

## § 230.11

## 39 CFR Ch. I (7–1–06 Edition)

### § 230.11 What special definitions apply to these rules?

The following definitions apply to Subpart B:

(a) Authorizing official means the Inspector General or an official designated by the Inspector General to authorize release of documents or permission to testify.

(b) Case or matter means any civil proceeding before a court of law, administrative board, hearing officer, or other body conducting a judicial or administrative proceeding in which the United States, the Postal Service, or another federal agency is not a named party.

(c) Demand includes any request, order, or subpoena for testimony or the production of documents.

(d) Document means all records, papers, or official files, including, but not limited to, official letters, telegrams, memoranda, reports, studies, calendar and diary entries, graphs, notes, charts, tabulations, data analyses, statistical or information accumulations, records of meetings and conversations, film impressions, magnetic tapes, computer discs, and sound or mechanical reproductions.

(e) Employee or Office of Inspector General employee, for the purpose of this subpart only, means a Postal Service employee currently or formerly assigned to the Postal Service Office of Inspector General, student interns, contractors, and employees of contractors who have access to Office of Inspector General information and records.

(f) General Counsel to the Inspector General means the General Counsel of the Office of Inspector General, or a person authorized by the Inspector General to give legal advice to Office of Inspector General employees. General Counsel to the Inspector General does not mean the General Counsel of the Postal Service.

(g) Nonpublic includes any material or information not subject to mandatory public disclosure under § 265.6(b) or which must be kept confidential under the Inspector General Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 3.

(h) Office of Inspector General means the organizational unit within the

Postal Service as outlined in part 221 of this chapter.

(i) Office of Inspector General Manual is the document containing the standard operating procedures for criminal investigators, evaluators, and other employees of the Office of Inspector General.

(j) Reports include all written reports, letters, recordings, or other memorizations made in conjunction with the duties of an Office of Inspector General employee.

(k) Testify or testimony includes both in-person oral statements before any body conducting a judicial or administrative proceeding and statements made in depositions, answers to interrogatories, declarations, affidavits, or other similar documents.

### § 230.12 Can Office of Inspector General employees testify or produce documents that would assist me in my civil proceeding?

No current or former employee within the Office of Inspector General may testify or produce documents concerning information acquired in the course of employment or as a result of his or her relationship with the Postal Service in any proceeding to which this subpart applies (see § 230.10), unless authorized to do so by an authorizing official.

### § 230.13 Why are restrictions on Office of Inspector General employees in civil proceedings necessary?

The restrictions are intended to reduce the risk of inappropriate disclosures that might affect the operations of the Office of Inspector General; prevent the expenditure of Office of Inspector General or Postal Service resources for private purposes; and ensure that employee time is serving the best interests of the public.

### § 230.14 Who owns the written or recorded notes, memoranda, reports, and transcriptions made pursuant to an official investigation, audit, or review conducted by an employee of the Office of Inspector General?

Notes, memoranda, reports, and transcriptions, whether written or recorded and made pursuant to an official investigation, audit, or review conducted by an employee of the Office of Inspector

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General, are the property of the Office of Inspector General.

### **§ 230.15 What must an Office of Inspector General employee do if served with a demand requiring the production of documents or an appearance in court?**

If an Office of Inspector General employee is served with a demand requiring the production of documents or an appearance in court, the employee must promptly inform the authorizing official of the nature of the documents or testimony sought and all relevant facts and circumstances. Office of Inspector General employees are directed to appear as the subpoena or summons may require, but may not testify or produce documents unless authorized.

### **§ 230.16 Is there a prohibition on presenting Office of Inspector General reports or records during an employee's testimony?**

Yes, Office of Inspector General reports or records will not be presented during an employee's testimony, unless authorized by an authorizing official.

### **§ 230.17 If an attempt is made to compel production of reports and records during the employee's testimony, what is an Office of Inspector General employee directed to do?**

If an attempt is made to compel production of reports and records during the employee's testimony, the employee is directed to decline to produce the item or information and to state that the material cannot be disclosed or produced without the approval of the authorizing official. All such requests, and any other requests for documents in judicial or administrative proceedings in which the United States is not a party, shall be deemed to be a request for records under the Freedom of Information Act and shall be handled pursuant to 39 CFR 230.5.

### **§ 230.18 If authorization to testify or produce documents is not obtained by the employee, what is the employee directed to do?**

Absent written authorization from the authorizing official, the employee must respectfully decline to produce the requested documents, testify, or otherwise disclose the requested infor-

mation. If the authorization is denied or not received by the return date, the employee, together with counsel, where appropriate, shall appear at the stated time and place, produce a copy of this section, and respectfully decline to testify or produce any document on the basis of the regulations in this section.

### **§ 230.19 What criteria will the authorizing official use to determine whether to authorize testimony or production of documents?**

(a) The authorizing official will determine whether testimony or the production of documents will be authorized according to the following criteria:

(1) Statutory restrictions, as well as any legal objection, exemption, or privilege that may apply;

(2) Relevant legal standards for disclosure of nonpublic information and documents;

(3) Office of Inspector General rules and regulations;

(4) The public interest;

(5) Minimizing or preventing expenditures of Office of Inspector General and Postal Service time and resources solely for private purposes.

(6) Minimizing the appearance of improperly favoring one litigant over another;

(7) Minimizing the possibility that the public will misconstrue variances between personal opinions of Office of Inspector General employees and agency policy; and

(8) Preserving the integrity of the administrative process.

(b) Permission to testify or to release documents in all cases will be limited to matters outlined in the affidavit or declaration described in section 230.24 of this part or to such matters as deemed appropriate by the authorizing official. If the authorizing official allows the release of documents or testimony to be given by an employee, arrangements shall be made for the taking of testimony or receipt of documents by the method least disruptive to the employee's official duties. Testimony may, for example, be provided by affidavits, answers to interrogatories, written depositions, or depositions transcribed, recorded, or preserved by any other means allowable by law.