

Federal Emergency Management Agency, DHS

§ 6.87

Federal Emergency Management Agency believes that the above-listed system of records should be exempt from this provision in order to avoid revealing investigative techniques and procedures outlined in those records and in order to prevent revelation of the existence on an on-going investigation where there is a need to keep the existence of the investigation secret.

(xii) 5 U.S.C. 552a(g) provides civil remedies to an individual for an agency's refusal to amend a record or to make a review of a request for amendment; for an agency's refusal to grant access to a record; for an agency's failure to maintain accurate, relevant, timely and complete records which are used to make a determination which is adverse to the individual; and for an agency's failure to comply with any other provision of 5 U.S.C. 552a in such a way as to have an adverse effect on an individual. The Federal Emergency Management Agency believes that the above-listed system of records should be exempted from this provision to the extent that the civil remedies provided therein may relate to provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552a from which the above-listed system of records is proposed to be exempt. Since the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552a enumerated in paragraphs (b)(2)(i) through (xi) of this section are proposed to be inapplicable to the above-listed systems of records for the reasons stated therein, there should be no corresponding civil remedies for failure to comply with the requirements of those provisions to which the exemption is proposed to apply. Further, the Federal Emergency Management Agency believes that application of this provision to the above-listed system of records would adversely affect its ability to conduct criminal investigations by exposing to civil court action every stage of the criminal investigative process in which information is compiled or used in order to identify, detect, or otherwise investigate persons suspected or known to be engaged in criminal conduct.

(xiii) Individuals may not have access to another agency's records, which are contained in files maintained by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, when that other agency's regulations provide that such records are

subject to general exemption under 5 U.S.C. 552a(j). If such exempt records are within a request for access, FEMA will advise the individual of their existence and of the name and address of the source agency. For any further information concerning the record and the exemption, the individual must contact that source agency.

[45 FR 64580, Sept. 30, 1980]

§ 6.87 Specific exemptions.

(a) *Exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(1).* The Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency has determined that certain systems of records may be exempt from the requirements of (c)(3) and (d) pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(1) to the extent that the system contains any information properly classified under Executive Order 12356 or any subsequent Executive order and which are required to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy. To the extent that this occurs, such records in the following systems would be exempt:

Claims (litigation) (FEMA/GC-1)—Limited Access
FEMA Enforcement (Compliance) (FEMA/GC-2)—Limited Access
General Investigative Files (FEMA/IG-1)—Limited Access
Security Management Information System (FEMA/SEC-1)—Limited Access

(b) *Exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(2) from the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552a (c)(3), (d), (e)(1), (e)(4) (G), (H), and (I), and (f).* The Federal Emergency Management Agency will not deny individuals access to information which has been used to deny them a right, privilege, or benefit to which they would otherwise be entitled.

(1) *Exempt systems.* The following systems of records, which contain information of the type described in 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(2), shall be exempt from the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(2) listed in paragraph (b) of this section.

Claims (litigation) (FEMA/GC-1)—Limited Access
FEMA Enforcement (Compliance) (FEMA/GC-2)—Limited Access
General Investigative Files (FEMA/IG-1)—Limited Access
Equal Employment Opportunity Complaints of Discrimination Files (FEMA/PER-2)—Limited Access

(2) *Reasons for exemptions.* (i) 5 U.S.C. 552a (e)(4)(G) and (f)(1) enable individuals to be notified whether a system of records contains records pertaining to them. The Federal Emergency Management Agency believes that application of these provisions to the above-listed systems of records would impair the ability of FEMA to successfully complete investigations and inquiries of suspected violators of civil and criminal laws and regulations under its jurisdiction. In many cases investigations and inquiries into violations of civil and criminal laws and regulations involve complex and continuing patterns of behavior. Individuals, if informed, that they have been identified as suspected violators of civil or criminal laws and regulations, would have an opportunity to take measures to prevent detection of illegal action so as to avoid prosecution or the imposition of civil sanctions. They would also be able to learn the nature and location of the investigation or inquiry, the type of surveillance being utilized, and they would be able to transmit this knowledge to co-conspirators. Finally, violators might be given the opportunity to destroy evidence needed to prove the violation under investigation or inquiry.

