

**What is a Confidential Financial Disclosure Report, OGE Form 450 (450), and why is it important?**

Many employees wonder why every October they are required to fill out Confidential Financial Disclosure reports. The following is provided to answer questions concerning this process.

Why do I have to fill out a 450?

5 C.F.R. part 2634 requires employees who have been identified to fully report their financial interests so that the agency ethics official can thoroughly review these reports for possible conflicts of interest. 5 CFR §2635.605 sets forth the requirements for each confidential report. Each agency determines which of its positions will be designated to require the filing of confidential reports, based on the criteria outlined at 5 C.F.R. §2635.904. Any employee who participates personally and substantially, through decision or exercise of significant judgment, in taking an official action for contracting or procurement, administering or monitoring grants, or regulating a non-Federal entity is required to fill out a 450. Some agencies also include other positions that the agency determines require filing to avoid actual or apparent conflicts of interest. An agency head or designee decides who shall file a 450. There is no grievance procedure. 5 C.F.R. §2634.906.

What is the purpose of the 450?

The purpose of the confidential financial disclosure system is to assist employees and their agencies in avoiding conflicts between official duties and private financial interests or affiliations. Individuals identified as confidential filers usually have duties that are likely to affect non-Government entities. By completing the 450, employees identify their financial interests and may recognize whether these interests conflict with their official duties. For supervisors, by reviewing these forms, they identify financial interests of their employees that may conflict with their employee's official duties. Ethics officials ensure that the agency has complied with the filing regulations and identify financial interests that may conflict with a filer's official duties.

I am a new employee. Do I wait until October to file my 450?

No. New employees must file within 30 days of assuming a new position. Please contact the Office of Counsel if you are a new employee and need to fill out a 450.

What could happen if I refuse to file the 450 or falsify the report?

Agencies may take an adverse action or other disciplinary measures for an employee's failure to submit a report when due, filing an incomplete report, or falsifying information on the report. Penalties are listed at 5 C.F.R. §2634.701 (c) and (d).

Everything on last year's 450 is exactly the same. Do I have to fill the whole thing out again?

Annual filers may file 450A if they have no new interests to report since the last report and if they do not have a new position description or significantly changed duties. In 2008, all incumbent filers must file the full 450 and then every four years thereafter, a full 450 must be filed.

I feel uncomfortable giving out this personal information. Will it be safe?

The report is a confidential report, protected under the Federal Privacy Act. After you have filled out your report, you should provide it to your supervisor for review and signature. Supervisors have been instructed to put reviewed reports in sealed envelopes addressed to The Office of Counsel. The Office of Counsel takes this responsibility very seriously. Only authorized personnel have access to these reports.

If you have any questions concerning the filing of your 450, please contact the Office of Counsel at 784-3009.