPSC is currently conducting studies on the safety of microwave ovens, the \$50 discount is a standard offer that the manufacturer has made broadly available through a number of employee associations and similar organizations to large segments of the public.

*Example 3 to paragraph (c)(2):* An Assistant Secretary may not accept a local country club's offer of membership to all members of Department Secretariats which includes a waiver of its \$5,000 membership initiation fee. Even though the country club is not a prohibited source, the offer discriminates in favor of higher ranking officials.

(3) An employee may not accept for personal use any benefit to which the Government is entitled as the result of an expenditure of Government funds, unless authorized by statute or regulation (e.g., 5 U.S.C. 5702, note, regarding frequent flyer miles).

*Example 1 to paragraph (c)(3):* The administrative officer for a field office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has signed an order to purchase 50 boxes of photocopy paper from a supplier whose literature advertises that it will give a free briefcase to anyone who purchases 50 or more boxes. Because the paper was purchased with ICE funds, the administrative officer cannot keep the briefcase which, if claimed and received, is Government property.

(d) *Awards and honorary degrees*—(1) *Awards.* An employee may accept a *bona fide* award for meritorious public service or achievement and any item incident to the award, provided that:

(i) The award and any item incident to the award are not from a person who has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or non-performance of the employee's official duties, or from an association or other organization if a majority of its members have such interests; and

(ii) If the award or any item incident to the award is in the form of cash or an investment interest, or if the aggregate value of the award and any item incident to the award, other than free attendance to the event provided to the employee and to members of the employee's family by the sponsor of the event, exceeds \$200, the agency ethics official has made a written determination that the award is made as part of an established program of recognition.

*Example 1 to paragraph (d)(1):* Based on a written determination by an agency ethics official that the prize meets the criteria set forth in paragraph (d)(2) of this section, an employee of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) may accept the Nobel Prize for Medicine, including the cash award which accompanies the prize, even though the prize was conferred on the basis of laboratory work performed at NIH.

*Example 2 to paragraph (d)(1):* A defense contractor, ABC Systems, has an annual award program for the outstanding public employee of the year. The award includes a cash payment of \$1,000. The award program is wholly funded to ensure its continuation on a regular basis for the next twenty years and

selection of award recipients is made pursuant to written standards. An employee of the Department of the Air Force, who has duties that include overseeing contract performance by ABC Systems, is selected to receive the award. The employee may not accept the cash award because ABC Systems has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's official duties.

*Example 3 to paragraph (d)(1):* An ambassador selected by a nonprofit organization as a recipient of its annual award for distinguished service in the interest of world peace may, together with his spouse and children, attend the awards ceremony dinner and accept a crystal bowl worth \$200 presented during the ceremony. However, where the organization has also offered airline tickets for the ambassador and his family to travel to the city where the awards ceremony is to be held, the aggregate value of the tickets and the crystal bowl exceeds \$200, and he may accept only upon a written determination by the agency ethics official that the award is made as part of an established program of recognition.

(2) *Established program of recognition.* An award and an item incident to the award are made pursuant to an established program of recognition if:

(i) Awards have been made on a regular basis or, if the program is new, there is a reasonable basis for concluding that awards will be made on a regular basis based on funding or funding commitments; and

(ii) Selection of award recipients is made pursuant to written standards.

(3) *Honorary degrees.* An employee may accept an honorary degree from an institution of higher education, as defined at 20 U.S.C. 1001, or from a similar foreign institution of higher education, based on a written determination by an agency ethics official that the timing of the award of the degree would not cause a reasonable person to question the employee's impartiality in a matter affecting the institution.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (d)(3): When the honorary degree is offered by a foreign institution of higher education, the agency may need to make a separate determination as to whether the institution of higher education is a foreign government for purposes of the Emoluments Clause of the U.S. Constitution (U.S. Const., art. I, sec. 9, cl. 8), which forbids employees from accepting emoluments, presents, offices, or titles from foreign governments, without the consent of Congress. The Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act, 5

U.S.C. 7342, however, may permit the acceptance of honorary degrees in some circumstances.

*Example 1 to paragraph (d)(3):* A well-known university located in the United States wishes to give an honorary degree to the Secretary of Labor. The Secretary may accept the honorary degree only if an agency ethics official determines in writing that the timing of the award of the degree would not cause a reasonable person to question the Secretary's impartiality in a matter affecting the university.

(4) *Presentation events.* An employee who may accept an award or honorary degree pursuant to paragraph (d)(1) or (3) of this section may also accept free attendance to the event provided to the employee and to members of the employee's family by the sponsor of an event. In addition, the employee may also accept unsolicited offers of travel to and from the event provided to the employee and to members of the employee's family by the sponsor of the event. Travel expenses accepted under this paragraph (d)(4) must be added to the value of the award for purposes of determining whether the aggregate value of the award exceeds \$200.

(e) *Gifts based on outside business or employment relationships.* An employee may accept meals, lodgings, transportation and other benefits:

(1) Resulting from the business or employment activities of an employee's spouse when it is clear that such benefits have not been offered or enhanced because of the employee's official position;

*Example 1 to paragraph (e)(1):* A Department of Agriculture employee whose spouse is a computer programmer employed by a Department of Agriculture contractor may attend the company's annual retreat for all of its employees and their families held at a resort facility. However, under §2635.502, the employee may be disqualified from performing official duties affecting her spouse's employer.

*Example 2 to paragraph (e)(1):* Where the spouses of other clerical personnel have not been invited, an employee of the Defense Contract Audit Agency whose spouse is a clerical worker at a defense contractor may not attend the contractor's annual retreat in Hawaii for corporate officers and members of the board of directors, even though his spouse received a special invitation for herself and the employee.

(2) Resulting from the employee's outside business or employment activities when it is clear that such benefits are based on the outside business or employment activities and have not been offered or enhanced because of the employee's official status;

*Example 1 to paragraph (e)(2):* The members of an Army Corps of Engineers environmental advisory committee that meets six times per year are special Government employees. A member who has a consulting business may accept an invitation to a \$50 dinner from her corporate client, an Army construction contractor, unless, for example, the invitation was extended in order to discuss the activities of the advisory committee.

(3) Customarily provided by a prospective employer in connection with *bona fide* employment discussions. If the prospective employer has interests that could be affected by performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties, acceptance is permitted only if the employee first has complied with the disqualification requirements of subpart F of this part applicable when seeking employment; or

*Example 1 to paragraph (e)(3):* An employee of the Federal Communications Commission with responsibility for drafting regulations affecting all cable television companies wishes to apply for a job opening with a cable television holding company. Once she has properly disqualified herself from further work on the regulations as required by subpart F of this part, she may enter into employment discussions with the company and may accept the company's offer to pay for her airfare, hotel, and meals in connection with an interview trip.

(4) Provided by a former employer to attend a reception or similar event when other former employees have been invited to attend, the invitation and benefits are based on the former employment relationship, and it is clear that such benefits have not been offered or enhanced because of the employee's official position.

*Example 1 to paragraph (e)(4):* An employee of the Department of the Army is invited by her former employer, an Army contractor, to attend its annual holiday dinner party. The former employer traditionally invites both its current and former employees to the holiday dinner regardless of their current employment activities. Under these circumstances, the employee may attend the

dinner because the dinner invitation is a result of the employee's former outside employment activities, other former employees have been asked to attend, and the gift is not offered because of the employee's official position.

(5) For purposes of paragraphs (e)(1) through (4) of this section, "employment" means any form of non-Federal employment or business relationship involving the provision of personal services.

(f) *Gifts in connection with political activities permitted by the Hatch Act Reform Amendments.* An employee who, in accordance with the Hatch Act Reform Amendments of 1993, at 5 U.S.C. 7323, may take an active part in political management or in political campaigns, may accept meals, lodgings, transportation, and other benefits, including free attendance at events, for the employee and an accompanying spouse or other guests, when provided, in connection with such active participation, by a political organization described in 26 U.S.C. 527(e). Any other employee, such as a security officer, whose official duties require him or her to accompany an employee to a political event, may accept meals, free attendance, and entertainment provided at the event by such an organization.

*Example 1 to paragraph (f):* The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services may accept an airline ticket and hotel accommodations furnished by the campaign committee of a candidate for the United States Senate in order to give a speech in support of the candidate.

(g) *Gifts of free attendance at widely attended gatherings—(1) Authorization.* When authorized in writing by the agency designee pursuant to paragraph (g)(3) of this section, an employee may accept an unsolicited gift of free attendance at all or appropriate parts of a widely attended gathering. For an employee who is subject to a leave system, attendance at the event will be on the employee's own time or, if authorized by the employee's agency, on excused absence pursuant to applicable guidelines for granting such absence, or otherwise without charge to the employee's leave account.

(2) *Widely attended gatherings.* A gathering is widely attended if it is expected that a large number of persons

will attend, that persons with a diversity of views or interests will be present, for example, if it is open to members from throughout the interested industry or profession or if those in attendance represent a range of persons interested in a given matter, and that there will be an opportunity to exchange ideas and views among invited persons.

(3) *Written authorization by the agency designee.* The agency designee may authorize an employee or employees to accept a gift of free attendance at all or appropriate parts of a widely attended gathering only if the agency designee issues a written determination after finding that:

(i) The event is a widely attended gathering, as set forth in paragraph (g)(2) of this section;

(ii) The employee's attendance at the event is in the agency's interest because it will further agency programs or operations;

(iii) The agency's interest in the employee's attendance outweighs the concern that the employee may be, or may appear to be, improperly influenced in the performance of official duties; and

(iv) If a person other than the sponsor of the event invites or designates the employee as the recipient of the gift of free attendance and bears the cost of that gift, the event is expected to be attended by more than 100 persons and the value of the gift of free attendance does not exceed \$415.

(4) *Determination of agency interest.* In determining whether the agency's interest in the employee's attendance outweighs the concern that the employee may be, or may appear to be, improperly influenced in the performance of official duties, the agency designee may consider relevant factors including:

(i) The importance of the event to the agency;

(ii) The nature and sensitivity of any pending matter affecting the interests of the person who extended the invitation and the significance of the employee's role in any such matter;

(iii) The purpose of the event;

(iv) The identity of other expected participants;

(v) Whether acceptance would reasonably create the appearance that the

donor is receiving preferential treatment;

(vi) Whether the Government is also providing persons with views or interests that differ from those of the donor with access to the Government; and

(vii) The market value of the gift of free attendance.

(5) *Cost provided by person other than the sponsor of the event.* The cost of the employee's attendance will be considered to be provided by a person other than the sponsor of the event where such person designates the employee to be invited and bears the cost of the employee's attendance through a contribution or other payment intended to facilitate the employee's attendance. Payment of dues or a similar assessment to a sponsoring organization does not constitute a payment intended to facilitate a particular employee's attendance.

(6) *Accompanying spouse or other guest.* When others in attendance will generally be accompanied by a spouse or other guest, and where the invitation is from the same person who has invited the employee, the agency designee may authorize an employee to accept an unsolicited invitation of free attendance to an accompanying spouse or one other accompanying guest to participate in all or a portion of the event at which the employee's free attendance is permitted under paragraph (g)(1) this section. The authorization required by this paragraph (g)(6) must be provided in writing.

*Example 1 to paragraph (g):* An aerospace industry association that is a prohibited source sponsors an industry-wide, two-day seminar for which it charges a fee of \$800 and anticipates attendance of approximately 400. An Air Force contractor pays \$4,000 to the association so that the association can extend free invitations to five Air Force officials designated by the contractor. The Air Force officials may not accept the gifts of free attendance because (a) the contractor, rather than the association, provided the cost of their attendance; (b) the contractor designated the specific employees to receive the gift of free attendance; and (c) the value of the gift exceeds \$415 per employee.

*Example 2 to paragraph (g):* An aerospace industry association that is a prohibited source sponsors an industry-wide, two-day seminar for which it charges a fee of \$25 and anticipates attendance of approximately 50.



An Air Force contractor pays \$125 to the association so that the association can extend free invitations to five Air Force officials designated by the contractor. The Air Force officials may not accept the gifts of free attendance because (a) the contractor, rather than the association, provided the cost of their attendance; (b) the contractor designated the specific employees to receive the gift of free attendance; and (c) the event was not expected to be attended by more than 100 persons.

*Example 3 to paragraph (g):* An aerospace industry association that is a prohibited source sponsors an industry-wide, two-day seminar for which it charges a fee of \$800 and anticipates attendance of approximately 400. An Air Force contractor pays \$4,000 in order that the association might invite any five Federal employees. An Air Force official to whom the sponsoring association, rather than the contractor, extended one of the five invitations could attend if the employee's participation were determined to be in the interest of the agency and he received a written authorization.

*Example 4 to paragraph (g):* An employee of the Department of Transportation is invited by a news organization to an annual press dinner sponsored by an association of press organizations. Tickets for the event cost \$415 per person and attendance is limited to 400 representatives of press organizations and their guests. If the employee's attendance is determined to be in the interest of the agency and she receives a written authorization from the agency designee, she may accept the invitation from the news organization because more than 100 persons will attend and the cost of the ticket does not exceed \$415. However, if the invitation were extended to the employee and an accompanying guest, the employee's guest could not be authorized to attend for free because the market value of the gift of free attendance would exceed \$415.

*Example 5 to paragraph (g):* An employee of the Department of Energy (DOE) and his spouse have been invited by a major utility executive to a small dinner party. A few other officials of the utility and their spouses or other guests are also invited, as is a representative of a consumer group concerned with utility rates and her spouse. The DOE official believes the dinner party will provide him an opportunity to socialize with and get to know those in attendance. The employee may not accept the free invitation under this exception, even if his attendance could be determined to be in the interest of the agency. The small dinner party is not a widely attended gathering. Nor could the employee be authorized to accept even if the event were instead a corporate banquet to which forty company officials and their spouses or other guests were invited. In this second case, notwithstanding the larger

number of persons expected (as opposed to the small dinner party just noted) and despite the presence of the consumer group representative and her spouse who are not officials of the utility, those in attendance would still not represent a diversity of views or interests. Thus, the company banquet would not qualify as a widely attended gathering under those circumstances either.

*Example 6 to paragraph (g):* An Assistant U.S. Attorney is invited to attend a luncheon meeting of a local bar association to hear a distinguished judge lecture on cross-examining expert witnesses. Although members of the bar association are assessed a \$15 fee for the meeting, the Assistant U.S. Attorney may accept the bar association's offer to attend for free, even without a determination of agency interest. The gift can be accepted under the \$20 gift exception at paragraph (a) of this section.

*Example 7 to paragraph (g):* An employee of the Department of the Interior authorized to speak on the first day of a four-day conference on endangered species may accept the sponsor's waiver of the conference fee for the first day of the conference under § 2635.203(b)(8). If the conference is widely attended, the employee may be authorized to accept the sponsor's offer to waive the attendance fee for the remainder of the conference if the agency designee has made a written determination that attendance is in the agency's interest.

*Example 8 to paragraph (g):* A military officer has been approved to attend a widely attended gathering, pursuant to paragraph (g) of this section, that will be held in the same city as the officer's duty station. The defense contractor sponsoring the event has offered to transport the officer in a limousine to the event. The officer may not accept the offer of transportation because the definition of "free attendance" set forth in § 2635.203(g) excludes travel, and the market value of the transportation would exceed \$20.

(h) *Social invitations.* An employee may accept food, refreshments, and entertainment, not including travel or lodgings, for the employee and an accompanying spouse or other guests, at a social event attended by several persons if:

(1) The invitation is unsolicited and is from a person who is not a prohibited source;

(2) No fee is charged to any person in attendance; and

(3) If either the sponsor of the event or the person extending the invitation to the employee is not an individual, the agency designee has made a written determination after finding that the employee's attendance would not

cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the employee's integrity or impartiality, consistent with § 2635.201(b).

*Example 1 to paragraph (h):* An employee of the White House Press Office has been invited to a social dinner for current and former White House Press Officers at the home of an individual who is not a prohibited source. The employee may attend even if she is being invited because of her official position.

(i) *Meals, refreshments, and entertainment in foreign areas.* An employee assigned to duty in, or on official travel to, a foreign area as defined in 41 CFR 300–3.1 may accept unsolicited food, refreshments, or entertainment in the course of a breakfast, luncheon, dinner, or other meeting or event provided:

(1) The market value in the foreign area of the food, refreshments or entertainment provided at the meeting or event, as converted to U.S. dollars, does not exceed the per diem rate for the foreign area specified in the U.S. Department of State's Maximum Per Diem Allowances for Foreign Areas, Per Diem Supplement Section 925 to the Standardized Regulations (GC–FA), available on the Internet at [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov);

(2) There is participation in the meeting or event by non-U.S. citizens or by representatives of foreign governments or other foreign entities;

(3) Attendance at the meeting or event is part of the employee's official duties to obtain information, disseminate information, promote the export of U.S. goods and services, represent the United States, or otherwise further programs or operations of the agency or the U.S. mission in the foreign area; and

(4) The gift of meals, refreshments, or entertainment is from a person other than a foreign government as defined in 5 U.S.C. 7342(a)(2).

*Example 1 to paragraph (i):* A number of local business owners in a developing country are eager for a U.S. company to locate a manufacturing facility in their province. An official of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation may accompany the visiting vice president of the U.S. company to a dinner meeting hosted by the business owners at a province restaurant where the market value of the food and refreshments does not exceed the per diem rate for that country.

(j) *Gifts to the President or Vice President.* Because of considerations relating to the conduct of their offices, including those of protocol and etiquette, the President or the Vice President may accept any gift on his or her own behalf or on behalf of any family member, provided that such acceptance does not violate § 2635.205(a) or (b), 18 U.S.C. 201(b) or 201(c)(3), or the Constitution of the United States.

(k) *Gifts authorized by supplemental agency regulation.* An employee may accept any gift when acceptance of the gift is specifically authorized by a supplemental agency regulation issued with the concurrence of the Office of Government Ethics, pursuant to § 2635.105.