(ii) 5 U.S.C. 552a (d)(1), (e)(4)(H) and (f)(2), (3) and (5) enable individuals to gain access to records pertaining to them. The Federal Emergency Management Agency believes that application of these provisions to the above-listed systems of records would impair its ability to complete or continue civil or criminal investigations and inquiries and to detect violators of civil or criminal laws. Permitting access to records contained in the above-listed systems of records would provide violators with significant information concerning the nature of the civil or criminal investigation or inquiry. Knowledge of the facts developed during an investigation or inquiry would enable violators of criminal and civil laws and regulations to learn the extent to which the investigation or inquiry has progressed, and this could provide them with an opportunity to destroy evidence that would form the basis for prosecution or the imposition of civil sanctions. In addition, knowledge

gained through access to investigatory material could alert a violator to the need to temporarily postpone commission of the violation or to change the intended point where the violation is to be committed so as to avoid detection or apprehension. Further, access to investigatory material would disclose investigative techniques and procedures which, if known, could enable violators to structure their future operations in such a way as to avoid detection or apprehension, thereby neutralizing investigators' established and effective investigative tools and procedures. In addition, investigatory material may contain the identity of a confidential source of information or other informer who would not want his/her identity to be disclosed for reasons of personal privacy or for fear of reprisal at the hands of the individual about whom he/she supplied information. In some cases mere disclosure of the information provided by an informer would reveal the identity of the informer either through the process of elimination or by virtue of the nature of the information supplied. If informers cannot be assured that their identities (as sources for information) will remain confidential, they would be very reluctant in the future to provide information pertaining to violations of criminal and civil laws and regulations, and this would seriously compromise the ability of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to carry out its mission. Further, application of 5 U.S.C. 552a (d)(1), (e)(4)(H) and (f)(2), (3) and (5) to the above-listed systems of records would make available attorney's work product and other documents which contain evaluations, recommendations, and discussions of ongoing civil and criminal legal proceedings; the availability of such documents could have a chilling effect on the free flow of information and ideas within the Federal Emergency Management Agency which is vital to the agency's predecisional deliberative process, could seriously prejudice the agency's or the Government's position in a civil or criminal litigation, and could result in the disclosure of investigatory material which should not be disclosed for the reasons stated above.

It is the belief of the Federal Emergency Management Agency that, in both civil actions and criminal prosecutions, due process will assure that individuals have a reasonable opportunity to learn of the existence of, and to challenge, investigatory records and related materials which are to be used in legal proceedings.

(iii) 5 U.S.C. 552a (d)(2), (3) and (4), (e)(4)(H) and (f)(4) which are dependent upon access having been granted to records pursuant to the provisions cited in paragraph (b)(2)(ii) of this section, enable individuals to contest (seek amendment to) the content of records contained in a system of records and require an agency to note an amended record and to provide a copy of an individual's statement (of disagreement with the agency's refusal to amend a record) to persons or other agencies to whom the record has been disclosed. The Federal Emergency Management Agency believes that the reasons set forth in paragraphs (b)(2)(i) of this section are equally applicable to this paragraph, and, accordingly, those reasons are hereby incorporated herein by reference.

(iv) 5 U.S.C. 552a(c)(3) requires that an agency make accountings of disclosures of records available to individuals named in the records at their request; such accountings must state the date, nature, and purpose of each disclosure of a record and the name and address of the recipient. The Federal Emergency Management Agency believes that application of this provision to the above-listed systems of records would impair the ability of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other law enforcement agencies to conduct investigations and inquiries into civil and criminal violations under their respective jurisdictions. Making accountings available to violators would alert those individuals to the fact that the Federal Emergency Management Agency or another law enforcement authority is conducting an investigation or inquiry into their activities, and such accountings could reveal the geographic location of the investigation or inquiry, the nature and purpose of the investigation or inquiry and the nature of the information disclosed, and the date on which that in-

vestigation or inquiry was active. Violators possessing such knowledge would thereby be able to take appropriate measures to avoid detection or apprehension by altering their operations, transferring their activities to other locations or destroying or concealing evidence which would form the basis for prosecution or the imposition of civil sanctions.

