

3. (a) There shall be established and maintained in the General Accounting Office Building, Washington, D.C., under the supervision of the Chief, Legal Reference Services, Office of the General Counsel, a public reading area.

(b) In the reading area there shall be available for public inspection, and copying, final decisions, opinions, statements of policy, and instructions (including staff manuals) which may be relied upon, used or cited as precedent in the determination of rights, privileges, and obligations of members of the public.

(c) The materials to be available in the public reading area shall be selected by the General Counsel after consultation with the divisions or offices which may be concerned.

(d) To the extent required to prevent a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, the Chief of Legal Reference Services shall delete identifying details from materials made available in the public reading area. The justification for any such deletion shall be fully explained in writing.

(e) There shall be maintained in the public reading area for public use a current index of materials issued, adopted, or promulgated after July 4, 1967, which are to be made available in the reading area for public inspection and copying.

(f) The index (and current supplements) of materials made available in the public reading area at Washington should be distributed to the various regional offices for guidance in determining what information or documents may be readily made available to the public.

4. (a) A request of a member of the public for an opportunity to inspect or for a copy of an identifiable record of our Office not otherwise publicly available should be forwarded to the Director, Office of Administrative Services, who shall promptly acknowledge and record the request. A request received by a division or office concerned with a record sought should be forwarded to the Director, Office of Administrative Services, with an expression of views and recommendations as to the disposition.

(b) The Director, Office of Administrative Services, after consultation with divisions or offices (or other Government agencies where appropriate) having a continuing substantial interest in the record sought, shall promptly honor the request if no valid objection or doubt arises as to the propriety of such action and the requester is willing and able to pay the costs of locating the record and making it available for inspection or being furnished a copy. In making records available for inspection, General Accounting Office field offices may be used.

(c) In the event of an objection or doubt as to the propriety of honoring a request, the matter should be immediately referred, with an explanation, to the General Counsel for an opinion as to whether a valid basis exists for denial of the request. If the General Counsel agrees that there is a basis for withholding the record, the Director, Office of Administrative Services, shall deny the request.

(d) A person whose request is denied should be informed that he may submit a written request to the Comptroller General for reconsideration.

(e) Fees for furnishing copies of records and certifications of authenticity shall be collected in accordance with the schedule of rates prescribed in paragraph 7 of Comptroller General's Order No. 1.10. To the extent personnel is available, a records search will be performed for reimbursement at the following rates:

(1) By clerical personnel at a rate of \$4 per person per hour.

(2) By professional personnel at an actual hourly cost basis to be established prior to search.

(3) Minimum charge, \$2.

There should also be collected any incidental expenses such as the cost of transportation, if in excess of \$0.50, incurred in making records available or the furnishing of copies.

5. The public disclosure of information and inspection of records contemplated by the foregoing instructions shall not be applicable to matters that are—

(1) specifically required by Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of the national defense or foreign policy;

(2) related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of any agency;

(3) specifically exempted from disclosure by statute;