(l) *Gifts accepted under specific statutory authority.* The prohibitions on acceptance of gifts from outside sources contained in this subpart do not apply to any item which a statute specifically authorizes an employee to accept. Gifts which may be accepted by an employee under the authority of specific statutes include, but are not limited to:

(1) Free attendance, course or meeting materials, transportation, lodgings, food and refreshments or reimbursements therefor incident to training or meetings when accepted by the employee under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 4111. The employee's acceptance must be approved by the agency in accordance with part 410 of this title; or

(2) Gifts from a foreign government or international or multinational organization, or its representative, when accepted by the employee under the authority of the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act, 5 U.S.C. 7342. As a condition of acceptance, an employee must comply with requirements imposed by the agency's regulations or procedures implementing that Act.

(m) *Gifts of informational materials.* (1) An employee may accept unsolicited gifts of informational materials, provided that:

(i) The aggregate market value of all informational materials received from any one person does not exceed \$100 in a calendar year; or

(ii) If the aggregate market value of all informational materials from the same person exceeds \$100 in a calendar

year, an agency designee has made a written determination after finding that acceptance by the employee would not be inconsistent with the standard set forth in § 2635.201(b).

(2) *Informational materials* are writings, recordings, documents, records, or other items that:

(i) Are educational or instructive in nature;

(ii) Are not primarily created for entertainment, display, or decoration; and

(iii) Contain information that relates in whole or in part to the following categories:

(A) The employee's official duties or position, profession, or field of study;

(B) A general subject matter area, industry, or economic sector affected by or involved in the programs or operations of the agency; or

(C) Another topic of interest to the agency or its mission.

*Example 1 to paragraph (m):* An analyst at the Agricultural Research Service receives an edition of an agricultural research journal in the mail from a consortium of private farming operations concerned with soil toxicity. The journal edition has a market value of \$75. The analyst may accept the gift.

*Example 2 to paragraph (m):* An inspector at the Mine Safety and Health Administration receives a popular novel with a market value of \$25 from a mine operator. Because the novel is primarily for entertainment purposes, the inspector may not accept the gift.

*Example 3 to paragraph (m):* An employee at the Department of the Army is offered an encyclopedia on cyberwarfare from a prohibited source. The cost of the encyclopedia is far in excess of \$100. The agency designee determines that acceptance of the gift would be inconsistent with the standard set out in § 2635.201(b). The employee may not accept the gift under paragraph (m) of this section.

[81 FR 81648, Nov. 18, 2016, as amended at 82 FR 22736, May 18, 2017; 85 FR 36717, June 18, 2020]

#### § 2635.205 Limitations on use of exceptions.

Notwithstanding any exception provided in this subpart, other than § 2635.204(j), an employee may not:

(a) Accept a gift in return for being influenced in the performance of an official act;

(b) Use, or permit the use of, the employee's Government position, or any authority associated with public office,

to solicit or coerce the offering of a gift;

(c) Accept gifts from the same or different sources on a basis so frequent that a reasonable person would be led to believe the employee is using the employee's public office for private gain;

*Example 1 to paragraph (c):* A purchasing agent for a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center routinely deals with representatives of pharmaceutical manufacturers who provide information about new company products. Because of his crowded calendar, the purchasing agent has offered to meet with manufacturer representatives during his lunch hours Tuesdays through Thursdays, and the representatives routinely arrive at the employee's office bringing a sandwich and a soft drink for the employee. Even though the market value of each of the lunches is less than \$6 and the aggregate value from any one manufacturer does not exceed the \$50 aggregate limitation in § 2635.204(a) on gifts of \$20 or less, the practice of accepting even these modest gifts on a recurring basis is improper.

(d) Accept a gift in violation of any statute; relevant statutes applicable to all employees include, but are not limited to:

(1) 18 U.S.C. 201(b), which prohibits a public official from, directly or indirectly, corruptly demanding, seeking, receiving, accepting, or agreeing to receive or accept anything of value personally or for any other person or entity in return for being influenced in the performance of an official act; being influenced to commit or aid in committing, or to collude in, or allow, any fraud, or make opportunity for the commission of any fraud, on the United States; or for being induced to do or omit to do any action in violation of his or her official duty. As used in 18 U.S.C. 201(b), the term "public official" is broadly construed and includes regular and special Government employees as well as all other Government officials; and

(2) 18 U.S.C. 209, which prohibits an employee, other than a special Government employee, from receiving any salary or any contribution to or supplementation of salary from any source other than the United States as compensation for services as a Government employee. The statute contains several

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specific exceptions to this general prohibition, including an exception for contributions made from the treasury of a State, county, or municipality;

(e) Accept a gift in violation of any Executive Order; or

(f) Accept any gift when acceptance of the gift is specifically prohibited by a supplemental agency regulation issued with the concurrence of the Office of Government Ethics, pursuant to § 2635.105.

### § 2635.206 Proper disposition of prohibited gifts.

(a) Unless a gift is accepted by an agency acting under specific statutory authority, an employee who has received a gift that cannot be accepted under this subpart must dispose of the gift in accordance with the procedures set forth in this section. The employee must promptly complete the authorized disposition of the gift. The obligation to dispose of a gift that cannot be accepted under this subpart is independent of an agency's decision regarding corrective or disciplinary action under § 2635.106.

(1) *Gifts of tangible items.* The employee must promptly return any tangible item to the donor or pay the donor its market value; or, in the case of a tangible item with a market value of \$100 or less, the employee may destroy the item. An employee who cannot ascertain the actual market value of an item may estimate its market value by reference to the retail cost of similar items of like quality.

*Example 1 to paragraph (a)(1):* A Department of Commerce employee received a \$25 T-shirt from a prohibited source after providing training at a conference. Because the gift would not be permissible under an exception to this subpart, the employee must either return or destroy the T-shirt or promptly reimburse the donor \$25. Destruction may be carried out by physical destruction or by permanently discarding the T-shirt by placing it in the trash.

*Example 2 to paragraph (a)(1):* To avoid public embarrassment to the seminar sponsor, an employee of the National Park Service did not decline a barometer worth \$200 given at the conclusion of his speech on Federal lands policy. To comply with this section, the employee must either promptly return the barometer or pay the donor the market value of the gift. Alternatively, the National Park Service may choose to accept the gift if

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permitted under specific statutory gift acceptance authority. The employee may not destroy this gift, as the market value is in excess of \$100.

(2) *Gifts of perishable items.* When it is not practical to return a tangible item in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this section because the item is perishable, the employee may, at the discretion of the employee's supervisor or the agency designee, give the item to an appropriate charity, share the item within the recipient's office, or destroy the item.

*Example 1 to paragraph (a)(2):* With approval by the recipient's supervisor, a floral arrangement sent by a disability claimant to a helpful employee of the Social Security Administration may be placed in the office's reception area.

(3) *Gifts of intangibles.* The employee must promptly reimburse the donor the market value for any entertainment, favor, service, benefit or other intangible. Subsequent reciprocation by the employee does not constitute reimbursement.

*Example 1 to paragraph (a)(3):* A Department of Defense employee wishes to attend a charitable event to which he has been offered a \$300 ticket by a prohibited source. Although his attendance is not in the interest of the agency under § 2635.204(g), he may attend if he reimburses the donor the \$300 face value of the ticket.

(4) *Gifts from foreign governments or international organizations.* The employee must dispose of gifts from foreign governments or international organizations in accordance with 41 CFR part 102–42.

(b) An agency may authorize disposition or return of gifts at Government expense. Employees may use penalty mail to forward reimbursements required or permitted by this section.

(c) An employee who, on his or her own initiative, promptly complies with the requirements of this section will not be deemed to have improperly accepted an unsolicited gift. An employee who promptly consults his or her agency ethics official to determine whether acceptance of an unsolicited gift is proper and who, upon the advice of the

ethics official, returns the gift or otherwise disposes of the gift in accordance with this section, will be considered to have complied with the requirements of this section on the employee's own initiative.

(d) Employees are encouraged to record any actions they have taken to properly dispose of gifts that cannot be accepted under this subpart, such as by sending an electronic mail message to the appropriate agency ethics official or the employee's supervisor.

### Subpart C—Gifts Between Employees

#### § 2635.301 Overview.

This subpart contains standards that prohibit an employee from giving, donating to, or soliciting contributions for, a gift to an official superior and from accepting a gift from an employee receiving less pay than himself, unless the item is excluded from the definition of a gift or falls within one of the exceptions set forth in this subpart.

#### § 2635.302 General standards.

(a) *Gifts to superiors.* Except as provided in this subpart, an employee may not:

(1) Directly or indirectly, give a gift to or make a donation toward a gift for an official superior; or

(2) Solicit a contribution from another employee for a gift to either his own or the other employee's official superior.

(b) *Gifts from employees receiving less pay.* Except as provided in this subpart, an employee may not, directly or indirectly, accept a gift from an employee receiving less pay than himself unless:

(1) The two employees are not in a subordinate-official superior relationship; and

(2) There is a personal relationship between the two employees that would justify the gift.

(c) *Limitation on use of exceptions.* Notwithstanding any exception provided in this subpart, an official superior shall not coerce the offering of a gift from a subordinate.

#### § 2635.303 Definitions.

For purposes of this subpart, the following definitions shall apply:

(a) *Gift* has the meaning set forth in § 2635.203(b). For purposes of that definition an employee will be deemed to have paid market value for any benefit received as a result of his participation in any carpool or other such mutual arrangement involving another employee or other employees if he bears his fair proportion of the expense or effort involved.

(b) *Indirectly*, for purposes of § 2635.302(b), has the meaning set forth in § 2635.203(f). For purposes of § 2635.302(a), it includes a gift:

(1) Given with the employee's knowledge and acquiescence by his parent, sibling, spouse, child, or dependent relative; or

(2) Given by a person other than the employee under circumstances where the employee has promised or agreed to reimburse that person or to give that person something of value in exchange for giving the gift.

(c) Subject to paragraph (a) of this section, market value has the meaning set forth in § 2635.203(c).

(d) *Official superior* means any other employee, other than the President and the Vice President, including but not limited to an immediate supervisor, whose official responsibilities include directing or evaluating the performance of the employee's official duties or those of any other official superior of the employee. For purposes of this subpart, an employee is considered to be the subordinate of any of his official superiors.

(e) *Solicit* means to request contributions by personal communication or by general announcement.

(f) *Voluntary contribution* means a contribution given freely, without pressure or coercion. A contribution is not voluntary unless it is made in an amount determined by the contributing employee, except that where an amount for a gift is included in the cost for a luncheon, reception or similar event, an employee who freely chooses to pay a proportionate share of the total cost in order to attend will be deemed to have made a voluntary contribution. Except in the case of contributions for a gift included in the cost of a luncheon, reception or similar event, a statement that an employee may choose to contribute less or not at

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all shall accompany any recommendation of an amount to be contributed for a gift to an official superior.

*Example 1:* A supervisory employee of the Agency for International Development has just been reassigned from Washington, DC to Kabul, Afghanistan. As a farewell party, 12 of her subordinates have decided to take her out to lunch at the Khyber Repast. It is understood that each will pay for his own meal and that the cost of the supervisor's lunch will be divided equally among the twelve. Even though the amount they will contribute is not determined until the supervisor orders lunch, the contribution made by those who choose to participate in the farewell lunch is voluntary.

### § 2635.304 Exceptions.

The prohibitions set forth in § 2635.302(a) and (b) do not apply to a gift given or accepted under the circumstances described in paragraph (a) or (b) of this section. A contribution or the solicitation of a contribution that would otherwise violate the prohibitions set forth in § 2635.302(a) and (b) may only be made in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

(a) *General exceptions.* On an occasional basis, including any occasion on which gifts are traditionally given or exchanged, the following may be given to an official superior or accepted from a subordinate or other employee receiving less pay:

(1) Items, other than cash, with an aggregate market value of \$10 or less per occasion;

(2) Items such as food and refreshments to be shared in the office among several employees;

(3) Personal hospitality provided at a residence which is of a type and value customarily provided by the employee to personal friends;

(4) Items given in connection with the receipt of personal hospitality if of a type and value customarily given on such occasions; and

(5) Leave transferred under subpart I of part 630 of this title to an employee who is not an immediate supervisor, unless obtained in violation of § 630.912 of this title.

*Example 1:* Upon returning to work following a vacation at the beach, a claims examiner with the Department of Veterans Affairs may give his supervisor, and his super-

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visor may accept, a bag of saltwater taffy purchased on the boardwalk for \$8.

*Example 2:* An employee of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation whose bank examination responsibilities require frequent travel may not bring her supervisor, and her supervisor may not accept, souvenir coffee mugs from each of the cities she visits in the course of performing her duties, even though each of the mugs costs less than \$5. Gifts given on this basis are not occasional.

*Example 3:* The Secretary of Labor has invited the agency's General Counsel to a dinner party at his home. The General Counsel may bring a \$15 bottle of wine to the dinner party and the Secretary may accept this customary hostess gift from his subordinate, even though its cost is in excess of \$10.

*Example 4:* For Christmas, a secretary may give his supervisor, and the supervisor may accept, a poinsettia plant purchased for \$10 or less. The secretary may also invite his supervisor to a Christmas party in his home and the supervisor may attend.

(b) *Special, infrequent occasions.* A gift appropriate to the occasion may be given to an official superior or accepted from a subordinate or other employee receiving less pay:

(1) In recognition of infrequently occurring occasions of personal significance such as marriage, illness, or the birth or adoption of a child; or

(2) Upon occasions that terminate a subordinate-official superior relationship, such as retirement, resignation, or transfer.

*Example 1:* The administrative assistant to the personnel director of the Tennessee Valley Authority may send a \$30 floral arrangement to the personnel director who is in the hospital recovering from surgery. The personnel director may accept the gift.

*Example 2:* A chemist employed by the Food and Drug Administration has been invited to the wedding of the lab director who is his official superior. He may give the lab director and his bride, and they may accept, a place setting in the couple's selected china pattern purchased for \$70.

*Example 3:* Upon the occasion of the supervisor's retirement from Federal service, an employee of the Fish and Wildlife Service may give her supervisor a book of wildlife photographs which she purchased for \$19. The retiring supervisor may accept the book.

(c) *Voluntary contributions.* An employee may solicit voluntary contributions of nominal amounts from fellow employees for an appropriate gift to an official superior and an employee may make a voluntary contribution of a

nominal amount to an appropriate gift to an official superior:

(1) On a special, infrequent occasion as described in paragraph (b) of this section; or

(2) On an occasional basis, for items such as food and refreshments to be shared in the office among several employees.

An employee may accept such gifts to which a subordinate or other employee receiving less pay than himself has contributed.

*Example 1:* To mark the occasion of his retirement, members of the immediate staff of the Under Secretary of the Army would like to give him a party and provide him with a gift certificate. They may distribute an announcement of the party and include a nominal amount for a retirement gift in the fee for the party.

*Example 2:* The General Counsel of the National Endowment for the Arts may not collect contributions for a Christmas gift for the Chairman. Christmas occurs annually and is not an occasion of personal significance.

*Example 3:* Subordinates may not take up a collection for a gift to an official superior on the occasion of the superior's swearing in or promotion to a higher grade position within the supervisory chain of that organization. These are not events that mark the termination of the subordinate-official superior relationship, nor are they events of personal significance within the meaning of § 2635.304(b). However, subordinates may take up a collection and employees may contribute \$3 each to buy refreshments to be consumed by everyone in the immediate office to mark either such occasion.

*Example 4:* Subordinates may each contribute a nominal amount to a fund to give a gift to an official superior upon the occasion of that superior's transfer or promotion to a position outside the organization.

*Example 5:* An Assistant Secretary at the Department of the Interior is getting married. His secretary has decided that a microwave oven would be a nice gift from his staff and has informed each of the Assistant Secretary's subordinates that they should contribute \$5 for the gift. Her method of collection is improper. Although she may recommend a \$5 contribution, the recommendation must be coupled with a statement that the employee whose contribution is solicited is free to contribute less or nothing at all.

## Subpart D—Conflicting Financial Interests

### § 2635.401 Overview.

This subpart contains two provisions relating to financial interests. One is a disqualification requirement and the other is a prohibition on acquiring or continuing to hold specific financial interests. An employee may acquire or hold any financial interest not prohibited by § 2635.403. Notwithstanding that his acquisition or holding of a particular interest is proper, an employee is prohibited in accordance with § 2635.402 of this subpart from participating in an official capacity in any particular matter in which, to his knowledge, he or any person whose interests are imputed to him has a financial interest, if the particular matter will have a direct and predictable effect on that interest. See also part 2640 of this chapter, for additional guidance amplifying § 2635.402.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 62 FR 48747, Sept. 17, 1997]

### § 2635.402 Disqualifying financial interests.

(a) *Statutory prohibition.* An employee is prohibited by criminal statute, 18 U.S.C. 208(a), from participating personally and substantially in an official capacity in any particular matter in which, to his knowledge, he or any person whose interests are imputed to him under this statute has a financial interest, if the particular matter will have a direct and predictable effect on that interest.

NOTE: Standards applicable when seeking non-Federal employment are contained in subpart F of this part and, if followed, will ensure that an employee does not violate 18 U.S.C. 208(a) or this section when he is negotiating for or has an arrangement concerning future employment. In all other cases where the employee's participation would violate 18 U.S.C. 208(a), an employee shall disqualify himself from participation in the matter in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section or obtain a waiver or determine that an exemption applies, as described in paragraph (d) of this section.

(b) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) *Direct and predictable effect.* (i) A particular matter will have a direct effect on a financial interest if there is a close causal link between any decision or action to be taken in the matter and any expected effect of the matter on the financial interest. An effect may be direct even though it does not occur immediately. A particular matter will not have a direct effect on a financial interest, however, if the chain of causation is attenuated or is contingent upon the occurrence of events that are speculative or that are independent of, and unrelated to, the matter. A particular matter that has an effect on a financial interest only as a consequence of its effects on the general economy does not have a direct effect within the meaning of this subpart.

