

understands that knowingly or willingly seeking or obtaining access to records about another individual under false pretenses is punishable by a fine of up to \$5,000.

(b) *Sensitive records.* In certain cases where the Department determines that the requested record is of sufficient sensitivity, it may require the individual to furnish a signed notarized statement verifying the requester's identity. The Department will inform the individual at the time the record is retrieved whether or not such a statement is necessary.

(c) *Accompanying individual.* If, when exercising physical access to a record, the requester is accompanied by any other person, the Department will require the requester to sign a statement authorizing disclosure of the contents of record in the presence of the accompanying individual.

(d) *Authorized representatives or designees.* When an individual wishes to authorize another person or persons access to her or his records other than as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, the individual shall submit a signed, notarized statement authorizing and consenting to access by a designated person or persons.

(e) *Guardians.* The parent(s) of any minor, or the legal guardian of an individual who has been declared to be incompetent due to physical or mental incapacity or age by a court of competent jurisdiction, may act for and on behalf of said individual upon presentation of appropriate documentation of such relationship.

(f) *Medical records.* If, in the judgment of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Medical Services or her/his designee, the release of medical information directly to the requester could have an adverse effect on the requester, the aforementioned officer will attempt to arrange an acceptable alternative in granting access to such record(s). This will normally involve the release of such information to a doctor named by the requester.

(g) *Records relating to civil actions or proceedings.* The requirements of this section do not entitle an individual to the right of access to any information compiled in reasonable anticipation of a civil action or proceeding.

§ 171.35 Requests for amending records.

(a) An individual has the right to request that the Department amend a record pertaining to her or him which the individual believes is not accurate, relevant, timely, or complete. At the time the Department grants access to a record it will also furnish guidelines for requesting amendments to the record. These guidelines will also be available in the public reading room in the Department of State, Washington, DC between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, except for legal public holidays, or may be obtained by writing the Information and Privacy Coordinator, Foreign Affairs Information Management Center, Department of State, Room 1239, Washington, DC 20520.

(b) Requests for amending records must be in writing and mailed or delivered to the Information and Privacy Coordinator, Foreign Affairs Information Management Center, Department of State, Room 1239, Washington, DC 20520, who will coordinate the review of the request to amend a record with the appropriate office(s). The Department will require verification of personal identity as provided § 154.5(c)(3) of these regulations before it will initiate action to amend a record to ensure that the requester is not deliberately or inadvertently seeking to change records about other persons. Such requests should contain, as a minimum, identifying information needed to locate the record, a brief description of the items of information to be amended, and the nature of the requested amendment. The requester should submit as much documentation, arguments or other data as seems warranted to support her/his request for amendment.

(c) All requests for amendments to records will be acknowledged within 10 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays). Whenever possible all requests for amendments to records will be reviewed within 10 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) of their receipt by the Office responsible for the record, and the requester will be advised of the results of the review. In those cases where the review cannot be completed within 10 days, the requester will be so

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advised and informed when the review will be completed. Except in unusual circumstances, this review will be completed no later than 30 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays) after receipt of the request to amend a record.

(d) In reviewing a record in response to a request to amend, the Department shall determine whether the record is relevant and necessary to accomplish a purpose of the agency and shall incorporate the criteria of accuracy, relevance, timeliness, and completeness of the record in that review.

(e) If the office responsible for the record agrees with an individual's request to amend a record, it shall:

(1) Advise the individual in writing;

(2) Amend the record accordingly; and

(3) If an accounting of disclosure has been made, advise all previous recipients of the record of the amendment and its substance.

(f) If the office responsible for the record, after an initial review of a request to amend a record disagrees with all or any portion of the requested amendment, an officer at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level or equivalent, shall:

(1) Advise the individual of its refusal and the reasons for it; and

(2) Inform the individual that she or he may request a further review in accordance with subpart G.

Subpart E—Ethics in Government Provisions

§ 171.40 Covered employees.

(a) Officers and employees, including special government employees, whose positions are classified at grades GS-16 and above or at any equivalent rate under another pay schedule;

(b) Officers or employees in a position determined by the Director of the Office of Government Ethics to be of equal classification to GS-16;

(c) Employees in the excepted service in positions which are of a confidential or policy-making nature unless an employee or groups of employees are ex-

empted by the Director of the Office of Government Ethics;

(d) The designated agency official who acts as the Department's Ethics Officer; and

(e) Individuals who are nominated for positions requiring Senate confirmation by the President but who are *not* subsequently confirmed by the Senate.

§ 171.41 Identifying information.

(a) The name and/or position title of the Department of State official who is subject of the request,

(b) The time period covered by the report requested, and

(c) Completion of an Ethics Request Form.

§ 171.42 Time limits.

(a) Reports shall be made available to the public within fifteen (15) days after receipt by the Department.

(b) Reports shall be retained by the Department and made available to the public for a period of six (6) years. The exceptions are those reports which are filed by individuals who are nominated for office by the President and are not confirmed by the Senate; those reports will be retained and made available for a one-year period.

§ 171.43 Access to, and use of, reports.

The Attorney General is authorized to bring a civil action against any person who obtains or uses a financial disclosure report:

(a) For any unlawful purpose;

(b) For any commercial purpose, other than for news or community dissemination to the general public;

(c) For determining or establishing the credit rating of any individual; or

(d) For use, directly or indirectly, in the solicitation of money for any political, charitable, or other purpose.

The court may assess a civil penalty not to exceed \$5,000 against any person who obtains or uses the reports for these prohibited purposes; an additional remedy as available under statutory or common law may also be assessed at the discretion of the court.