(v) 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(1) requires that an agency maintain in its records only such information about an individual as is relevant and necessary to accomplish a purpose of the agency required to be accomplished by statute or executive order. The term *maintain* as defined in 5 U.S.C. 552a(a)(3) includes "collect" and "disseminate." At the time that information is collected by the Federal Emergency Management Agency there is often insufficient time to determine whether the information is relevant and necessary to accomplish a purpose of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; in many cases information collected may not be immediately susceptible to a determination of whether the information is relevant and necessary, particularly in the early stages of investigation or inquiry, and in many cases information which initially appears to be irrelevant or unnecessary may, upon further evaluation or upon continuation of the investigation or inquiry, prove to have particular relevance to an enforcement program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Further, not all violations of law uncovered during a Federal Emergency Management Agency inquiry fall within the civil or criminal jurisdiction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; in order to promote effective law enforcement, it often becomes necessary and desirable to disseminate information pertaining to such violations to other law enforcement agencies which have jurisdiction over the offense to which the information relates. The Federal Emergency Management Agency should not be placed in a position of having to ignore information relating to violations of law not within its jurisdiction when that information comes to the attention of the Federal Emergency Management Agency through the conduct of a lawful FEMAs

civil or criminal investigation or inquiry. The Federal Emergency Management Agency therefore believes that it is appropriate to exempt the above-listed systems of records from the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(1).

(c) *Exempt under 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(5).* The Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency has determined that certain systems of records are exempt from the requirements of (c)(3) and (d) of 5 U.S.C. 552a.

(1) *Exempt systems.* The following systems of records, which contain information of the type described in 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(5), shall be exempted from the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552a listed in paragraph (c) of this section.

Claims (litigation) (FEMA/GC-1)—Limited Access
 FEMA Enforcement (Compliance) (FEMA/GC-2)—Limited Access
 General Investigative Files (FEMA/IG-2)—Limited Access
 Security Management Information Systems (FEMA/SEC-1)—Limited Access

(2) *Reasons for exemptions.* All information about individuals in these records that meet the criteria stated in 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(5) is exempt from the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552a (c)(3) and (d). These provisions of the Privacy Act relate to making accountings of disclosure available to the subject and access to and amendment of records. These exemptions are claimed because the system of records entitled, FEMA/SEC-1, Security Management Information System, contains investigatory material compiled solely for the purpose of determining suitability, eligibility, or qualifications for access to classified information or classified Federal contracts, but only to the extent that the disclosure would reveal the identity of a source who furnished information to the Government under an express promise or, prior to September 27, 1975, under an implied promise that the identity of the source would be held in confidence. During the litigation process and investigations, it is possible that certain records from the system of records entitled, FEMA/SEC-1, Security Management System may be necessary and relevant to the litigation or investigation and included in these systems of records. To the extent that this occurs, the Director, FEMA, has deter-

mined that the records would also be exempted from subsections (c)(3) and (d) pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(5) to protect such records. A determination will be made at the time of the request for a record concerning whether specific information would reveal the identity of a source. This exemption is required in order to protect the confidentiality of the sources of information compiled for the purpose of determining access to classified information. This confidentiality helps maintain the Government's continued access to information from persons who would otherwise refuse to give it.

[45 FR 64580, Sept. 30, 1980, as amended at 47 FR 54816, Dec. 6, 1982; 52 FR 5114, Feb. 19, 1987]

PART 7—NONDISCRIMINATION IN FEDERALLY-ASSISTED PROGRAMS (FEMA REG. 5)

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