

Office of Government Ethics

§ 2638.310

(2) If after such consultation the Criminal Division determines that a criminal investigation will be undertaken, the Director shall take no further action with regard to that request pending a determination by the Criminal Division not to prosecute.

(3) Upon receipt of a determination by the Criminal Division not to prosecute, the Director shall then follow the procedures for all other requests for formal advisory opinions set forth in this part.

§ 2638.306 Notice of requests.

The Director shall provide notice to interested parties identified in a request which will be the subject of a formal advisory opinion that such an opinion will be rendered. Generally, the designated agency ethics official of the agency involved shall be notified of the request.

§ 2638.307 Written comment on requests.

(a) To the extent practicable, the Director shall provide interested parties with an opportunity to submit written comment on a request for a formal advisory opinion. A time by which the comment should be received to be considered will be indicated with the notice that the request has been made.

(b) Additional time in which to comment may be granted upon written request to or at the discretion of the Director. Such requests and all written comments shall be sent to the Office of Government Ethics, Suite 500, 1201 New York Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20005-3917.

[46 FR 2583, Jan. 9, 1981. Redesignated at 54 FR 50231, Dec. 5, 1989, and amended at 55 FR 27180, July 2, 1990]

§ 2638.308 Issuance.

(a) A formal advisory opinion,

(1) Which involves the application of any conflict of interest law embodied in 18 U.S.C. 202-209 to a transaction or activity which does not raise a question of an actual or apparent violation of this law but which raises an important matter of first impression, or

(2) Which is issued following the procedure set forth in § 2638.305(d),

requires consultation by the Office of Government Ethics with the Office of Legal Counsel of the Department of Justice before it is issued.

(b) An advisory opinion shall be considered issued when it is dated, numbered, and signed by the Director. Unless released by the person who made the request, the opinion will not become publicly available until information which identifies individuals involved and which is unnecessary to the complete understanding of the opinion has been deleted from the opinion and this version of the opinion is placed in a public reading file at the Office of Government Ethics. (See § 2638.310)

§ 2638.309 Reliance on formal advisory opinions.

(a) Any formal advisory opinion referred to in § 2638.308(a) or any provisions or finding of a formal advisory opinion involving the application of the Act, Executive Order 11222 and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act or Executive Order, may be relied upon by:

(1) Any person directly involved in the specific transaction or activity with respect to which such advisory opinion has been rendered, and

(2) Any person directly involved in any specific transaction or activity which is indistinguishable in all its material aspects from the transaction or activity with respect to which such advisory opinion was rendered.

(b) Any person who relies upon any provision or finding of any formal advisory opinion in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section and who acts in good faith in accordance with the provisions and findings of such opinion, shall not, as a result of such act, be subject to prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 202-209 or, in the case where the opinion is exculpatory, be subject to any administrative adverse action or civil action based upon legal authority cited in that opinion.

§ 2638.310 Public availability and publication of formal advisory opinions.

(a) The Director shall make sufficient deletions in any formal advisory opinion so that unless necessary to the complete understanding of the opinion,