(ii) A particular matter will have a predictable effect if there is a real, as opposed to a speculative possibility that the matter will affect the financial interest. It is not necessary, however, that the magnitude of the gain or loss be known, and the dollar amount of the gain or loss is immaterial.

NOTE: If a particular matter involves a specific party or parties, generally the matter will at most only have a direct and predictable effect, for purposes of this subpart, on a financial interest of the employee in or with a party, such as the employee's interest by virtue of owning stock. There may, however, be some situations in which, under the above standards, a particular matter will have a direct and predictable effect on an employee's financial interests in or with a nonparty. For example, if a party is a corporation, a particular matter may also have a direct and predictable effect on an employee's financial interests through ownership of stock in an affiliate, parent, or subsidiary of that party. Similarly, the disposition of a protest against the award of a contract to a particular company may also have a direct and predictable effect on an employee's financial interest in another company listed as a subcontractor in the proposal of one of the competing offerors.

*Example 1:* An employee of the National Library of Medicine at the National Institutes of Health has just been asked to serve on the technical evaluation panel to review proposals for a new library computer search system. DEF Computer Corporation, a closely held company in which he and his wife own a majority of the stock, has submitted a proposal. Because award of the systems contract to DEF or to any other offeror will have a direct and predictable effect on both his and his wife's financial interests, the employee

cannot participate on the technical evaluation team unless his disqualification has been waived.

*Example 2:* Upon assignment to the technical evaluation panel, the employee in the preceding example finds that DEF Computer Corporation has not submitted a proposal. Rather, LMN Corp., with which DEF competes for private sector business, is one of the six offerors. The employee is not disqualified from serving on the technical evaluation panel. Any effect on the employee's financial interests as a result of the agency's decision to award or not award the systems contract to LMN would be at most indirect and speculative.

(2) *Imputed interests.* For purposes of 18 U.S.C. 208(a) and this subpart, the financial interests of the following persons will serve to disqualify an employee to the same extent as if they were the employee's own interests:

- (i) The employee's spouse;
- (ii) The employee's minor child;
- (iii) The employee's general partner;
- (iv) An organization or entity which the employee serves as officer, director, trustee, general partner or employee; and
- (v) A person with whom the employee is negotiating for or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment. (Employees who are seeking other employment should refer to and comply with the standards in subpart F of this part).

*Example 1:* An employee of the Department of Education serves without compensation on the board of directors of Kinder World, Inc., a nonprofit corporation that engages in good works. Even though her personal financial interests will not be affected, the employee must disqualify herself from participating in the review of a grant application submitted by Kinder World. Award or denial of the grant will affect the financial interests of Kinder World and its financial interests are imputed to her as a member of its board of directors.

*Example 2:* The spouse of an employee of the Food and Drug Administration has obtained a position with a well established biomedical research company. The company has developed an artificial limb for which it is seeking FDA approval and the employee would ordinarily be asked to participate in the FDA's review and approval process. The spouse is a salaried employee of the company and has no direct ownership interest in the company. Nor does she have an indirect ownership interest, as would be the case, for example, if she were participating in a pension



plan that held stock in the company. Her position with the company is such that the granting or withholding of FDA approval will not have a direct and predictable effect on her salary or on her continued employment with the company. Since the FDA approval process will not affect his spouse's financial interests, the employee is not disqualified under § 2635.402 from participating in that process. Nevertheless, the financial interests of the spouse's employer may be disqualifying under the impartiality principle, as implemented at § 2635.502.

(3) *Particular matter.* The term particular matter encompasses only matters that involve deliberation, decision, or action that is focused upon the interests of specific persons, or a discrete and identifiable class of persons. Such a matter is covered by this subpart even if it does not involve formal parties and may include governmental action such as legislation or policy-making that is narrowly focused on the interests of such a discrete and identifiable class of persons. The term particular matter, however, does not extend to the consideration or adoption of broad policy options that are directed to the interests of a large and diverse group of persons. The particular matters covered by this subpart include a judicial or other proceeding, application, request for a ruling or other determination, contract, claim, controversy, charge, accusation or arrest.

*Example 1:* The Internal Revenue Service's amendment of its regulations to change the manner in which depreciation is calculated is not a particular matter, nor is the Social Security Administration's consideration of changes to its appeal procedures for disability claimants.

*Example 2:* Consideration by the Interstate Commerce Commission of regulations establishing safety standards for trucks on interstate highways involves a particular matter.

(4) *Personal and substantial.* To participate personally means to participate directly. It includes the direct and active supervision of the participation of a subordinate in the matter. To participate substantially means that the employee's involvement is of significance to the matter. Participation may be substantial even though it is not determinative of the outcome of a particular matter. However, it requires more than official responsibility,

knowledge, perfunctory involvement, or involvement on an administrative or peripheral issue. A finding of substantiality should be based not only on the effort devoted to a matter, but also on the importance of the effort. While a series of peripheral involvements may be insubstantial, the single act of approving or participating in a critical step may be substantial. Personal and substantial participation may occur when, for example, an employee participates through decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, investigation or the rendering of advice in a particular matter.

(c) *Disqualification.* Unless the employee is authorized to participate in the particular matter by virtue of a waiver or exemption described in paragraph (d) of this section or because the interest has been divested in accordance with paragraph (e) of this section, an employee shall disqualify himself from participating in a particular matter in which, to his knowledge, he or a person whose interests are imputed to him has a financial interest, if the particular matter will have a direct and predictable effect on that interest. Disqualification is accomplished by not participating in the particular matter.

(1) *Notification.* An employee who becomes aware of the need to disqualify himself from participation in a particular matter to which he has been assigned should notify the person responsible for his assignment. An employee who is responsible for his own assignment should take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that he does not participate in the matter from which he is disqualified. Appropriate oral or written notification of the employee's disqualification may be made to co-workers by the employee or a supervisor to ensure that the employee is not involved in a matter from which he is disqualified.

(2) *Documentation.* An employee need not file a written disqualification statement unless he is required by part 2634 of this chapter to file written evidence of compliance with an ethics agreement with the Office of Government Ethics or is asked by an agency ethics official or the person responsible for his assignment to file a written disqualification statement. However, an

employee may elect to create a record of his actions by providing written notice to a supervisor or other appropriate official.

*Example 1:* An Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior owns recreational property that borders on land which is being considered for annexation to a national park. Annexation would directly and predictably increase the value of her vacation property and, thus, she is disqualified from participating in any way in the Department's deliberations or decisions regarding the annexation. Because she is responsible for determining which matters she will work on, she may accomplish her disqualification merely by ensuring that she does not participate in the matter. Because of the level of her position, however, the Assistant Secretary might be wise to establish a record that she has acted properly by providing a written disqualification statement to an official superior and by providing written notification of the disqualification to subordinates to ensure that they do not raise or discuss with her any issues related to the annexation.

(d) *Waiver of or exemptions from disqualification.* An employee who would otherwise be disqualified by 18 U.S.C. 208(a) may be permitted to participate in a particular matter where the otherwise disqualifying financial interest is the subject of a regulatory exemption or individual waiver described in this paragraph, or results from certain Indian birthrights as described in 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(4).

(1) *Regulatory exemptions.* Under 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(2), regulatory exemptions of general applicability have been issued by the Office of Government Ethics, based on its determination that particular interests are too remote or too inconsequential to affect the integrity of the services of employees to whom those exemptions apply. See the regulations in subpart B of part 2640 of this chapter, which supersede any pre-existing agency regulatory exemptions.

(2) *Individual waivers.* An individual waiver enabling the employee to participate in one or more particular matters may be issued under 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(1) if, in advance of the employee's participation:

(i) The employee:

(A) Advises the Government official responsible for the employee's appointment (or other Government official to whom authority to issue such a waiver

for the employee has been delegated) about the nature and circumstances of the particular matter or matters; and

(B) Makes full disclosure to such official of the nature and extent of the disqualifying financial interest; and

(ii) Such official determines, in writing, that the employee's financial interest in the particular matter or matters is not so substantial as to be deemed likely to affect the integrity of the services which the Government may expect from such employee. See also subpart C of part 2640 of this chapter, for additional guidance.

(3) *Federal advisory committee member waivers.* An individual waiver may be issued under 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(3) to a special Government employee serving on, or under consideration for appointment to, an advisory committee within the meaning of the Federal Advisory Committee Act if the Government official responsible for the employee's appointment (or other Government official to whom authority to issue such a waiver for the employee has been delegated):

(i) Reviews the financial disclosure report filed by the special Government employee pursuant to the Ethics in Government Act of 1978; and

(ii) Certifies in writing that the need for the individual's services outweighs the potential for a conflict of interest created by the otherwise disqualifying financial interest. See also subpart C of part 2640 of this chapter, for additional guidance.

(4) *Consultation and notification regarding waivers.* When practicable, an official is required to consult formally or informally with the Office of Government Ethics prior to granting a waiver referred to in paragraph (d)(2) or (3) of this section. A copy of each such waiver is to be forwarded to the Director of the Office of Government Ethics.

(e) *Divestiture of a disqualifying financial interest.* Upon sale or other divestiture of the asset or other interest that causes his disqualification from participation in a particular matter, 18 U.S.C. 208(a) and paragraph (c) of this section will no longer prohibit the employee's participation in the matter.

(1) *Voluntary divestiture.* An employee who would otherwise be disqualified

from participation in a particular matter may voluntarily sell or otherwise divest himself of the interest that causes the disqualification.

(2) *Directed divestiture.* An employee may be required to sell or otherwise divest himself of the disqualifying financial interest if his continued holding of that interest is prohibited by statute or by agency supplemental regulation issued in accordance with § 2635.403(a), or if the agency determines in accordance with § 2635.403(b) that a substantial conflict exists between the financial interest and the employee's duties or accomplishment of the agency's mission.

(3) *Eligibility for special tax treatment.* An employee who is directed to divest an interest may be eligible to defer the tax consequences of divestiture under subpart J of part 2634 of this chapter. An employee who divests before obtaining a certificate of divestiture will not be eligible for this special tax treatment.

(f) *Official duties that give rise to potential conflicts.* Where an employee's official duties create a substantial likelihood that the employee may be assigned to a particular matter from which he is disqualified, the employee should advise his supervisor or other person responsible for his assignments of that potential so that conflicting assignments can be avoided, consistent with the agency's needs.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 62 FR 48747, Sept. 17, 1997]

#### **§ 2635.403 Prohibited financial interests.**

An employee shall not acquire or hold any financial interest that he is prohibited from acquiring or holding by statute, by agency regulation issued in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section or by reason of an agency determination of substantial conflict under paragraph (b) of this section.

NOTE: There is no statute of Government-wide applicability prohibiting employees from holding or acquiring any financial interest. Statutory restrictions, if any, are contained in agency statutes which, in some cases, may be implemented by agency regulations issued independent of this part.

(a) *Agency regulation prohibiting certain financial interests.* An agency may,

by supplemental agency regulation issued after February 3, 1993, prohibit or restrict the acquisition or holding of a financial interest or a class of financial interests by agency employees, or any category of agency employees, and the spouses and minor children of those employees, based on the agency's determination that the acquisition or holding of such financial interests would cause a reasonable person to question the impartiality and objectivity with which agency programs are administered. Where the agency restricts or prohibits the holding of certain financial interests by its employees' spouses or minor children, any such prohibition or restriction shall be based on a determination that there is a direct and appropriate nexus between the prohibition or restriction as applied to spouses and minor children and the efficiency of the service.

(b) *Agency determination of substantial conflict.* An agency may prohibit or restrict an individual employee from acquiring or holding a financial interest or a class of financial interests based upon the agency designee's determination that the holding of such interest or interests will:

(1) Require the employee's disqualification from matters so central or critical to the performance of his official duties that the employee's ability to perform the duties of his position would be materially impaired; or

(2) Adversely affect the efficient accomplishment of the agency's mission because another employee cannot be readily assigned to perform work from which the employee would be disqualified by reason of the financial interest.

*Example 1:* An Air Force employee who owns stock in a major aircraft engine manufacturer is being considered for promotion to a position that involves responsibility for development of a new fighter airplane. If the agency determined that engineering and other decisions about the Air Force's requirements for the fighter would directly and predictably affect his financial interests, the employee could not, by virtue of 18 U.S.C. 208(a), perform these significant duties of the position while retaining his stock in the company. The agency can require the employee to sell his stock as a condition of being selected for the position rather than allowing him to disqualify himself in particular matters.

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(c) *Definition of financial interest.* For purposes of this section:

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, the term financial interest is limited to financial interests that are owned by the employee or by the employee's spouse or minor children. However, the term is not limited to only those financial interests that would be disqualifying under 18 U.S.C. 208(a) and §2635.402. The term includes any current or contingent ownership, equity, or security interest in real or personal property or a business and may include an indebtedness or compensated employment relationship. It thus includes, for example, interests in the nature of stocks, bonds, partnership interests, fee and leasehold interests, mineral and other property rights, deeds of trust, and liens, and extends to any right to purchase or acquire any such interest, such as a stock option or commodity future. It does not include a future interest created by someone other than the employee, his spouse, or dependent child or any right as a beneficiary of an estate that has not been settled.

*Example 1:* A regulatory agency has concluded that ownership by its employees of stock in entities regulated by the agency would significantly diminish public confidence in the agency's performance of its regulatory functions and thereby interfere with the accomplishment of its mission. In its supplemental agency regulations, the agency may prohibit its employees from acquiring or continuing to hold stock in regulated entities.

*Example 2:* An agency that insures bank deposits may, by supplemental agency regulation, prohibit its employees who are bank examiners from obtaining loans from banks they examine. Examination of a member bank could have no effect on an employee's fixed obligation to repay a loan from that bank and, thus, would not affect an employee's financial interests so as to require disqualification under §2635.402. Nevertheless, a loan from a member bank is a discrete financial interest within the meaning of §2635.403(c) that may, when appropriate, be prohibited by supplemental agency regulation.

(2) The term financial interest includes service, with or without compensation, as an officer, director, trustee, general partner or employee of any person, including a nonprofit entity, whose financial interests are imputed

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to the employee under §2635.402(b)(2) (iii) or (iv).

*Example 1.* The Foundation for the Preservation of Wild Horses maintains herds of horses that graze on public and private lands. Because its costs are affected by Federal policies regarding grazing permits, the Foundation routinely comments on all proposed rules governing use of Federal grasslands issued by the Bureau of Land Management. BLM may require an employee to resign his uncompensated position as Vice President of the Foundation as a condition of his promotion to a policy-level position within the Bureau rather than allowing him to rely on disqualification in particular cases.

(d) *Reasonable period to divest or terminate.* Whenever an agency directs divestiture of a financial interest under paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, the employee shall be given a reasonable period of time, considering the nature of his particular duties and the nature and marketability of the interest, within which to comply with the agency's direction. Except in cases of unusual hardship, as determined by the agency, a reasonable period shall not exceed 90 days from the date divestiture is first directed. However, as long as the employee continues to hold the financial interest, he remains subject to any restrictions imposed by this subpart.

(e) *Eligibility for special tax treatment.* An employee required to sell or otherwise divest a financial interest may be eligible to defer the tax consequences of divestiture under subpart J of part 2634 of this chapter.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 59 FR 4780, Feb. 2, 1994; 60 FR 6391, Feb. 2, 1995; 60 FR 66858, Dec. 27, 1995; 61 FR 40951, Aug. 7, 1996; 62 FR 48748, Sept. 17, 1996]

### Subpart E—Impartiality in Performing Official Duties

#### § 2635.501 Overview.

(a) This subpart contains two provisions intended to ensure that an employee takes appropriate steps to avoid an appearance of loss of impartiality in the performance of his official duties. Under §2635.502, unless he receives prior authorization, an employee should not participate in a particular matter involving specific parties which

he knows is likely to affect the financial interests of a member of his household, or in which he knows a person with whom he has a covered relationship is or represents a party, if he determines that a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts would question his impartiality in the matter. An employee who is concerned that other circumstances would raise a question regarding his impartiality should use the process described in § 2635.502 to determine whether he should or should not participate in a particular matter.

(b) Under § 2635.503, an employee who has received an extraordinary severance or other payment from a former employer prior to entering Government service is subject, in the absence of a waiver, to a two-year period of disqualification from participation in particular matters in which that former employer is or represents a party.

NOTE: Questions regarding impartiality necessarily arise when an employee's official duties impact upon the employee's own financial interests or those of certain other persons, such as the employee's spouse or minor child. An employee is prohibited by criminal statute, 18 U.S.C. 208(a), from participating personally and substantially in an official capacity in any particular matter in which, to his knowledge, he, his spouse, general partner or minor child has a financial interest, if the particular matter will have a direct and predictable effect on that interest. The statutory prohibition also extends to an employee's participation in a particular matter in which, to his knowledge, an organization in which the employee is serving as officer, director, trustee, general partner or employee, or with whom he is negotiating or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment has a financial interest. Where the employee's participation in a particular matter would affect any one of these financial interests, the standards set forth in subparts D or F of this part apply and only a statutory waiver or exemption, as described in §§ 2635.402(d) and 2635.605(a), will enable the employee to participate in that matter. The authorization procedures in § 2635.502(d) may not be used to authorize an employee's participation in any such matter. Where the employee complies with all terms of the waiver, the granting of a statutory waiver will be deemed to constitute a determination that the interest of the Government in the employee's participation outweighs the concern that a reasonable person may question the integrity of agency programs and operations. Similarly, where the employee meets all pre-

requisites for the application of one of the exemptions set forth in subpart B of part 2640 of this chapter, that also constitutes a determination that the interest of the Government in the employee's participation outweighs the concern that a reasonable person may question the integrity of agency programs and operations.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 62 FR 48748, Sept. 17, 1997]

#### § 2635.502 Personal and business relationships.

(a) *Consideration of appearances by the employee.* Where an employee knows that a particular matter involving specific parties is likely to have a direct and predictable effect on the financial interest of a member of his household, or knows that a person with whom he has a covered relationship is or represents a party to such matter, and where the employee determines that the circumstances would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question his impartiality in the matter, the employee should not participate in the matter unless he has informed the agency designee of the appearance problem and received authorization from the agency designee in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section.

