

**Annual Filing
Help Sheet for Completing SF-278**

IN GENERAL

1. Reporting Period

- a. Schedule A – Value your assets as of December 31 of the previous calendar year. Report income (including any income that was reinvested or retirement income that was deferred for income tax purposes) that was produced by each asset during the previous calendar year.
- b. Schedule B – Include information covering the previous calendar year with one exception. If you were not a federal employee for part of the year, transactions that occurred or gifts received prior to your appointment should not be included.
- c. Schedule C, Part I – For each liability, report the highest amount owed during the previous calendar year.
- d. Schedule C, Part II – List all current agreements and arrangements.
- e. Schedule D, Part I – Include information covering the calendar year up to the date of filing.
- f. Schedule D, Part II – Not required.

2. Compare with prior report. Compare your prior report with the current submission to ensure that you do not inadvertently omit entries on Schedule A or forget to report a purchase or sale transaction on Schedule B, Part I.

For example, if you reported a stock interest in Microsoft on your prior report, you must account for it on your current report. If it was sold during the reporting period, include the “sale” transaction on Schedule B, Part I. In addition, if the stock produced more than \$200 income (to include capital gains from the sale), include it on Schedule A with a value of “None (or less than \$1,000)” (because it was sold) and note the type and amount of income produced. On the other hand, if you purchased a stock during the reporting period, report the purchase transaction on Schedule B, Part I and include the stock on Schedule A. The stock should be valued as of December 31 of the previous calendar year, and type and amount of income produced should be noted.

3. Please help us review your report quickly by listing assets in the same order as your prior submission, adding new entries at the end. We really appreciate that!
4. If there is nothing to report on a schedule, check the “None” block. Do not leave the schedule blank.

SCHEDULE A

1. Report the name of each asset. Mutual funds (MF), money market funds (MM), bond funds, real estate investment trusts (REIT), unit investment trusts (UIT), etc. must be reported by

their specific names. For example, Merrill Lynch fund does not properly identify a fund, whereas Merrill Lynch Latin America Fund is a complete name.

2. **Excepted Investment Funds.** For investment vehicles that contain underlying securities (such as mutual funds, REIT, etc.), filers are required to make a determination that the vehicle is an “Excepted Investment Fund (EIF)”. For example, if you have no control over the underlying investments of a mutual fund (or similar investment vehicle) and the fund is widely held and widely diversified or widely held and publicly available, the fund qualifies as an EIF. Most publicly traded mutual funds and unit investment trusts qualify as EIFs. If you cannot make the “EIF” determination for an investment vehicle (such as Privately held investment limited partnership interest), the underlying holdings of the investment vehicle must be listed individually (with values and income) on Schedule A.

3. **IRAs.** Apply the following rules when deciding whether and how to report an IRA on Schedule A -

a. If the IRA is invested in a bank, S&L, or credit union (including money market accounts and Certificates of Deposit), treat the IRA as a regular savings account for reporting on Schedule A. (Such holdings are reportable only if the value of all holdings in the financial institution exceeded \$5,000 or income accrued to the account exceeded \$200.)

b. If the IRA is invested in individual units of securities such as stocks, bonds, or mutual funds, report the name of the fund(s) or other securities as separate line items on Schedule A and indicate the value and income for each security. IRAs are always considered self-directed and the individual holdings must be individually reported.

4. **Honoraria.** When reporting honoraria received by you or *your spouse*, please remember to include the *exact amount* and the *date* for each. Under most circumstances, you should not accept an honorarium while on official duty, and never on your own behalf. Check with us first. If you accept an honorarium on your own time on your personal behalf, you must disqualify yourself for one year from the day of receipt with respect to any matter involving the donor.

5. **Pensions.** There are two basic types of pensions, defined benefit plans and defined contribution plans. A defined benefit plan is a pension where an employee receives a fixed benefit for life based factors such as number of years employed by the entity and highest amount paid. A defined contribution plan is a pension (e.g., TIAA-CREF or other 401k plans) where employees contribute a certain amount of their salary to an account (and generally choose a fund or funds in which to invest their contributions). Sometimes the employer matches the employee’s contributions. The amount employees receive from the defined contribution plan after retirement is entirely dependant upon how well their investments did. Federal Government retirement benefits are not reportable.

a. **Defined Benefit – Schedule A** – Report the name of the employer and note that the pension is a defined benefit plan. Provide a value (if applicable) and the exact amount of the annual benefit you receive. If you do not currently receive a benefit, provide the annual benefit you will receive and the age you will start receiving the benefit. **Schedule C, Part II** – report the name of the employer, note that it is a defined benefit plan, and report the date the plan began.

b. Defined Contribution – Schedule A – Report the name of the employer and list individually as separate line items (with values and income for each) the underlying securities in the retirement plan. Generally, these plans will be invested in the company stock or mutual funds. You must make the “EIF” determination if it is invested in funds. **Schedule C, Part II** – report the name of the employer, note that it is a defined contribution plan, and report the date the plan began.

6. **“Other Income.”** For any income not identified under Block C of Schedule A, you must specify the “Type” (e.g., salary, directors fees, ordinary income, pension annuity, honoraria, etc.) and the exact amount received during calendar year 2002 under “Other Income”. However, if your spouse is employed and receives salary/wages, the employers name is reportable – not the amount.

7. **Accrued or reinvested income.** Income that accrues in a retirement account or is reinvested instead of distributed is reportable on Schedule A.

8. When listing **excepted trusts**, include the date the trust was created and the name of the trust.

Schedule B

1. **Schedule B, Part I** – Capital Gains derived from a sale listed on Schedule B must be reported on Schedule A if the total amount of income produced during the reporting period is greater than \$200. On Schedule A, the asset value for the “sold” item should reflect the value as of December 31 of the previous calendar year (e.g., if the interest was completely sold, the value would be reported as “None (or less than \$1,001)”) and “type” and “amount” of income must be noted.

2. **Schedule B, Part II** – Travel.

- a. Do not report official NSF travel even if paid for by a nonfederal source. (Contributions for official travel from outside sources are reported elsewhere as “a gift to the Government, not a personal gift.)
- b. Do not report any travel paid for by a state or local government, including the District of Columbia.

3. **In general** – Transactions or travel that occurred or gifts that were accepted prior to your Government appointment are not reportable.

Schedule C

1. **Schedule C, Part I** – Please ensure that you include the date incurred, interest rate, and term (if applicable) for all liabilities.

2. **Schedule C, Part I** – Report the highest amount owed during the previous calendar year. For example, a piece of property that was sold or whose mortgage was paid in full during the reporting period will still have a reportable liability because of the highest amount owed requirement.

3. **Schedule C, Part II** – Continuing participation in a retirement or other benefit plan of a former or current employer is reportable. For IPAs, please make note of your IPA agreement. If you are on a leave of absence, please include.

Schedule D

1. **Schedule D, Part I** – All outside positions held during the previous calendar year (except those specifically excluded in the instructions) must be included on Schedule D, Part I – regardless of compensation level. In some cases, the position will be reported on both Schedule A (if you received compensation for your services) and Schedule D, Part I.