

received from Government agencies or other sources for official use only within the Department or developed under a pledge of confidence is not to be divulged to unauthorized persons or agencies.

(3) *Information obtained in confidence.* Certain Department units (e.g., Food and Drug Administration, and the Social Security Administration) obtain in the course of their program activities certain information from businesses or individuals which they are forbidden by law from disclosing. These statutory prohibitions are found in 21 U.S.C. 331j, and 18 U.S.C. 1905. Each employee is responsible for observing these laws.

(4) *Use of information for private gain.* Government employees are sometimes able to obtain information about some action the Government is about to take or some other matter which is not generally known. Information of this kind shall not be used by the employee to further his or her or someone else's private financial or other interests. Such a use of official information is clearly a violation of a public trust. Employees shall not, directly or indirectly, make use of, or permit others to make use of, for the purpose of furthering any private interest, official information not made available to the general public.

(b) The Privacy Act provides criminal penalties for an employee who willfully discloses individually identifiable information from records, disclosure of which is prohibited by that Act. 5 U.S.C. 552a(i).

Subpart D—Financial Obligations

§ 73.735-401 General provisions.

(a) The Department considers the indebtedness of its employees to be a matter of their own concern. However, employees shall not by failure to meet their just financial obligations reflect adversely on the Government as their employer. Employees are expected to pay each just financial obligation in a proper and timely manner. A "just financial obligation" is one acknowledged by the employee or reduced to judgment by a court, or one imposed by law such as Federal, State, or local taxes. "In a proper and timely manner" is a manner which the Depart-

ment determines does not, under the circumstances, reflect adversely on the part of an employee in meeting his or her financial obligations, particularly those that relate to support of the employee's family, to payment of Federal, State, or local taxes, or to payments to tax-supported institutions such as a city or State hospital, or educational institution. If for some reason an employee is unable to pay these obligations promptly, he or she is expected to make satisfactory arrangements for payment and abide by these arrangements.

(b) Disciplinary action may be considered when an employee has handled his or her financial affairs in such a way that:

(1) Action on complaints received from creditors requires the use of a considerable amount of official time, or

(2) It appears that financial difficulties are impairing the employee's efficiency on the job, or

(3) Because of the employee's financial irresponsibility, the attitude of the general public toward the Department may be adversely affected; and the employee after counseling does not make arrangements to meet his or her financial obligations.

Subpart E—Gifts, Entertainment, and Favors

§ 73.735-501 Prohibited acceptance of gifts, entertainment, and favors.

(a) Except as provided in §§ 73.735-502 and 73.735-506, an employee shall not directly or indirectly solicit or accept anything of monetary value, including gifts, gratuities, favors, entertainment or loans from a person who the employee knows, or should know because of the nature of the employee's work:

(1) Has, or is seeking to obtain, contractual or other business or financial relations with the employee's principal operating component, or sub-unit thereof; or with a component of the Department with respect to which the employee has official duties;

(2) Conducts operations or activities that are regulated by the employee's principal operating component, or sub-unit thereof or by a component of the