(1) In considering whether a relationship would cause a reasonable person to question his impartiality, an employee may seek the assistance of his supervisor, an agency ethics official or the agency designee.

(2) An employee who is concerned that circumstances other than those specifically described in this section would raise a question regarding his impartiality should use the process described in this section to determine whether he should or should not participate in a particular matter.

(b) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

(1) An employee has a *covered relationship* with:

(i) A person, other than a prospective employer described in § 2635.603(c), with whom the employee has or seeks a business, contractual or other financial relationship that involves other than a routine consumer transaction;

NOTE: An employee who is seeking employment within the meaning of § 2635.603 shall

comply with subpart F of this part rather than with this section.

(ii) A person who is a member of the employee's household, or who is a relative with whom the employee has a close personal relationship;

(iii) A person for whom the employee's spouse, parent or dependent child is, to the employee's knowledge, serving or seeking to serve as an officer, director, trustee, general partner, agent, attorney, consultant, contractor or employee;

(iv) Any person for whom the employee has, within the last year, served as officer, director, trustee, general partner, agent, attorney, consultant, contractor or employee; or

(v) An organization, other than a political party described in 26 U.S.C. 527(e), in which the employee is an active participant. Participation is active if, for example, it involves service as an official of the organization or in a capacity similar to that of a committee or subcommittee chairperson or spokesperson, or participation in directing the activities of the organization. In other cases, significant time devoted to promoting specific programs of the organization, including coordination of fundraising efforts, is an indication of active participation. Payment of dues or the donation or solicitation of financial support does not, in itself, constitute active participation.

NOTE: Nothing in this section shall be construed to suggest that an employee should not participate in a matter because of his political, religious or moral views.

(2) *Direct and predictable effect* has the meaning set forth in § 2635.402(b)(1).

(3) *Particular matter involving specific parties* has the meaning set forth in § 2637.102(a)(7) of this chapter.

*Example 1:* An employee of the General Services Administration has made an offer to purchase a restaurant owned by a local developer. The developer has submitted an offer in response to a GSA solicitation for lease of office space. Under the circumstances, she would be correct in concluding that a reasonable person would be likely to question her impartiality if she were to participate in evaluating that developer's or its competitor's lease proposal.

*Example 2:* An employee of the Department of Labor is providing technical assistance in

drafting occupational safety and health legislation that will affect all employers of five or more persons. His wife is employed as an administrative assistant by a large corporation that will incur additional costs if the proposed legislation is enacted. Because the legislation is not a particular matter involving specific parties, the employee may continue to work on the legislation and need not be concerned that his wife's employment with an affected corporation would raise a question concerning his impartiality.

*Example 3:* An employee of the Defense Logistics Agency who has responsibilities for testing avionics being produced by an Air Force contractor has just learned that his sister-in-law has accepted employment as an engineer with the contractor's parent corporation. Where the parent corporation is a conglomerate, the employee could reasonably conclude that, under the circumstances, a reasonable person would not be likely to question his impartiality if he were to continue to perform his test and evaluation responsibilities.

*Example 4:* An engineer has just resigned from her position as vice president of an electronics company in order to accept employment with the Federal Aviation Administration in a position involving procurement responsibilities. Although the employee did not receive an extraordinary payment in connection with her resignation and has severed all financial ties with the firm, under the circumstances she would be correct in concluding that her former service as an officer of the company would be likely to cause a reasonable person to question her impartiality if she were to participate in the administration of a DOT contract for which the firm is a first-tier subcontractor.

*Example 5:* An employee of the Internal Revenue Service is a member of a private organization whose purpose is to restore a Victorian-era railroad station and she chairs its annual fundraising drive. Under the circumstances, the employee would be correct in concluding that her active membership in the organization would be likely to cause a reasonable person to question her impartiality if she were to participate in an IRS determination regarding the tax-exempt status of the organization.

(c) *Determination by agency designee.* Where he has information concerning a potential appearance problem arising from the financial interest of a member of the employee's household in a particular matter involving specific parties, or from the role in such matter of a person with whom the employee has a covered relationship, the agency designee may make an independent determination as to whether a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant

facts would be likely to question the employee's impartiality in the matter. Ordinarily, the agency designee's determination will be initiated by information provided by the employee pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section. However, at any time, including after the employee has disqualified himself from participation in a matter pursuant to paragraph (e) of this section, the agency designee may make this determination on his own initiative or when requested by the employee's supervisor or any other person responsible for the employee's assignment.

(1) If the agency designee determines that the employee's impartiality is likely to be questioned, he shall then determine, in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section, whether the employee should be authorized to participate in the matter. Where the agency designee determines that the employee's participation should not be authorized, the employee will be disqualified from participation in the matter in accordance with paragraph (e) of this section.

(2) If the agency designee determines that the employee's impartiality is not likely to be questioned, he may advise the employee, including an employee who has reached a contrary conclusion under paragraph (a) of this section, that the employee's participation in the matter would be proper.

(d) *Authorization by agency designee.* Where an employee's participation in a particular matter involving specific parties would not violate 18 U.S.C. 208(a), but would raise a question in the mind of a reasonable person about his impartiality, the agency designee may authorize the employee to participate in the matter based on a determination, made in light of all relevant circumstances, that the interest of the Government in the employee's participation outweighs the concern that a reasonable person may question the integrity of the agency's programs and operations. Factors which may be taken into consideration include:

(1) The nature of the relationship involved;

(2) The effect that resolution of the matter would have upon the financial interests of the person involved in the relationship;

(3) The nature and importance of the employee's role in the matter, including the extent to which the employee is called upon to exercise discretion in the matter;

(4) The sensitivity of the matter;

(5) The difficulty of reassigning the matter to another employee; and

(6) Adjustments that may be made in the employee's duties that would reduce or eliminate the likelihood that a reasonable person would question the employee's impartiality.

Authorization by the agency designee shall be documented in writing at the agency designee's discretion or when requested by the employee. An employee who has been authorized to participate in a particular matter involving specific parties may not thereafter disqualify himself from participation in the matter on the basis of an appearance problem involving the same circumstances that have been considered by the agency designee.

*Example 1:* The Deputy Director of Personnel for the Department of the Treasury and an attorney with the Department's Office of General Counsel are general partners in a real estate partnership. The Deputy Director advises his supervisor, the Director of Personnel, of the relationship upon being assigned to a selection panel for a position for which his partner has applied. If selected, the partner would receive a substantial increase in salary. The agency designee cannot authorize the Deputy Director to participate on the panel under the authority of this section since the Deputy Director is prohibited by criminal statute, 18 U.S.C. 208(a), from participating in a particular matter affecting the financial interest of a person who is his general partner. See § 2635.402.

*Example 2:* A new employee of the Securities and Exchange Commission is assigned to an investigation of insider trading by the brokerage house where she had recently been employed. Because of the sensitivity of the investigation, the agency designee may be unable to conclude that the Government's interest in the employee's participation in the investigation outweighs the concern that a reasonable person may question the integrity of the investigation, even though the employee has severed all financial ties with the company. Based on consideration of all relevant circumstances, the agency designee might determine, however, that it is in the interest of the Government for the employee to pass on a routine filing by the particular brokerage house.

*Example 3:* An Internal Revenue Service employee involved in a long and complex tax

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audit is advised by her son that he has just accepted an entry-level management position with a corporation whose taxes are the subject of the audit. Because the audit is essentially complete and because the employee is the only one with an intimate knowledge of the case, the agency designee might determine, after considering all relevant circumstances, that it is in the Government's interest for the employee to complete the audit, which is subject to additional levels of review.

(e) *Disqualification.* Unless the employee is authorized to participate in the matter under paragraph (d) of this section, an employee shall not participate in a particular matter involving specific parties when he or the agency designee has concluded, in accordance with paragraph (a) or (c) of this section, that the financial interest of a member of the employee's household, or the role of a person with whom he has a covered relationship, is likely to raise a question in the mind of a reasonable person about his impartiality. Disqualification is accomplished by not participating in the matter.

(1) *Notification.* An employee who becomes aware of the need to disqualify himself from participation in a particular matter involving specific parties to which he has been assigned should notify the person responsible for his assignment. An employee who is responsible for his own assignment should take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that he does not participate in the matter from which he is disqualified. Appropriate oral or written notification of the employee's disqualification may be made to coworkers by the employee or a supervisor to ensure that the employee is not involved in a particular matter involving specific parties from which he is disqualified.

(2) *Documentation.* An employee need not file a written disqualification statement unless he is required by part 2634 of this chapter to file written evidence of compliance with an ethics agreement with the Office of Government Ethics or is specifically asked by an agency ethics official or the person responsible for his assignment to file a written disqualification statement. However, an employee may elect to create a record of his actions by pro-

viding written notice to a supervisor or other appropriate official.

(f) *Relevant considerations.* An employee's reputation for honesty and integrity is not a relevant consideration for purposes of any determination required by this section.

§ 2635.503 **Extraordinary payments from former employers.**

(a) *Disqualification requirement.* Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, an employee shall be disqualified for two years from participating in any particular matter in which a former employer is a party or represents a party if he received an extraordinary payment from that person prior to entering Government service. The two-year period of disqualification begins to run on the date that the extraordinary payment is received.

*Example 1:* Following his confirmation hearings and one month before his scheduled swearing in, a nominee to the position of Assistant Secretary of a department received an extraordinary payment from his employer. For one year and 11 months after his swearing in, the Assistant Secretary may not participate in any particular matter to which his former employer is a party.

*Example 2:* An employee received an extraordinary payment from her former employer, a coal mine operator, prior to entering on duty with the Department of the Interior. For two years thereafter, she may not participate in a determination regarding her former employer's obligation to reclaim a particular mining site, because her former employer is a party to the matter. However, she may help to draft reclamation legislation affecting all coal mining operations because this legislation does not involve any parties.

(b) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) *Extraordinary payment* means any item, including cash or an investment interest, with a value in excess of \$10,000, which is paid:

(i) On the basis of a determination made after it became known to the former employer that the individual was being considered for or had accepted a Government position; and

(ii) Other than pursuant to the former employer's established compensation, partnership, or benefits program. A compensation, partnership, or



benefits program will be deemed an established program if it is contained in bylaws, a contract or other written form, or if there is a history of similar payments made to others not entering into Federal service.

*Example 1:* The vice president of a small corporation is nominated to be an ambassador. In recognition of his service to the corporation, the board of directors votes to pay him \$50,000 upon his confirmation in addition to the regular severance payment provided for by the corporate bylaws. The regular severance payment is not an extraordinary payment. The gratuitous payment of \$50,000 is an extraordinary payment, since the corporation had not made similar payments to other departing officers.

(2) *Former employer* includes any person which the employee served as an officer, director, trustee, general partner, agent, attorney, consultant, contractor or employee.

(c) *Waiver of disqualification.* The disqualification requirement of this section may be waived based on a finding that the amount of the payment was not so substantial as to cause a reasonable person to question the employee's ability to act impartially in a matter in which the former employer is or represents a party. The waiver shall be in writing and may be given only by the head of the agency or, where the recipient of the payment is the head of the agency, by the President or his designee. Waiver authority may be delegated by agency heads to any person who has been delegated authority to issue individual waivers under 18 U.S.C. 208(b) for the employee who is the recipient of the extraordinary payment.

### Subpart F—Seeking Other Employment

SOURCE: 81 FR 48688, July 26, 2016, unless otherwise noted.

#### § 2635.601 Overview.

This subpart contains a recusal requirement that applies to employees when seeking non-Federal employment with persons whose financial interests would be directly and predictably affected by particular matters in which the employees participate personally and substantially. Specifically, it addresses the requirement of 18 U.S.C.

208(a) that an employee not participate personally and substantially in any particular matter that, to the employee's knowledge, will have a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of a person "with whom the employee is negotiating or has any arrangement concerning prospective employment." See § 2635.402 and § 2640.103 of this chapter. Beyond this statutory requirement, this subpart also addresses issues of lack of impartiality that require recusal from particular matters affecting the financial interests of a prospective employer when an employee's actions in seeking employment fall short of actual employment negotiations. In addition, this subpart contains the statutory notification requirements that apply to public filers when they negotiate for or have agreements of future employment or compensation. Specifically, it addresses the requirements of section 17 of the Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act of 2012 (STOCK Act), Public Law 112-105, 126 Stat. 303, 5 U.S.C. app. 101 note, that a public filer must submit a written statement identifying the entity involved in the negotiations or agreement within three business days after commencement of such negotiations or agreement and must submit a notification of recusal whenever there is a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest.

#### § 2635.602 Applicability and related considerations.

(a) *Applicability.* (1) To ensure that an employee does not violate 18 U.S.C. 208(a), section 17 of the STOCK Act, or the principles of ethical conduct contained in § 2635.101(b), an employee who is seeking employment or who has an arrangement concerning prospective employment must comply with the applicable recusal requirements of §§ 2635.604 and 2635.606 if particular matters in which the employee will be participating personally and substantially would, to the employee's knowledge, directly and predictably affect the financial interests of a prospective employer or of a person with whom the employee has an arrangement concerning prospective employment. Compliance with this subpart also will ensure that the employee does not violate

subpart D or E of this part. In addition, a public filer who negotiates for or has an agreement of future employment or compensation must comply with the requirements of § 2635.607.

(2) An employee who is seeking employment with a person whose financial interests are not, to the employee's knowledge, affected directly and predictably by particular matters in which the employee participates personally and substantially has no obligation to recuse under this subpart. In addition, nothing in this subpart requires an employee, other than a public filer, to notify anyone that the employee is seeking employment unless a notification is necessary to implement a recusal pursuant to § 2635.604(b). A public filer who negotiates for or has an agreement of future employment or compensation must comply with the notification requirements in § 2635.607. An employee may, however, be subject to other statutes that impose requirements on employment contacts or discussions, such as 41 U.S.C. 2103, which is applicable to agency officials involved in certain procurement matters. Employees are encouraged to consult with their ethics officials if they have any questions about how this subpart may apply to them. Ethics officials are not obligated by this subpart to inform supervisors that employees are seeking employment.

*Example 1 to paragraph (a):* Recently, an employee of the Department of Education submitted her resume to the University of Delaware for a job opening that she heard about through a friend. The employee has begun seeking employment. However, because she is not participating in any particular matters affecting the University of Delaware, she is not required to notify anyone that she has begun seeking employment.

*Example 2 to paragraph (a):* The employee in the preceding example has been approached about an employment opportunity at the University of Maryland. Because the University of Maryland has applied for grants on which she has been assigned to work in the past, she wants to make certain that she does not violate the ethics rules. The employee contacts her ethics official to discuss the matter. The employee informs the ethics official that she is not currently participating in any particular matters affecting the University of Maryland. As a result, the ethics official advises the employee that she will have no notification obligations under this subpart. However, the ethics official

cautions the employee that, if the employee is assigned to participate in a particular matter affecting the University of Maryland while she is seeking employment with the University, she must take whatever steps are necessary to avoid working on the grant, in accordance with § 2635.604.

(b) *Related restrictions—(1) Outside employment while a Federal employee.* An employee who is contemplating outside employment to be undertaken concurrently with the employee's Federal employment must abide by any limitations applicable to the employee's outside activities under subparts G and H of this part, including any requirements under supplemental agency regulations to obtain prior approval before engaging in outside employment or activities and any prohibitions under supplemental agency regulations related to outside employment or activities. The employee must also comply with any applicable recusal requirement of this subpart, as well as any applicable recusal requirements under subpart D or E of this part as a result of the employee's outside employment activities.

(2) *Post-employment restrictions.* An employee who is contemplating employment to be undertaken following the termination of the employee's Federal employment should consult an agency ethics official to obtain advice regarding any post-employment restrictions that may be applicable. The regulation implementing the Governmentwide post-employment statute, 18 U.S.C. 207, is contained in part 2641 of this chapter. Employees are cautioned that they may be subject to additional statutory prohibitions on post-employment acceptance of compensation from contractors, such as 41 U.S.C. 2104.

(3) *Interview trips and entertainment.* Where a prospective employer who is a prohibited source as defined in § 2635.203(d) offers to reimburse an employee's travel expenses, or provide other reasonable amenities incident to employment discussions, the employee may accept such amenities in accordance with § 2635.204(e)(3). Where a prospective employer is a foreign government or international organization, the employee must also ensure that he or she is in compliance with the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act, 5 U.S.C. 7342.

**§ 2635.603 Definitions.**

For purposes of this subpart:

(a) *Employment* means any form of non-Federal employment or business relationship involving the provision of personal services by the employee, whether to be undertaken at the same time as or subsequent to Federal employment. It includes but is not limited to personal services as an officer, director, employee, agent, attorney, consultant, contractor, general partner, or trustee.

*Example 1 to paragraph (a):* An employee of the Bureau of Indian Affairs who has announced her intention to retire is approached by tribal representatives concerning a possible consulting contract with the tribe. The contractual relationship the tribe wishes to negotiate is employment for purposes of this subpart.

*Example 2 to paragraph (a):* An employee of the Department of Health and Human Services is invited to a meeting with officials of a nonprofit corporation to discuss the possibility of his serving as a member of the corporation's board of directors. Service, with or without compensation, as a member of the board of directors constitutes employment for purposes of this subpart.

*Example 3 to paragraph (a):* An employee at the Department of Energy volunteers without compensation to serve dinners at a homeless shelter each month. The employee's uncompensated volunteer services in this case are not considered an employment or business relationship for purposes of this subpart.

(b) An employee is *seeking employment* once the employee has begun seeking employment within the meaning of paragraph (b)(1) of this section and until the employee is no longer seeking employment within the meaning of paragraph (b)(2) of this section.

(1) An employee has begun seeking employment if the employee has directly or indirectly:

(i) Engaged in negotiations for employment with any person. For these purposes, as for 18 U.S.C. 208(a) and section 17 of the STOCK Act, the term *negotiations* means discussion or communication with another person, or such person's agent or intermediary, mutually conducted with a view toward reaching an agreement regarding possible employment with that person. The term is not limited to discussions of specific terms and conditions of employment in a specific position;

(ii) Made an unsolicited communication to any person, or such person's agent or intermediary, regarding possible employment with that person. However, the employee has not begun seeking employment if that communication was for the sole purpose of requesting a job application; or

(iii) Made a response, other than rejection, to an unsolicited communication from any person, or such person's agent or intermediary, regarding possible employment with that person.

(2) An employee is no longer seeking employment when:

(i) The employee or the prospective employer rejects the possibility of employment and all discussions of possible employment have terminated; or

(ii) Two months have transpired after the employee's dispatch of an unsolicited resume or employment proposal, provided the employee has received no indication of interest in employment discussions from the prospective employer.

(3) For purposes of this definition, a response that defers discussions until the foreseeable future does not constitute rejection of an unsolicited employment overture, proposal, or resume nor rejection of a prospective employment possibility.

*Example 1 to paragraph (b):* A paralegal at the Department of the Army is in his third year of law school. During a discussion with his neighbor, who is a partner in a large law firm in the community, the neighbor invited him to visit her law firm. The paralegal took her up on the offer and met with an associate at the firm. The associate shared with the paralegal her experiences looking for a legal position, discussed what she does in her position at the law firm, and explained why she chose her current law firm. There was no discussion of possible employment with the firm. The Army paralegal is not seeking employment at this time. The purpose of the visit was informational only.

*Example 2 to paragraph (b):* An employee of the Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA) is auditing the overhead accounts of an Army contractor. While at the contractor's headquarters, the head of the contractor's accounting division tells the employee that his division is thinking about hiring another accountant and asks whether the employee might be interested in leaving DCAA. The DCAA employee asks what kind of work would be involved. The DCAA employee has begun seeking employment because he made

a response other than a rejection to the communication regarding possible employment with the Army contractor, although he has not yet begun negotiating for employment.

*Example 3 to paragraph (b):* The DCAA employee and the head of the contractor's accounting division in the previous example have a meeting to discuss the duties of the position that the accounting division would like to fill and the DCAA employee's qualifications for the position. They also discuss ways the DCAA employee could remedy one of the missing qualifications, and the employee indicates a willingness to obtain the proper qualifications. They do not discuss salary. The employee has engaged in negotiations regarding possible employment with the contractor.

*Example 4 to paragraph (b):* An employee at the Department of Energy (DOE) lists his job duties and employment experience in a profile on an online, business-oriented social networking service. The employee's profile is not targeted at a specific prospective employer. The employee has not begun seeking employment because the posting of a profile or resume is not an unsolicited communication with any prospective employer.

*Example 5 to paragraph (b):* The DOE employee in the previous example was recently notified that a representative of a university has viewed his profile. The employee still has not begun seeking employment with the university. Subsequently, a representative of the university contacts the employee through the online forum to inquire whether the employee would be interested in working for the university, to which he makes a response other than rejection. At this point, the employee has begun seeking employment with the university until he rejects the possibility of employment and all discussions of possible employment have terminated.

*Example 6 to paragraph (b):* The DOE employee in the previous two examples receives emails from various companies in response to his online profile. He does not respond. The employee has not begun seeking employment with the companies because he has not made a response.

*Example 7 to paragraph (b):* An employee of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is complimented on her work by an official of a State Health Department who asks her to call if she is ever interested in leaving Federal service. The employee explains to the State official that she is very happy with her job at CMS and is not interested in another job. She thanks him for his compliment regarding her work and adds that she'll remember his interest if she ever decides to leave the Government. The employee has rejected the unsolicited employment overture and has not begun seeking employment.

*Example 8 to paragraph (b):* The employee in the preceding example responds by stating

that she cannot discuss future employment while she is working on a project affecting the State's health care funding but would like to discuss employment with the State when the project is completed. Because the employee has merely deferred employment discussions until the foreseeable future, she has begun seeking employment with the State Health Department.

*Example 9 to paragraph (b):* Three months prior to the end of the current administration, a political appointee at a large department receives a telephone call from the managing partner of an international law firm. The managing partner asks if the official would be interested in joining the law firm. The official says, "I am not talking to anyone about employment until I leave the Government." The official has rejected the unsolicited employment overture and has not begun seeking employment.

*Example 10 to paragraph (b):* A geologist employed by the U.S. Geological Survey sends her resume to an oil company. The geologist has begun seeking employment with that oil company and will be seeking employment for two months from the date the resume was mailed, provided she does not receive a response indicating an interest in employment discussions. A letter merely acknowledging receipt of the resume is not an indication of interest in employment discussions. However, if she withdraws her application or is notified within the two-month period that her resume has been rejected, she will no longer be seeking employment with the oil company as of the date she makes such withdrawal or receives such notification.

(c) *Prospective employer* means any person with whom the employee is seeking employment. Where contacts that constitute seeking employment are made by or with an agent or other intermediary, the term prospective employer means:

(1) A person who uses that agent or other intermediary for the purpose of seeking to establish an employment relationship with the employee if the agent identifies the prospective employer to the employee; and

(2) A person contacted by the employee's agent or other intermediary for the purpose of seeking to establish an employment relationship if the agent identifies the prospective employer to the employee.

*Example 1 to paragraph (c):* An employee of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has retained an employment search firm to help her find another job. The search firm has just reported to the FAA employee that it has given her resume to and had promising

discussions with two airport authorities, which the search firm identifies to the employee. Even though the employee has not personally had employment discussions with either airport authority, each airport authority is her prospective employer. She began seeking employment with each airport authority upon learning its identity and that it has been given her resume.

*Example 2 to paragraph (c):* An employee pays for an online resume distribution service, which sends her resume to recruiters that specialize in her field. The online service has just notified her that it sent her resume to Software Company A and Software Company B. Even though the employee has not personally had employment discussions with either company, each software company is her prospective employer. She began seeking employment with each company upon learning from the online service that Software Company A and Software Company B had been given her resume by the intermediary.

(d) *Direct and predictable effect, particular matter, and personal and substantial* have the respective meanings set forth in § 2635.402(b)(1), (3), and (4).

(e) *Public filer* means a person required to file a public financial disclosure report as set forth in § 2634.202 of this chapter.

#### § 2635.604 Recusal while seeking employment.

(a) *Obligation to recuse.* (1) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(2) of this section or where the employee's participation has been authorized in accordance with § 2635.605, the employee may not participate personally and substantially in a particular matter that, to the employee's knowledge, has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of a prospective employer with whom the employee is seeking employment within the meaning of § 2635.603(b). Recusal is accomplished by not participating in the particular matter.

(2) The employee may participate in a particular matter under paragraph (a)(1) of this section when:

(i) The employee's only communication with the prospective employer in connection with the search for employment is the submission of an unsolicited resume or other employment proposal;

(ii) The prospective employer has not responded to the employee's unsolic-

ited communication with a response indicating an interest in employment discussions; and

(iii) The matter is not a particular matter involving specific parties.

*Example 1 to paragraph (a):* A scientist is employed by the National Science Foundation (NSF) as a special Government employee to serve on a panel that reviews grant applications to fund research relating to deterioration of the ozone layer. She is discussing possible employment with a university that received an NSF grant several years ago to study the effect of fluorocarbons but has no current grant applications pending before NSF. The employee is seeking employment, but she does not need to recuse because there is no particular matter that would have a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of the prospective employer. Recusal would be required if the university submits a new application for the panel's review.

*Example 2 to paragraph (a):* An employee of the Food and Drug Administration is developing a regulation on research criteria for approving prescription drugs. She begins discussing possible employment with a pharmaceutical company. The employee may not participate personally and substantially in the development of the regulation because she has begun employment discussions with the pharmaceutical company and the regulation is a particular matter of general applicability which would have a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of the pharmaceutical company.

*Example 3 to paragraph (a):* A special Government employee of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) is assigned to advise the FDIC on rules applicable to all member banks. She mails an unsolicited letter to a member bank offering her services as a contract consultant. Although the employee is seeking employment, the employee may participate in this particular matter of general applicability until she receives some response indicating an interest in discussing her employment proposal. A letter merely acknowledging receipt of the proposal is not an indication of interest in employment discussions.

*Example 4 to paragraph (a):* An employee of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration is conducting an inspection of one of several textile companies to which he sent an unsolicited resume. The employee may not participate personally and substantially in the inspection because he is seeking employment and the inspection is a particular matter involving specific parties that will affect the textile company.

(b) *Notification.* An employee who becomes aware of the need to recuse from participation in a particular matter to

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which the employee has been assigned must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the employee does not participate in the matter. Appropriate oral or written notification of the employee's recusal may be made to an agency ethics official, coworkers, or a supervisor to document and help effectuate the employee's recusal. Public filers must comply with additional notification requirements set forth in § 2635.607.

*Example 1 to paragraph (b):* An employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is participating in the audit of a contract for laboratory support services. Before sending his resume to a lab which is a subcontractor under the VA contract, the employee should recuse from participation in the audit. Since he cannot withdraw from participation in the contract audit without the approval of his supervisor, he should notify his supervisor of his need to recuse for ethics reasons so that appropriate adjustments in his work assignments can be made.

*Example 2 to paragraph (b):* An employee of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is contacted in writing by a pharmaceutical company concerning possible employment with the company. The employee is reviewing an application from the same pharmaceutical company, which is seeking FDA approval for a new drug product. Once the employee makes a response that is not a rejection to the company's communication concerning possible employment, the employee must recuse from further participation in the review of the application. Where he has authority to ask his colleague to assume his reviewing responsibilities, he may accomplish his recusal by transferring the work to the employee designated to cover for him. However, to ensure that his colleague and others with whom he had been working on the review do not seek his advice regarding the review of the application or otherwise involve him in the matter, it may be necessary for him to advise those individuals of his recusal.

(c) *Documentation.* An employee, other than a public filer, need not file a written recusal statement unless the employee is required by part 2634 of this chapter to file written evidence of compliance with an ethics agreement with the Office of Government Ethics or a designated agency ethics official, or is specifically directed by an agency ethics official or the person responsible for the employee's assignment to file a written recusal statement. However, it is often prudent for an employee to cre-

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ate a record of his or her actions by providing written notice to an agency ethics official, a supervisor, or other appropriate official. Public filers must comply with the documentation requirements set forth in § 2635.607.

*Example 1 to paragraph (c):* The General Counsel of a regulatory agency will be engaging in discussions regarding possible employment as corporate counsel of a regulated entity. Matters directly affecting the financial interests of the regulated entity are pending within the Office of General Counsel, but the General Counsel will not be called upon to act in any such matter because signature authority for that particular class of matters has been delegated to an Assistant General Counsel. Because the General Counsel is responsible for assigning work within the Office of General Counsel, he can, in fact, accomplish his recusal by simply avoiding any involvement in matters affecting the regulated entity. However, because it is likely to be assumed by others that the General Counsel is involved in all matters within the cognizance of the Office of General Counsel, he would benefit from filing a written recusal statement with an agency ethics official or the Commissioners of the regulatory agency and providing his subordinates with written notification of his recusal. He may also be specifically directed by an agency ethics official or the Commissioners to file a written recusal statement. If the General Counsel is a public filer, he must comply with the documentation requirements set forth in § 2635.607.

(d) *Agency determination of substantial conflict.* Where the agency determines that the employee's action in seeking employment with a particular person will require the employee's recusal from matters so central or critical to the performance of the employee's official duties that the employee's ability to perform the duties of the employee's position would be materially impaired, the agency may allow the employee to take annual leave or leave without pay while seeking employment, or may take other appropriate action.

### § 2635.605 Waiver or authorization permitting participation while seeking employment.

(a) *Waiver.* Where, as defined in § 2635.603(b)(1)(i), an employee is engaged in employment negotiations for purposes of 18 U.S.C. 208(a), the employee may not participate personally and substantially in a particular matter that, to the employee's knowledge,

has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of a prospective employer. The employee may participate in such matters only where the employee has received a written waiver issued under the authority of 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(1) or (3). These waivers are described in § 2635.402(d) and part 2640, subpart C of this chapter. For certain employees, a regulatory exemption under the authority of 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(2) may also apply (see part 2640, subpart B of this chapter), including § 2640.203(g) and (i).

*Example 1 to paragraph (a):* An employee of the Department of Agriculture is negotiating for employment within the meaning of 18 U.S.C. 208(a) and § 2635.603(b)(1)(i) with an orange grower. In the absence of a written waiver issued under 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(1), she may not take official action on a complaint filed by a competitor alleging that the grower has shipped oranges in violation of applicable quotas.

(b) *Authorization by agency designee.* Where an employee is seeking employment within the meaning of § 2635.603(b)(1)(ii) or (iii) and is not negotiating for employment, a reasonable person would be likely to question the employee's impartiality if the employee were to participate personally and substantially in a particular matter that, to the employee's knowledge, has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of any such prospective employer. The employee may participate in such matters only where the agency designee has authorized in writing the employee's participation in accordance with the standards set forth in § 2635.502(d).

*Example 1 to paragraph (b):* Within the past month, an employee of the Department of Education mailed her resume to a university. She is thus seeking employment with the university within the meaning of § 2635.603(b)(1)(ii). In the absence of specific authorization by the agency designee in accordance with § 2635.502(d), she may not participate personally and substantially in an assignment to review a grant application submitted by the university.

**§ 2635.606 Recusal based on an arrangement concerning prospective employment or otherwise after negotiations.**

(a) *Employment or arrangement concerning employment.* An employee may not participate personally and substantially in a particular matter that, to the employee's knowledge, has a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of the person by whom he or

she is employed or with whom he or she has an arrangement concerning future employment, unless authorized to participate in the matter by a written waiver issued under the authority of 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(1) or (3), or by a regulatory exemption under the authority of 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(2). These waivers and exemptions are described in § 2635.402(d) and part 2640, subparts B and C of this chapter.

*Example 1 to paragraph (a):* A military officer has accepted a job with a defense contractor that will begin six months after his retirement from military service. During the period that he remains with the Government, the officer may not participate personally and substantially in the administration of a contract with that particular defense contractor unless he has received a written waiver under the authority of 18 U.S.C. 208(b)(1).

*Example 2 to paragraph (a):* An accountant has just been offered a job with the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) which involves a two-year limited appointment. Her private employer, a large corporation, believes the job will enhance her skills and has agreed to give her a two-year unpaid leave of absence at the end of which she has agreed to return to work for the corporation. During the two-year period that she is to be an OCC employee, the accountant will have an arrangement concerning future employment with the corporation that will require her recusal from participation personally and substantially in any particular matter that, to her knowledge, will have a direct and predictable effect on the corporation's financial interests.

(b) *Offer rejected or not made.* The agency designee for the purpose of § 2635.502(c) may, in an appropriate case, determine that an employee not covered by the preceding paragraph who has sought but is no longer seeking employment nevertheless will be subject to a period of recusal upon the conclusion of employment negotiations. Any such determination will be based on a consideration of all the relevant factors, including those listed in § 2635.502(d), and a determination that the concern that a reasonable person may question the integrity of the agency's decision-making process outweighs the Government's interest in the employee's participation in the particular matter.

*Example 1 to paragraph (b):* An employee of the Securities and Exchange Commission

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was relieved of responsibility for an investigation of a broker-dealer while seeking employment with the law firm representing the broker-dealer in that matter. The firm did not offer her the partnership position she sought. Even though she is no longer seeking employment with the firm, she may continue to be recused from participating in the investigation based on a determination by the agency designee that the concern that a reasonable person might question whether, in view of the history of the employment negotiations, she could act impartially in the matter outweighs the Government's interest in her participation.

### **§ 2635.607 Notification requirements for public financial disclosure report filers regarding negotiations for or agreement of future employment or compensation.**

(a) *Notification regarding negotiations for or agreement of future employment or compensation.* A public filer who is negotiating for or has an agreement of future employment or compensation with a non-Federal entity must file a statement notifying an agency ethics official of such negotiation or agreement within three business days after commencement of the negotiation or agreement. This notification statement must be in writing, must be signed by the public filer, and must include the name of the non-Federal entity involved in such negotiation or agreement and the date on which the negotiation or agreement commenced. When a public filer has previously complied with the notification requirement in this section regarding the commencement of negotiations, the filer need not file a separate notification statement when an agreement of future employment or compensation is reached with the previously identified non-Federal entity. There is also no requirement to file another notification when negotiations have been unsuccessful. However, employees may want to do so to facilitate the resumption of their duties.

*Example 1 to paragraph (a):* An employee of the Merit Systems Protection Board who is a public filer was in private practice prior to his Government service. He receives a telephone call from a partner in a law firm who inquires as to whether he would be interested in returning to private practice. During this initial telephone call with the law firm partner, the employee indicates that he is interested in resuming private practice.

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They discuss generally the types of issues that would need to be agreed upon if the employee were to consider a possible offer to serve as "of counsel" with the firm, such as salary, benefits, and type of work the employee would perform. The employee has begun negotiating for future employment with the law firm. Within three business days after this initial telephone call, he must file written notification of the negotiations with his agency ethics official.

*Example 2 to paragraph (a):* The employee in the previous example also negotiates a possible contract with a publisher to begin writing a textbook after he leaves Government service. Within three business days after commencing negotiations, the employee must file written notification with his agency ethics official documenting that he is engaged in negotiations for future compensation with the book publisher.

(b) *Notification of recusal.* A public filer who files a notification statement pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section must file with an agency ethics official a notification of recusal whenever there is a conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest with the non-Federal entity identified in the notification statement. The notification statement and the recusal statement may be contained in a single document or in separate documents.

(c) *Advance filing of notification and recusal statements.* When a public filer is seeking employment within the meaning of § 2635.603(b)(1)(ii) or (iii) or is considering seeking employment, the public filer may elect to file the notification statement pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section before negotiations have commenced and before an agreement of future employment or compensation is reached. A public filer may also elect to file the recusal statement pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section before the public filer has a conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest with the non-Federal entity identified in the notification statement. The public filer need not file the document again upon commencing negotiations or reaching an agreement of future employment or compensation. The advance filing of any such document is not construed as a statement that negotiations have or have not commenced or that a conflict of interest does or does not exist. Although the Office of Government Ethics encourages advance filing when a



public filer anticipates a realistic possibility of negotiations or an agreement, the failure to make an advance filing does not violate this subpart or the principles of ethical conduct contained in § 2635.101(b).

*Example 1 to paragraph (c):* An employee of the Federal Labor Relations Authority who is a public filer began negotiating for future employment with a law firm. At the time he began negotiating for future employment with the law firm, he was not participating personally and substantially in a particular matter that, to his knowledge, had a direct and predictable effect on the financial interest of the law firm. Although the employee was not required to file a recusal statement because he did not have a conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest with the law firm identified in the notification statement, the Office of Government Ethics encourages the employee to submit a notification of recusal at the same time that he files the notification statement regarding the negotiations for future employment in order to ensure that the requirement of paragraph (b) of this section is satisfied if a conflict of interest or an appearance of a conflict of interest later arises. The agency ethics official should counsel the employee on applicable requirements but is under no obligation to notify the employee's supervisor that the employee is negotiating for employment.

*Example 2 to paragraph (c):* An employee of the General Services Administration is contacted by a prospective employer regarding scheduling an interview for the following week to begin discussing the possibility of future employment. The employee discusses the matter with the ethics official and chooses to file a notification and recusal statement prior to the interview. The notification and recusal statement contain the identity of the prospective employer and an estimated date of when the interview will occur. The employee has complied with the notification requirement of section 17 of the STOCK Act.

(d) *Agreement of future employment or compensation* for the purposes of § 2635.607 means any arrangement concerning employment that will commence after the termination of Government service. The term also means any arrangement to compensate in exchange for services that will commence after the termination of Government service. The term includes, among other things, an arrangement to compensate for teaching, speaking, or writing that will commence after the termination of Government service.

## Subpart G—Misuse of Position

### § 2635.701 Overview.

This subpart contains provisions relating to the proper use of official time and authority, and of information and resources to which an employee has access because of his Federal employment. This subpart sets forth standards relating to:

- (a) Use of public office for private gain;
- (b) Use of nonpublic information;
- (c) Use of Government property; and
- (d) Use of official time.

### § 2635.702 Use of public office for private gain.

An employee shall not use his public office for his own private gain, for the endorsement of any product, service or enterprise, or for the private gain of friends, relatives, or persons with whom the employee is affiliated in a nongovernmental capacity, including nonprofit organizations of which the employee is an officer or member, and persons with whom the employee has or seeks employment or business relations. The specific prohibitions set forth in paragraphs (a) through (d) of this section apply this general standard, but are not intended to be exclusive or to limit the application of this section.

(a) *Inducement or coercion of benefits.* An employee shall not use or permit the use of his Government position or title or any authority associated with his public office in a manner that is intended to coerce or induce another person, including a subordinate, to provide any benefit, financial or otherwise, to himself or to friends, relatives, or persons with whom the employee is affiliated in a nongovernmental capacity.

*Example 1:* Offering to pursue a relative's consumer complaint over a household appliance, an employee of the Securities and Exchange Commission called the general counsel of the manufacturer and, in the course of discussing the problem, stated that he worked at the SEC and was responsible for reviewing the company's filings. The employee violated the prohibition against use of public office for private gain by invoking his official authority in an attempt to influence action to benefit his relative.

*Example 2:* An employee of the Department of Commerce was asked by a friend to determine why his firm's export license had not yet been granted by another office within the Department of Commerce. At a department-level staff meeting, the employee raised as a matter for official inquiry the delay in approval of the particular license and asked that the particular license be expedited. The official used her public office in an attempt to benefit her friend and, in acting as her friend's agent for the purpose of pursuing the export license with the Department of Commerce, may also have violated 18 U.S.C. 205.

(b) *Appearance of governmental sanction.* Except as otherwise provided in this part, an employee shall not use or permit the use of his Government position or title or any authority associated with his public office in a manner that could reasonably be construed to imply that his agency or the Government sanctions or endorses his personal activities or those of another. When teaching, speaking, or writing in a personal capacity, he may refer to his official title or position only as permitted by § 2635.807(b). He may sign a letter of recommendation using his official title only in response to a request for an employment recommendation or character reference based upon personal knowledge of the ability or character of an individual with whom he has dealt in the course of Federal employment or whom he is recommending for Federal employment.

*Example 1:* An employee of the Department of the Treasury who is asked to provide a letter of recommendation for a former subordinate on his staff may provide the recommendation using official stationery and may sign the letter using his official title. If, however, the request is for the recommendation of a personal friend with whom he has not dealt in the Government, the employee should not use official stationery or sign the letter of recommendation using his official title, unless the recommendation is for Federal employment. In writing the letter of recommendation for his personal friend, it may be appropriate for the employee to refer to his official position in the body of the letter.

(c) *Endorsements.* An employee shall not use or permit the use of his Government position or title or any authority associated with his public office to endorse any product, service or enterprise except:

(1) In furtherance of statutory authority to promote products, services or enterprises; or

(2) As a result of documentation of compliance with agency requirements or standards or as the result of recognition for achievement given under an agency program of recognition for accomplishment in support of the agency's mission.

*Example 1:* A Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission may not appear in a television commercial in which she endorses an electrical appliance produced by her former employer, stating that it has been found by the CPSC to be safe for residential use.

*Example 2:* A Foreign Commercial Service officer from the Department of Commerce is asked by a United States telecommunications company to meet with representatives of the Government of Spain, which is in the process of procuring telecommunications services and equipment. The company is bidding against five European companies and the statutory mission of the Department of Commerce includes assisting the export activities of U.S. companies. As part of his official duties, the Foreign Commercial Service officer may meet with Spanish officials and explain the advantages of procurement from the United States company.

*Example 3:* The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency may sign a letter to an oil company indicating that its refining operations are in compliance with Federal air quality standards even though he knows that the company has routinely displayed letters of this type in television commercials portraying it as a "trustee of the environment for future generations."

*Example 4:* An Assistant Attorney General may not use his official title or refer to his Government position in a book jacket endorsement of a novel about organized crime written by an author whose work he admires. Nor may he do so in a book review published in a newspaper.

(d) *Performance of official duties affecting a private interest.* To ensure that the performance of his official duties does not give rise to an appearance of use of public office for private gain or of giving preferential treatment, an employee whose duties would affect the financial interests of a friend, relative or person with whom he is affiliated in a nongovernmental capacity shall comply with any applicable requirements of § 2635.502.

(e) *Use of terms of address and ranks.* Nothing in this section prohibits an

employee who is ordinarily addressed using a general term of address, such as “The Honorable”, or a rank, such as a military or ambassadorial rank, from using that term of address or rank in connection with a personal activity.

**§ 2635.703 Use of nonpublic information.**

(a) *Prohibition.* An employee shall not engage in a financial transaction using nonpublic information, nor allow the improper use of nonpublic information to further his own private interest or that of another, whether through advice or recommendation, or by knowing unauthorized disclosure.

(b) *Definition of nonpublic information.* For purposes of this section, *nonpublic information* is information that the employee gains by reason of Federal employment and that he knows or reasonably should know has not been made available to the general public. It includes information that he knows or reasonably should know:

(1) Is routinely exempt from disclosure under 5 U.S.C. 552 or otherwise protected from disclosure by statute, Executive order or regulation;

(2) Is designated as confidential by an agency; or

(3) Has not actually been disseminated to the general public and is not authorized to be made available to the public on request.

*Example 1:* A Navy employee learns in the course of her duties that a small corporation will be awarded a Navy contract for electrical test equipment. She may not take any action to purchase stock in the corporation or its suppliers and she may not advise friends or relatives to do so until after public announcement of the award. Such actions could violate Federal securities statutes as well as this section.

*Example 2:* A General Services Administration employee involved in evaluating proposals for a construction contract cannot disclose the terms of a competing proposal to a friend employed by a company bidding on the work. Prior to award of the contract, bid or proposal information is nonpublic information specifically protected by 41 U.S.C. 423.

*Example 3:* An employee is a member of a source selection team assigned to review the proposals submitted by several companies in response to an Army solicitation for spare parts. As a member of the evaluation team, the employee has access to proprietary information regarding the production methods of

Alpha Corporation, one of the competitors. He may not use that information to assist Beta Company in drafting a proposal to compete for a Navy spare parts contract. The Federal Acquisition Regulation in 48 CFR parts 3, 14 and 15 restricts the release of information related to procurements and other contractor information that must be protected under 18 U.S.C. 1905 and 41 U.S.C. 423.

*Example 4:* An employee of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission inadvertently includes a document that is exempt from disclosure with a group of documents released in response to a Freedom of Information Act request. Regardless of whether the document is used improperly, the employee’s disclosure does not violate this section because it was not a knowing unauthorized disclosure made for the purpose of furthering a private interest.

*Example 5:* An employee of the Army Corps of Engineers is actively involved in the activities of an organization whose goals relate to protection of the environment. The employee may not, other than as permitted by agency procedures, give the organization or a newspaper reporter nonpublic information about long-range plans to build a particular dam.

**§ 2635.704 Use of Government property.**

(a) *Standard.* An employee has a duty to protect and conserve Government property and shall not use such property, or allow its use, for other than authorized purposes.

(b) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

(1) *Government property* includes any form of real or personal property in which the Government has an ownership, leasehold, or other property interest as well as any right or other intangible interest that is purchased with Government funds, including the services of contractor personnel. The term includes office supplies, telephone and other telecommunications equipment and services, the Government mails, automated data processing capabilities, printing and reproduction facilities, Government records, and Government vehicles.

(2) *Authorized purposes* are those purposes for which Government property is made available to members of the public or those purposes authorized in accordance with law or regulation.

*Example 1:* Under regulations of the General Services Administration at 41 CFR 101-35.201, an employee may make a personal

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long distance call charged to her personal calling card.

*Example 2:* An employee of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission whose office computer gives him access to a commercial service providing information for investors may not use that service for personal investment research.

*Example 3:* In accordance with Office of Personnel Management regulations at part 251 of this title, an attorney employed by the Department of Justice may be permitted to use her office word processor and agency photocopy equipment to prepare a paper to be presented at a conference sponsored by a professional association of which she is a member.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 62 FR 48748, Sept. 17, 1997]

### § 2635.705 Use of official time.

(a) *Use of an employee's own time.* Unless authorized in accordance with law or regulations to use such time for other purposes, an employee shall use official time in an honest effort to perform official duties. An employee not under a leave system, including a Presidential appointee exempted under 5 U.S.C. 6301(2), has an obligation to expend an honest effort and a reasonable proportion of his time in the performance of official duties.

*Example 1:* An employee of the Social Security Administration may use official time to engage in certain representational activities on behalf of the employee union of which she is a member. Under 5 U.S.C. 7131, this is a proper use of her official time even though it does not involve performance of her assigned duties as a disability claims examiner.

*Example 2:* A pharmacist employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs has been granted excused absence to participate as a speaker in a conference on drug abuse sponsored by the professional association to which he belongs. Although excused absence granted by an agency in accordance with guidance in chapter 630 of the Federal Personnel Manual allows an employee to be absent from his official duties without charge to his annual leave account, such absence is not on official time.

(b) *Use of a subordinate's time.* An employee shall not encourage, direct, coerce, or request a subordinate to use official time to perform activities other than those required in the performance of official duties or authorized in accordance with law or regulation.

*Example 1:* An employee of the Department of Housing and Urban Development may not

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ask his secretary to type his personal correspondence during duty hours. Further, directing or coercing a subordinate to perform such activities during nonduty hours constitutes an improper use of public office for private gain in violation of § 2635.702(a). Where the arrangement is entirely voluntary and appropriate compensation is paid, the secretary may type the correspondence at home on her own time. Where the compensation is not adequate, however, the arrangement would involve a gift to the superior in violation of the standards in subpart C of this part.

### Subpart H—Outside Activities

#### § 2635.801 Overview.

(a) This subpart contains provisions relating to outside employment, outside activities and personal financial obligations of employees that are in addition to the principles and standards set forth in other subparts of this part. Several of these provisions apply to uncompensated as well as to compensated outside activities.

(b) An employee who wishes to engage in outside employment or other outside activities must comply with all relevant provisions of this subpart, including, when applicable:

(1) The prohibition on outside employment or any other outside activity that conflicts with the employee's official duties;

(2) Any agency-specific requirement for prior approval of outside employment or activities;

(3) The limitations on receipt of outside earned income by certain Presidential appointees and other noncareer employees;

(4) The limitations on paid and unpaid service as an expert witness;

(5) The limitations on participation in professional organizations;

(6) The limitations on paid and unpaid teaching, speaking, and writing; and

(7) The limitations on fundraising activities.

(c) Outside employment and other outside activities of an employee must also comply with applicable provisions set forth in other subparts of this part and in supplemental agency regulations. These include the principle that an employee shall endeavor to avoid actions creating an appearance of violating any of the ethical standards in

this part and the prohibition against use of official position for an employee's private gain or for the private gain of any person with whom he has employment or business relations or is otherwise affiliated in a nongovernmental capacity.

(d) In addition to the provisions of this and other subparts of this part, an employee who wishes to engage in outside employment or other outside activities must comply with applicable statutes and regulations. Relevant provisions of law, many of which are listed in subpart I of this part, may include:

(1) 18 U.S.C. 201(b), which prohibits a public official from seeking, accepting or agreeing to receive or accept anything of value in return for being influenced in the performance of an official act or for being induced to take or omit to take any action in violation of his official duty;

(2) 18 U.S.C. 201(c), which prohibits a public official, otherwise than as provided by law for the proper discharge of official duty, from seeking, accepting, or agreeing to receive or accept anything of value for or because of any official act;

(3) 18 U.S.C. 203(a), which prohibits an employee from seeking, accepting, or agreeing to receive or accept compensation for any representational services, rendered personally or by another, in relation to any particular matter in which the United States is a party or has a direct and substantial interest, before any department, agency, or other specified entity. This statute contains several exceptions, as well as standards for special Government employees that limit the scope of the restriction;

(4) 18 U.S.C. 205, which prohibits an employee, whether or not for compensation, from acting as agent or attorney for anyone in a claim against the United States or from acting as agent or attorney for anyone, before any department, agency, or other specified entity, in any particular matter in which the United States is a party or has a direct and substantial interest. It also prohibits receipt of any gratuity, or any share of or interest in a claim against the United States, in consideration for assisting in the prosecution of such claim. This statute

contains several exceptions, as well as standards for special Government employees that limit the scope of the restrictions;

(5) 18 U.S.C. 209, which prohibits an employee, other than a special Government employee, from receiving any salary or any contribution to or supplementation of salary from any source other than the United States as compensation for services as a Government employee. The statute contains several exceptions that limit its applicability;

(6) The Emoluments Clause of the United States Constitution, article I, section 9, clause 8, which prohibits anyone holding an office of profit or trust under the United States from accepting any gift, office, title or emolument, including salary or compensation, from any foreign government except as authorized by Congress. In addition, 18 U.S.C. 219 generally prohibits any public official from being or acting as an agent of a foreign principal, including a foreign government, corporation or person, if the employee would be required to register as a foreign agent under 22 U.S.C. 611 *et seq.*;

(7) The Hatch Act Reform Amendments, 5 U.S.C. 7321 through 7326, which govern the political activities of executive branch employees; and

(8) The limitations on outside employment, 5 U.S.C. App. (Ethics in Government Act of 1978), which prohibit a covered noncareer employee's receipt of compensation for specified activities and provide that he shall not allow his name to be used by any firm or other entity which provides professional services involving a fiduciary relationship. Implementing regulations are contained in §§ 2636.305 through 2636.307 of this chapter.

[57 FR 35041, Aug. 7, 1992; 57 FR 48557, Oct. 27, 1992; 61 FR 50691, Sept. 27, 1996; 62 FR 48748, Sept. 17, 1997]

#### **§ 2635.802 Conflicting outside employment and activities.**

An employee shall not engage in outside employment or any other outside activity that conflicts with his official duties. An activity conflicts with an employee's official duties:

(a) If it is prohibited by statute or by an agency supplemental regulation; or

(b) If, under the standards set forth in §§ 2635.402 and 2635.502, it would require the employee's disqualification from matters so central or critical to the performance of his official duties that the employee's ability to perform the duties of his position would be materially impaired.

Employees are cautioned that even though an outside activity may not be prohibited under this section, it may violate other principles or standards set forth in this part or require the employee to disqualify himself from participation in certain particular matters under either subpart D or subpart E of this part.

*Example 1:* An employee of the Environmental Protection Agency has just been promoted. His principal duty in his new position is to write regulations relating to the disposal of hazardous waste. The employee may not continue to serve as president of a non-profit environmental organization that routinely submits comments on such regulations. His service as an officer would require his disqualification from duties critical to the performance of his official duties on a basis so frequent as to materially impair his ability to perform the duties of his position.

*Example 2:* An employee of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration who was and is expected again to be instrumental in formulating new OSHA safety standards applicable to manufacturers that use chemical solvents has been offered a consulting contract to provide advice to an affected company in restructuring its manufacturing operations to comply with the OSHA standards. The employee should not enter into the consulting arrangement even though he is not currently working on OSHA standards affecting this industry and his consulting contract can be expected to be completed before he again works on such standards. Even though the consulting arrangement would not be a conflicting activity within the meaning of § 2635.802, it would create an appearance that the employee had used his official position to obtain the compensated outside business opportunity and it would create the further appearance of using his public office for the private gain of the manufacturer.

**§ 2635.803 Prior approval for outside employment and activities.**

When required by agency supplemental regulation issued after February 3, 1993, an employee shall obtain prior approval before engaging in outside employment or activities. Where it is determined to be necessary or de-

sirable for the purpose of administering its ethics program, an agency shall, by supplemental regulation, require employees or any category of employees to obtain prior approval before engaging in specific types of outside activities, including outside employment.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 59 FR 4780, Feb. 2, 1994; 60 FR 6391, Feb. 2, 1995; 60 FR 66858, Dec. 27, 1995; 61 FR 40951, Aug. 7, 1996; 62 FR 48748, Sept. 17, 1997]

**§ 2635.804 Outside earned income limitations applicable to certain Presidential appointees and other non-career employees.**

(a) *Presidential appointees to full-time noncareer positions.* A Presidential appointee to a full-time noncareer position shall not receive any outside earned income for outside employment, or for any other outside activity, performed during that Presidential appointment. This limitation does not apply to any outside earned income received for outside employment, or for any other outside activity, carried out in satisfaction of the employee's obligation under a contract entered into prior to April 12, 1989.

(b) *Covered noncareer employees.* Covered noncareer employees, as defined in § 2636.303(a) of this chapter, may not, in any calendar year, receive outside earned income attributable to that calendar year which exceeds 15 percent of the annual rate of basic pay for level II of the Executive Schedule under 5 U.S.C. 5313, as in effect on January 1 of such calendar year. Employees should consult the regulations implementing this limitation, which are contained in §§ 2636.301 through 2636.304 of this chapter.

**NOTE:** In addition to the 15 percent limitation on outside earned income, covered non-career employees are prohibited from receiving any compensation for: practicing a profession which involves a fiduciary relationship; affiliating with or being employed by a firm or other entity which provides professional services involving a fiduciary relationship; serving as an officer or member of the board of any association, corporation or other entity; or teaching without prior approval. Implementing regulations are contained in §§ 2636.305 through 2636.307 of this chapter.

(c) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

(1) *Outside earned income* has the meaning set forth in § 2636.303(b) of this chapter, except that § 2636.303(b)(7) shall not apply.

(2) *Presidential appointee to a full-time noncareer position* means any employee who is appointed by the President to a full-time position described in 5 U.S.C. 5312 through 5317 or to a position that, by statute or as a matter of practice, is filled by Presidential appointment, other than:

(i) A position filled under the authority of 3 U.S.C. 105 or 3 U.S.C. 107(a) for which the rate of basic pay is less than that for GS-9, step 1 of the General Schedule;

(ii) A position, within a White House operating unit, that is designated as not normally subject to change as a result of a Presidential transition;

(iii) A position within the uniformed services; or

(iv) A position in which a member of the foreign service is serving that does not require advice and consent of the Senate.

*Example 1:* A career Department of Justice employee who is detailed to a policy-making position in the White House Office that is ordinarily filled by a noncareer employee is not a Presidential appointee to a full-time noncareer position.

*Example 2:* A Department of Energy employee appointed under § 213.3301 of this title to a Schedule C position is appointed by the agency and, thus, is not a Presidential appointee to a full-time noncareer position.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 72 FR 16987, Apr. 6, 2007]

#### § 2635.805 Service as an expert witness.

(a) *Restriction.* An employee shall not serve, other than on behalf of the United States, as an expert witness, with or without compensation, in any proceeding before a court or agency of the United States in which the United States is a party or has a direct and substantial interest, unless the employee's participation is authorized by the agency under paragraph (c) of this section. Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, this restriction shall apply to a special Government employee only if he has participated as an employee or special Government employee in the particular

proceeding or in the particular matter that is the subject of the proceeding.

(b) *Additional restriction applicable to certain special Government employees.* (1) In addition to the restriction described in paragraph (a) of this section, a special Government employee described in paragraph (b)(2) of this section shall not serve, other than on behalf of the United States, as an expert witness, with or without compensation, in any proceeding before a court or agency of the United States in which his employing agency is a party or has a direct and substantial interest, unless the employee's participation is authorized by the agency under paragraph (c) of this section.

(2) The restriction in paragraph (b)(1) of this section shall apply to a special Government employee who:

(i) Is appointed by the President;

(ii) Serves on a commission established by statute; or

(iii) Has served or is expected to serve for more than 60 days in a period of 365 consecutive days.

(c) *Authorization to serve as an expert witness.* Provided that the employee's testimony will not violate any of the principles or standards set forth in this part, authorization to provide expert witness service otherwise prohibited by paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section may be given by the designated agency ethics official of the agency in which the employee serves when:

(1) After consultation with the agency representing the Government in the proceeding or, if the Government is not a party, with the Department of Justice and the agency with the most direct and substantial interest in the matter, the designated agency ethics official determines that the employee's service as an expert witness is in the interest of the Government; or

(2) The designated agency ethics official determines that the subject matter of the testimony does not relate to the employee's official duties within the meaning of § 2635.807(a)(2)(i).

(d) Nothing in this section prohibits an employee from serving as a fact witness when subpoenaed by an appropriate authority.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 62 FR 48748, Sept. 17, 1997]

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**§ 2635.806 Participation in professional associations. [Reserved]**

**§ 2635.807 Teaching, speaking and writing.**

(a) *Compensation for teaching, speaking or writing.* Except as permitted by paragraph (a)(3) of this section, an employee, including a special Government employee, shall not receive compensation from any source other than the Government for teaching, speaking or writing that relates to the employee's official duties.

(1) *Relationship to other limitations on receipt of compensation.* The compensation prohibition contained in this section is in addition to any other limitation on receipt of compensation set forth in this chapter, including:

(i) The requirement contained in § 2636.307 of this chapter that covered noncareer employees obtain advance authorization before engaging in teaching for compensation; and

(ii) The prohibitions and limitations in § 2635.804 and in § 2636.304 of this chapter on receipt of outside earned income applicable to certain Presidential appointees and to other covered non-career employees.

(2) *Definitions.* For purposes of this paragraph:

(i) Teaching, speaking or writing relates to the employee's official duties if:

(A) The activity is undertaken as part of the employee's official duties;

(B) The circumstances indicate that the invitation to engage in the activity was extended to the employee primarily because of his official position rather than his expertise on the particular subject matter;

(C) The invitation to engage in the activity or the offer of compensation for the activity was extended to the employee, directly or indirectly, by a person who has interests that may be affected substantially by performance or nonperformance of the employee's official duties;

(D) The information conveyed through the activity draws substantially on ideas or official data that are nonpublic information as defined in § 2635.703(b); or

(E) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(2)(i)(E)(4) of this section, the sub-

ject of the activity deals in significant part with:

(1) Any matter to which the employee presently is assigned or to which the employee had been assigned during the previous one-year period;

(2) Any ongoing or announced policy, program or operation of the agency; or

(3) In the case of a noncareer employee as defined in § 2636.303(a) of this chapter, the general subject matter area, industry, or economic sector primarily affected by the programs and operations of his agency.

(4) The restrictions in paragraphs (a)(2)(i)(E) (2) and (3) of this section do not apply to a special Government employee. The restriction in paragraph (a)(2)(i)(E)(1) of this section applies only during the current appointment of a special Government employee; except that if the special Government employee has not served or is not expected to serve for more than 60 days during the first year or any subsequent one year period of that appointment, the restriction applies only to particular matters involving specific parties in which the special Government employee has participated or is participating personally and substantially.

NOTE: Section 2635.807(a)(2)(i)(E) does not preclude an employee, other than a covered noncareer employee, from receiving compensation for teaching, speaking or writing on a subject within the employee's discipline or inherent area of expertise based on his educational background or experience even though the teaching, speaking or writing deals generally with a subject within the agency's areas of responsibility.

*Example 1:* The Director of the Division of Enforcement at the Commodity Futures Trading Commission has a keen interest in stamp collecting and has spent years developing his own collection as well as studying the field generally. He is asked by an international society of philatelists to give a series of four lectures on how to assess the value of American stamps. Because the subject does not relate to his official duties, the Director may accept compensation for the lecture series. He could not, however, accept a similar invitation from a commodities broker.

*Example 2:* A scientist at the National Institutes of Health, whose principal area of Government research is the molecular basis of the development of cancer, could not be



compensated for writing a book which focuses specifically on the research she conducts in her position at NIH, and thus, relates to her official duties. However, the scientist could receive compensation for writing or editing a textbook on the treatment of all cancers, provided that the book does not focus on recent research at NIH, but rather conveys scientific knowledge gleaned from the scientific community as a whole. The book might include a chapter, among many other chapters, which discusses the molecular basis of cancer development. Additionally, the book could contain brief discussions of recent developments in cancer treatment, even though some of those developments are derived from NIH research, as long as it is available to the public.

*Example 3:* On his own time, a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration employee prepared a consumer's guide to purchasing a safe automobile that focuses on automobile crash worthiness statistics gathered and made public by NHTSA. He may not receive royalties or any other form of compensation for the guide. The guide deals in significant part with the programs or operations of NHTSA and, therefore, relates to the employee's official duties. On the other hand, the employee could receive royalties from the sale of a consumer's guide to values in used automobiles even though it contains a brief, incidental discussion of automobile safety standards developed by NHTSA.

*Example 4:* An employee of the Securities and Exchange Commission may not receive compensation for a book which focuses specifically on the regulation of the securities industry in the United States, since that subject concerns the regulatory programs or operations of the SEC. The employee may, however, write a book about the advantages of investing in various types of securities as long as the book contains only an incidental discussion of any program or operation of the SEC.

*Example 5:* An employee of the Department of Commerce who works in the Department's employee relations office is an acknowledged expert in the field of Federal employee labor relations, and participates in Department negotiations with employee unions. The employee may receive compensation from a private training institute for a series of lectures which describe the decisions of the Federal Labor Relations Authority concerning unfair labor practices, provided that her lectures do not contain any significant discussion of labor relations cases handled at the Department of Commerce, or the Department's labor relations policies. Federal Labor Relations Authority decisions concerning Federal employee unfair labor practices are not a specific program or operation of the Department of Commerce and thus do not relate to the employee's official duties. However, an employee of the FLRA could

not give the same presentations for compensation.

*Example 6:* A program analyst employed at the Environmental Protection Agency may receive royalties and other compensation for a book about the history of the environmental movement in the United States even though it contains brief references to the creation and responsibilities of the EPA. A covered noncareer employee of the EPA, however, could not receive compensation for writing the same book because it deals with the general subject matter area affected by EPA programs and operations. Neither employee could receive compensation for writing a book that focuses on specific EPA regulations or otherwise on its programs and operations.

*Example 7:* An attorney in private practice has been given a one year appointment as a special Government employee to serve on an advisory committee convened for the purpose of surveying and recommending modification of procurement regulations that deter small businesses from competing for Government contracts. Because his service under that appointment is not expected to exceed 60 days, the attorney may accept compensation for an article about the anti-competitive effects of certain regulatory certification requirements even though those regulations are being reviewed by the advisory committee. The regulations which are the focus of the advisory committee deliberations are not a particular matter involving specific parties. Because the information is nonpublic, he could not, however, accept compensation for an article which recounts advisory committee deliberations that took place in a meeting closed to the public in order to discuss proprietary information provided by a small business.

*Example 8:* A biologist who is an expert in marine life is employed for more than 60 days in a year as a special Government employee by the National Science Foundation to assist in developing a program of grants by the Foundation for the study of coral reefs. The biologist may continue to receive compensation for speaking, teaching and writing about marine life generally and coral reefs specifically. However, during the term of her appointment as a special Government employee, she may not receive compensation for an article about the NSF program she is participating in developing. Only the latter would concern a matter to which the special Government employee is assigned.

*Example 9:* An expert on international banking transactions has been given a one-year appointment as a special Government employee to assist in analyzing evidence in the Government's fraud prosecution of owners of a failed savings and loan association. It is anticipated that she will serve fewer than 60 days under that appointment. Nevertheless, during her appointment, the expert

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may not accept compensation for an article about the fraud prosecution, even though the article does not reveal nonpublic information. The prosecution is a particular matter that involves specific parties.

(ii) *Agency* has the meaning set forth in § 2635.102(a), except that any component of a department designated as a separate agency under § 2635.203(a) shall be considered a separate agency.

(iii) *Compensation* includes any form of consideration, remuneration or income, including royalties, given for or in connection with the employee's teaching, speaking or writing activities. Unless accepted under specific statutory authority, such as 31 U.S.C. 1353, 5 U.S.C. 4111 or 7342, or an agency gift acceptance statute, it includes transportation, lodgings and meals, whether provided in kind, by purchase of a ticket, by payment in advance or by reimbursement after the expense has been incurred. It does not include:

(A) Items offered by any source that could be accepted from a prohibited source under subpart B of this part;

(B) Meals or other incidents of attendance such as waiver of attendance fees or course materials furnished as part of the event at which the teaching or speaking takes place;

(C) Copies of books or of publications containing articles, reprints of articles, tapes of speeches, and similar items that provide a record of the teaching, speaking or writing activity; or

(D) In the case of an employee other than a covered noncareer employee as defined in 5 CFR 2636.303(a), travel expenses, consisting of transportation, lodgings or meals, incurred in connection with the teaching, speaking or writing activity.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (a)(2)(iii): Independent of § 2635.807(a), other authorities, such as 18 U.S.C. 209, in some circumstances may limit or entirely preclude an employee's acceptance of travel expenses. In addition, employees who file financial disclosure reports should be aware that, subject to applicable thresholds and exclusions, travel and travel reimbursements accepted from sources other than the United States Government must be reported on their financial disclosure reports.

*Example 1 to paragraph (a)(2)(iii):* A GS–15 employee of the Forest Service has developed and marketed, in her private capacity, a speed reading technique for which popular demand is growing. She is invited to speak

about the technique by a representative of an organization that will be substantially affected by a regulation on land management which the employee is in the process of drafting for the Forest Service. The representative offers to pay the employee a \$200 speaker's fee and to reimburse all her travel expenses. She may accept the travel reimbursements, but not the speaker's fee. The speaking activity is related to her official duties under § 2635.807(a)(2)(i)(C) and the fee is prohibited compensation for such speech; travel expenses incurred in connection with the speaking engagement, on the other hand, are not prohibited compensation for a GS–15 employee.

*Example 2 to paragraph (a)(2)(iii):* Solely because of her recent appointment to a Cabinet-level position, a Government official is invited by the Chief Executive Officer of a major international corporation to attend firm meetings to be held in Aspen for the purpose of addressing senior corporate managers on the importance of recreational activities to a balanced lifestyle. The firm offers to reimburse the official's travel expenses. The official may not accept the offer. The speaking activity is related to official duties under § 2635.807(a)(2)(i)(B) and, because she is a covered noncareer employee as defined in § 2636.303(a) of this chapter, the travel expenses are prohibited compensation as to her.

*Example 3 to paragraph (a)(2)(iii):* A GS–14 attorney at the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) who played a lead role in a recently concluded merger case is invited to speak about the case, in his private capacity, at a conference in New York. The attorney has no public speaking responsibilities on behalf of the FTC apart from the judicial and administrative proceedings to which he is assigned. The sponsors of the conference offer to reimburse the attorney for expenses incurred in connection with his travel to New York. They also offer him, as compensation for his time and effort, a free trip to San Francisco. The attorney may accept the travel expenses to New York, but not the expenses to San Francisco. The lecture relates to his official duties under paragraphs (a)(2)(i)(E)(1) and (a)(2)(i)(E)(2) of § 2635.807, but because he is not a covered noncareer employee as defined in § 2636.303(a) of this chapter, the expenses associated with his travel to New York are not a prohibited form of compensation as to him. The travel expenses to San Francisco, on the other hand, not incurred in connection with the speaking activity, are a prohibited form of compensation. If the attorney were a covered noncareer employee he would be barred from accepting the travel expenses to New York as well as the travel expenses to San Francisco.

*Example 4 to paragraph (a)(2)(iii):* An advocacy group dedicated to improving treatments for severe pain asks the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to provide a conference speaker who can discuss recent advances in the agency's research on pain. The group also offers to pay the employee's travel expenses to attend the conference. After performing the required conflict of interest analysis, NIH authorizes acceptance of the travel expenses under 31 U.S.C. 1353 and the implementing General Services Administration regulation, as codified under 41 CFR chapter 304, and authorizes an employee to undertake the travel. At the conference the advocacy group, as agreed, pays the employee's hotel bill and provides several of his meals. Subsequently the group reimburses the agency for the cost of the employee's airfare and some additional meals. All of the payments by the advocacy group are permissible. Since the employee is speaking officially and the expense payments are accepted under 31 U.S.C. 1353, they are not prohibited compensation under § 2635.807(a)(2)(iii). The same result would obtain with respect to expense payments made by non-Government sources properly authorized under an agency gift acceptance statute, the Government Employees Training Act, 5 U.S.C. 4111, or the foreign gifts law, 5 U.S.C. 7342.

(iv) *Receive* means that there is actual or constructive receipt of the compensation by the employee so that the employee has the right to exercise dominion and control over the compensation and to direct its subsequent use. Compensation received by an employee includes compensation which is:

(A) Paid to another person, including a charitable organization, on the basis of designation, recommendation or other specification by the employee; or

(B) Paid with the employee's knowledge and acquiescence to his parent, sibling, spouse, child, or dependent relative.

(v) *Particular matter involving specific parties* has the meaning set forth in § 2637.102(a)(7) of this chapter.

(vi) *Personal and substantial participation* has the meaning set forth in § 2635.402(b)(4).

(3) *Exception for teaching certain courses.* Notwithstanding that the activity would relate to his official duties under paragraphs (a)(2)(i) (B) or (E) of this section, an employee may accept compensation for teaching a course requiring multiple presentations by the employee if the course is offered as part of:

(i) The regularly established curriculum of:

(A) An institution of higher education as defined at 20 U.S.C. 1141(a);

(B) An elementary school as defined at 20 U.S.C. 2891(8); or

(C) A secondary school as defined at 20 U.S.C. 2891(21); or

(ii) A program of education or training sponsored and funded by the Federal Government or by a State or local government which is not offered by an entity described in paragraph (a)(3)(i) of this section.

*Example 1:* An employee of the Cost Accounting Standards Board who teaches an advanced accounting course as part of the regular business school curriculum of an accredited university may receive compensation for teaching the course even though a substantial portion of the course deals with cost accounting principles applicable to contracts with the Government.

*Example 2:* An attorney employed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission may accept compensation for teaching a course at a state college on the subject of Federal employment discrimination law. The attorney could not accept compensation for teaching the same seminar as part of a continuing education program sponsored by her bar association because the subject of the course is focused on the operations or programs of the EEOC and the sponsor of the course is not an accredited educational institution.

*Example 3:* An employee of the National Endowment for the Humanities is invited by a private university to teach a course that is a survey of Government policies in support of artists, poets and writers. As part of his official duties, the employee administers a grant that the university has received from the NEH. The employee may not accept compensation for teaching the course because the university has interests that may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties. Likewise, an employee may not receive compensation for any teaching that is undertaken as part of his official duties or that involves the use of nonpublic information.

(b) *Reference to official position.* An employee who is engaged in teaching, speaking or writing as outside employment or as an outside activity shall not use or permit the use of his official title or position to identify him in connection with his teaching, speaking or writing activity or to promote any book, seminar, course, program or similar undertaking, except that:

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(1) An employee may include or permit the inclusion of his title or position as one of several biographical details when such information is given to identify him in connection with his teaching, speaking or writing, provided that his title or position is given no more prominence than other significant biographical details;

(2) An employee may use, or permit the use of, his title or position in connection with an article published in a scientific or professional journal, provided that the title or position is accompanied by a reasonably prominent disclaimer satisfactory to the agency stating that the views expressed in the article do not necessarily represent the views of the agency or the United States; and

(3) An employee who is ordinarily addressed using a general term of address, such as "The Honorable," or a rank, such as a military or ambassadorial rank, may use or permit the use of that term of address or rank in connection with his teaching, speaking or writing.

NOTE: Some agencies may have policies requiring advance agency review, clearance, or approval of certain speeches, books, articles or similar products to determine whether the product contains an appropriate disclaimer, discloses nonpublic information, or otherwise complies with this section.

Example 1: A meteorologist employed with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is asked by a local university to teach a graduate course on hurricanes. The university may include the meteorologist's Government title and position together with other information about his education and previous employment in course materials setting forth biographical data on all teachers involved in the graduate program. However, his title or position may not be used to promote the course, for example, by featuring the meteorologist's Government title, Senior Meteorologist, NOAA, in bold type under his name. In contrast, his title may be used in this manner when the meteorologist is authorized by NOAA to speak in his official capacity.

Example 2: A doctor just employed by the Centers for Disease Control has written a paper based on his earlier independent research into cell structures. Incident to the paper's publication in the Journal of the American Medical Association, the doctor may be given credit for the paper, as Dr. M. Wellbeing, Associate Director, Centers for Disease Control, provided that the article also contains a disclaimer, concurred in by

the CDC, indicating that the paper is the result of the doctor's independent research and does not represent the findings of the CDC.

Example 3: An employee of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation has been asked to give a speech in his private capacity, without compensation, to the annual meeting of a committee of the American Bankers Association on the need for banking reform. The employee may be described in his introduction at the meeting as an employee of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation provided that other pertinent biographical details are mentioned as well.

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992; 57 FR 48557, Oct. 27, 1992, as amended at 62 FR 48748, Sept. 17, 1997; 65 FR 53652, Sept. 5, 2000; 66 FR 59674, Nov. 30, 2001]

§ 2635.808 Fundraising activities.

An employee may engage in fundraising only in accordance with the restrictions in part 950 of this title on the conduct of charitable fundraising in the Federal workplace and in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section.

(a) Definitions. For purposes of this section: (1) Fundraising means the raising of funds for a nonprofit organization, other than a political organization as defined in 26 U.S.C. 527(e), through:

(i) Solicitation of funds or sale of items; or

(ii) Participation in the conduct of an event by an employee where any portion of the cost of attendance or participation may be taken as a charitable tax deduction by a person incurring that cost.

(2) Participation in the conduct of an event means active and visible participation in the promotion, production, or presentation of the event and includes serving as honorary chairperson, sitting at a head table during the event, and standing in a reception line. The term does not include mere attendance at an event provided that, to the employee's knowledge, his attendance is not used by the nonprofit organization to promote the event. While the term generally includes any public speaking during the event, it does not include the delivery of an official speech as defined in paragraph (a)(3) of this section or any seating or other participation appropriate to the delivery of such a speech. Waiver of a fee for attendance

at an event by a participant in the conduct of that event does not constitute a gift for purposes of subpart B of this part.

**NOTE:** This section does not prohibit fundraising for a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group. However, there are statutory restrictions that apply to political fundraising. For example, under the Hatch Act Reform Amendments of 1993, at 5 U.S.C. 7323(a), employees may not knowingly solicit, accept, or receive a political contribution from any person, except under limited circumstances. In addition, employees are prohibited by 18 U.S.C. 607 from soliciting or receiving political contributions in Federal offices, and, except as permitted by the Hatch Act Reform Amendments, are prohibited by 18 U.S.C. 602 from knowingly soliciting political contributions from other employees.

*Example 1:* The Secretary of Transportation has been asked to serve as master of ceremonies for an All-Star Gala. Tickets to the event cost \$150 and are tax deductible as a charitable donation, with proceeds to be donated to a local hospital. By serving as master of ceremonies, the Secretary would be participating in fundraising.

(3) *Official speech* means a speech given by an employee in his official capacity on a subject matter that relates to his official duties, provided that the employee's agency has determined that the event at which the speech is to be given provides an appropriate forum for the dissemination of the information to be presented and provided that the employee does not request donations or other support for the nonprofit organization. Subject matter relates to an employee's official duties if it focuses specifically on the employee's official duties, on the responsibilities, programs, or operations of the employee's agency as described in § 2635.807(a)(2)(i)(E), or on matters of Administration policy on which the employee has been authorized to speak.

*Example 1:* The Secretary of Labor is invited to speak at a banquet honoring a distinguished labor leader, the proceeds of which will benefit a nonprofit organization that assists homeless families. She devotes a major portion of her speech to the Administration's Points of Light initiative, an effort to encourage citizens to volunteer their time to help solve serious social problems. Because she is authorized to speak on Administration policy, her remarks at the banquet are an official speech. However, the Secretary would be engaged in fundraising if she

were to conclude her official speech with a request for donations to the nonprofit organization.

*Example 2:* A charitable organization is sponsoring a two-day tennis tournament at a country club in the Washington, DC area to raise funds for recreational programs for learning disabled children. The organization has invited the Secretary of Education to give a speech on federally funded special education programs at the awards dinner to be held at the conclusion of the tournament and a determination has been made that the dinner is an appropriate forum for the particular speech. The Secretary may speak at the dinner and, under § 2635.204(g)(1), he may partake of the meal provided to him at the dinner.

(4) *Personally solicit* means to request or otherwise encourage donations or other support either through person-to-person contact or through the use of one's name or identity in correspondence or by permitting its use by others. It does not include the solicitation of funds through the media or through either oral remarks, or the contemporaneous dispatch of like items of mass-produced correspondence, if such remarks or correspondence are addressed to a group consisting of many persons, unless it is known to the employee that the solicitation is targeted at subordinates or at persons who are prohibited sources within the meaning of § 2635.203(d). It does not include behind-the-scenes assistance in the solicitation of funds, such as drafting correspondence, stuffing envelopes, or accounting for contributions.

*Example 1:* An employee of the Department of Energy who signs a letter soliciting funds for a local private school does not "personally solicit" funds when 500 copies of the letter, which makes no mention of his DOE position and title, are mailed to members of the local community, even though some individuals who are employed by Department of Energy contractors may receive the letter.

(b) *Fundraising in an official capacity.* An employee may participate in fundraising in an official capacity if, in accordance with a statute, Executive order, regulation or otherwise as determined by the agency, he is authorized to engage in the fundraising activity as part of his official duties. When authorized to participate in an official capacity, an employee may use his official title, position and authority.

## § 2635.809

*Example 1:* Because participation in his official capacity is authorized under part 950 of this title, the Secretary of the Army may sign a memorandum to all Army personnel encouraging them to donate to the Combined Federal Campaign.

(c) *Fundraising in a personal capacity.* An employee may engage in fundraising in his personal capacity provided that he does not:

(1) Personally solicit funds or other support from a subordinate or from any person:

(i) Known to the employee, if the employee is other than a special Government employee, to be a prohibited source within the meaning of § 2635.203(d); or

(ii) Known to the employee, if the employee is a special Government employee, to be a prohibited source within the meaning of § 2635.203(d)(4) that is a person whose interests may be substantially affected by performance or non-performance of his official duties;

(2) Use or permit the use of his official title, position or any authority associated with his public office to further the fundraising effort, except that an employee who is ordinarily addressed using a general term of address, such as “The Honorable,” or a rank, such as a military or ambassadorial rank, may use or permit the use of that term of address or rank for such purposes; or

(3) Engage in any action that would otherwise violate this part.

*Example 1:* A nonprofit organization is sponsoring a golf tournament to raise funds for underprivileged children. The Secretary of the Navy may not enter the tournament with the understanding that the organization intends to attract participants by offering other entrants the opportunity, in exchange for a donation in the form of an entry fee, to spend the day playing 18 holes of golf in a foursome with the Secretary of the Navy.

*Example 2:* An employee of the Merit Systems Protection Board may not use the agency’s photocopier to reproduce fundraising literature for her son’s private school. Such use of the photocopier would violate the standards at § 2635.704 regarding use of Government property.

*Example 3:* An Assistant Attorney General may not sign a letter soliciting funds for a homeless shelter as “John Doe, Assistant Attorney General.” He also may not sign a letter with just his signature, “John Doe,” soliciting funds from a prohibited source, un-

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less the letter is one of many identical, mass-produced letters addressed to a large group where the solicitation is not known to him to be targeted at persons who are either prohibited sources or subordinates.

[57 FR 35041, Aug. 7, 1992; 57 FR 48557, Oct. 27, 1992; 61 FR 50691, Sept. 27, 1996]

### § 2635.809 Just financial obligations.

Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those such as Federal, State, or local taxes that are imposed by law. For purposes of this section, a just financial obligation includes any financial obligation acknowledged by the employee or reduced to judgment by a court. In good faith means an honest intention to fulfill any just financial obligation in a timely manner. In the event of a dispute between an employee and an alleged creditor, this section does not require an agency to determine the validity or amount of the disputed debt or to collect a debt on the alleged creditor’s behalf.

## Subpart I—Related Statutory Authorities

### § 2635.901 General.

In addition to the standards of ethical conduct set forth in subparts A through H of this part, there are a number of statutes that establish standards to which an employee’s conduct must conform. The list set forth in § 2635.902 references some of the more significant of those statutes. It is not comprehensive and includes only references to statutes of general applicability. While it includes references to several of the basic conflict of interest statutes whose standards are explained in more detail throughout this part, it does not include references to statutes of more limited applicability, such as statutes that apply only to officers and employees of the Department of Defense.

### § 2635.902 Related statutes.

(a) The prohibition against solicitation or receipt of bribes (18 U.S.C. 201(b)).

(b) The prohibition against solicitation or receipt of illegal gratuities (18 U.S.C. 201(c)).

(c) The prohibition against seeking or receiving compensation for certain representational services before the Government (18 U.S.C. 203).

(d) The prohibition against assisting in the prosecution of claims against the Government or acting as agent or attorney before the Government (18 U.S.C. 205).

(e) The post-employment restrictions applicable to former employees (18 U.S.C. 207, with implementing regulations at parts 2637 and 2641 of this chapter).

(f) The prohibition on certain former agency officials' acceptance of compensation from a contractor (41 U.S.C. 423(d)).

(g) The prohibition against participating in matters affecting an employee's own financial interests or the financial interests of other specified persons or organizations (18 U.S.C. 208).

(h) The actions required of certain agency officials when they contact, or are contacted by, offerors or bidders regarding non-Federal employment (41 U.S.C. 423(c)).

(i) The prohibition against receiving salary or any contribution to or supplementation of salary as compensation for Government service from a source other than the United States (18 U.S.C. 209).

(j) The prohibition against gifts to superiors (5 U.S.C. 7351).

(k) The prohibition against solicitation or receipt of gifts from specified prohibited sources (5 U.S.C. 7353).

(l) The prohibition against fraudulent access and related activity in connection with computers (18 U.S.C. 1030).

(m) The provisions governing receipt and disposition of foreign gifts and decorations (5 U.S.C. 7342).

(n) [Reserved]

(o) The prohibitions against certain political activities (5 U.S.C. 7321 through 7326 and 18 U.S.C. 602, 603, 606 and 607).

(p) The prohibitions against disloyalty and striking (5 U.S.C. 7311 and 18 U.S.C. 1918).

(q) The general prohibition (18 U.S.C. 219) against acting as the agent of a foreign principal required to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (22 U.S.C. 611 through 621).

(r) The prohibition against employment of a person convicted of participating in or promoting a riot or civil disorder (5 U.S.C. 7313).

(s) The prohibition against employment of an individual who habitually uses intoxicating beverages to excess (5 U.S.C. 7352).

(t) The prohibition against misuse of a Government vehicle (31 U.S.C. 1344).

(u) The prohibition against misuse of the franking privilege (18 U.S.C. 1719).

(v) The prohibition against fraud or false statements in a Government matter (18 U.S.C. 1001).

(w) The prohibition against concealing, mutilating or destroying a public record (18 U.S.C. 2071).

(x) The prohibition against counterfeiting or forging transportation requests (18 U.S.C. 508).

(y) The restrictions on disclosure of certain sensitive Government information under the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552 and 552a).

(z) The prohibitions against disclosure of classified information (18 U.S.C. 798 and 50 U.S.C. 783(a)).

(aa) The prohibition against disclosure of proprietary information and certain other information of a confidential nature (18 U.S.C. 1905).

(bb) The prohibitions on disclosing and obtaining certain procurement information (41 U.S.C. 423(a) and (b)).

(cc) The prohibition against unauthorized use of documents relating to claims from or by the Government (18 U.S.C. 285).

(dd) The prohibition against certain personnel practices (5 U.S.C. 2302).

(ee) The prohibition against interference with civil service examinations (18 U.S.C. 1917).

(ff) The restrictions on use of public funds for lobbying (18 U.S.C. 1913).

(gg) The prohibition against participation in the appointment or promotion of relatives (5 U.S.C. 3110).

(hh) The prohibition against solicitation or acceptance of anything of value to obtain public office for another (18 U.S.C. 211).

(ii) The prohibition against conspiracy to commit an offense against or to defraud the United States (18 U.S.C. 371).

(jj) The prohibition against embezzlement or conversion of Government money or property (18 U.S.C. 641).

(kk) The prohibition against failing to account for public money (18 U.S.C. 643).

(ll) The prohibition against embezzlement of the money or property of another person that is in the possession of an employee by reason of his employment (18 U.S.C. 654).

[57 FR 35042, Aug. 7, 1992, as amended at 62 FR 48748, Sept. 17, 1997; 64 FR 2422, Jan. 14, 1999; 65 FR 69657, Nov. 20, 2000]

## PART 2636—LIMITATIONS ON OUTSIDE EARNED INCOME, EMPLOYMENT AND AFFILIATIONS FOR CERTAIN NONCAREER EMPLOYEES

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2636.307	Requirement for advance authorization to engage in teaching for compensation.

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. App. (Ethics in Government Act of 1978); Pub. L. 101–410, 104 Stat. 890, 28 U.S.C. 2461 note (Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 1990), as amended by Sec. 31001, Pub. L. 104–134, 110 Stat. 1321 (Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996) and Sec. 701, Pub. L. 114–74 (Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015); E.O. 12674, 54 FR 15159, 3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 215, as modified by E.O. 12731, 55 FR 42547, 3 CFR, 1990 Comp., p. 306.

SOURCE: 56 FR 1723, Jan. 17, 1991, unless otherwise noted.

### Subpart A—General Provisions

#### § 2636.101 Purpose.

This part is issued under authority of title VI of the Ethics Reform Act of 1989 (Pub. L. 101–194, as amended), to implement the 15 percent outside earned income limitation at 5 U.S.C. app. 501(a) and the limitations at 5 U.S.C. app. 502 on outside employment and affiliations, which are applicable to certain noncareer employees.

[63 FR 43068, Aug. 12, 1998]

#### § 2636.102 Definitions.

The definitions listed below are of general applicability to this part. Additional definitions of narrower applicability appear in the subparts or sections of subparts to which they apply. For purposes of this part:

(a) *Agency ethics official* refers to the designated agency ethics official and to any deputy ethics official described in § 2638.204 of this subchapter to whom authority to issue advisory opinions under § 2636.103 of this part has been delegated by the designated agency ethics official.

(b) *Designated agency ethics official* refers to the official described in § 2638.201 of this subchapter.

(c) *Employee* means any officer or employee of the executive branch, other than a special Government employee as defined in 18 U.S.C. 202. It includes officers but not enlisted members of the uniformed services as defined in 5 U.S.C. 2101(3). It does not include the President or Vice President.

(d) *Executive branch* includes each executive agency as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105 and any other entity or administrative unit in the executive branch. However, it does not include any agency that is defined by 5 U.S.C. app. 109(11) as within the legislative branch.

(e) The terms *he*, *his*, and *him* include “she,” “hers” and “her.”

[56 FR 1723, Jan. 17, 1991, as amended at 63 FR 43068, Aug. 12, 1998]

#### § 2636.103 Advisory opinions.

(a) *Request for an advisory opinion.* (1) An employee may request an advisory