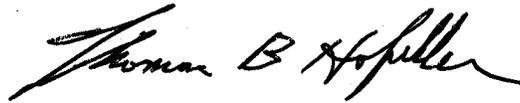


For: FSA Employees

2008 Annual Filing of OGE Form 450, Confidential Financial Disclosure Report

Approved by: Associate Administrator for Operations and Management



1 Overview

A Background

According to 5 CFR, Part 2634, Subpart I, and to avoid possible conflict-of-interest situations, employees within the Executive Branch of the Federal Government engaged in certain duties are required to report their outside activities, and personal financial interest on an annual basis.

B Purpose

This notice:

- advises all employees, who are designated to file an annual OGE Form 450, of their requirements to file by **COB May 15, 2008**
- provides guidance and instructions to management about their responsibility to ensure compliance by those designated filers under their supervision
- advises that OGE Optional Form 450-A will **not** be accepted for calendar year (CY) 2008.

Note: Instructions about STC's will be provided in a forthcoming PM notice.

Disposal Date	Distribution
August 1, 2008	All FSA employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

Notice PM-2641

1 Overview (Continued)

C Employees Required to File Annual OGE Form 450

Employees required to file OGE Form 450 are those who are assigned duties that entail personal and substantial involvement in making official decisions or using significant judgment in making a Government decision or taking a Government action in relation to any or all of the following:

- contracting or procurement
- administering or monitoring grants, subsidies, licenses, or other benefits
- regulating or auditing any non-Federal entity
- performing other activities in which the decision or action will have a direct and substantial economic effect on a non-Federal entity
- serving in any other position that FSA determines requires filing to avoid a conflict of interest, appearance of favoritism, or loss of impartiality (i.e., a real or apparent conflict of interest).

Questions about whether an employee is required to file OGE Form 450 shall be directed according to the following.

IF the employee is located in...	THEN contact...
the National Office	the servicing Classification Specialist, HRD, Domestic Operations Branch.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• APFO• Kansas City• St. Louis• State Office	KCHRO, Operations Section at 816-823-1957.

Note: Servicing administrative offices seeking ethics guidance about the criteria for whether an employee should be required to file, should contact Tonya Willis, Ethics Specialist at 202-720-0055.

2 Annual Filing Requirement of OGE Form 450

A Filing Deadline

All annual OGE Form 450's are normally due by February 15, however, because of the realignment of Ethics Offices throughout USDA, the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) granted an extension to USDA filers for the 2007 filing season. Therefore, the annual OGE Form 450 from FSA filers must be submitted by **COB May 15, 2008**.

Notice PM-2641

2 Annual Filing Requirement of OGE Form 450 (Continued)

B Reporting Period

The annual confidential financial disclosure reporting period covers the preceding CY, January 1, 2007, through December 31, 2007.

C OGE Optional Form 450-A

OGE Optional Form 450-A will not be accepted for CY 2008. CY 2008 is an election year; therefore, all filers **must** file OGE Form 450.

D Accessing OGE Form 450

OGE Form 450 should be used in place of all previous versions. OGE Form 450 may be obtained through the Internet at either of the following web sites:

- www.usda-ethics.net/, CLICK “Forms”
- www.usoge.gov, CLICK “Forms, Publications & Other Ethics Documents”.

Note: The online, web-based reporting version of OGE Form 450 is **not** available through NFC’s EPP system.

E Requests for Extensions

Extensions of the filing due date generally will not be granted except for the following extenuating circumstances:

- medical emergency
- active military duty
- natural disaster.

Each request must include a written justification and be received **before** May 15, 2008.

- National Office and Kansas City Regional Field Administrative Offices should forward requests to the Office of Ethics, Farm, Conservation, and Rural Programs Division (OE-Farm).
- SED may issue individual extensions up to 14 days for good cause shown. Cannot be redelegated.
- The Branch Chief, OE-Farm, through SED may issue extensions for more than 14 days.
- Group extension may **not** be granted without the written concurrence of the Branch Chief, OE-Farm.

Notice PM-2641

2 Annual Filing Requirement of OGE Form 450 (Continued)

F Additional Information for Filers

OGE has created the online course, “Completing the OGE Form 450”, to assist filers with completing OGE Form 450. There are separate courses for both experienced and new filers. A link to the courses may be found at www.usda-ethics.net/ and CLICK “Forms”. This web site also provides a link to information that addresses some of the OGE Form 450 filers’ more common issues, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), and other information about the Federal ethics laws and regulations.

3 Responsibilities

A Directors and Administrative Officers (AO’s) Responsibilities

National Office and Kansas City Directors and AO’s shall:

- inform covered employees of their requirement to complete OGE Form 450 according to Exhibit 1

Note: A list of designated filers maybe obtained from the servicing Administrative Office.

- provide covered employees with a pre-addressed envelope labeled according to the following:

employee name

Office or Division

“For Official Use Only: Contains OGE Form 450 - To Be Opened by Addressee Only”

- submit all completed and collected OGE Form 450’s according to subparagraph C.

B Employee Responsibilities

All employees designated to file OGE Form 450 shall:

- complete OGE Form 450
- attach any FSA-322 or prior approval of outside employment, if applicable
- sign and date OGE Form 450
- seal completed OGE Form 450 in the provided envelope and return to Director or AO.

Notice PM-2641

3 Responsibilities (Continued)

C Filing OGE Form 450

National Office and Kansas City Directors and AO's shall submit received OGE Form 450's according to the following.

IF the OGE Form 450's filer is...	THEN submit OGE Form 450 to the following for review and certification...
located in the National Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> by interoffice mail to: USDA, OE, EO-Farm Attn: Tonya Willis STOP 2120 Room 6832 South
AO, Executive Officer (EO), Management Operations Officer, or Administrative Specialists located in the State Office and APFO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> by Express mail: USDA, OE, EO-Farm Attn: Tonya Willis 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Room 6832-South Building Washington DC 20250-2120
an FSA employee located in Kansas City or St Louis	Kansas City Human Resources Office P.O. Box 419205 Mail Stop 8398 Kansas City, MO 64141-6205.
a Federal employee located in the State or County Office	AO in the State.
an APFO employee	Management Operations Officer in APFO.

D Reviewing and Certifying OGE Form 450's

OGE Form 450's:

- submitted **directly** OE-Farm according to subparagraph C **do not** require any supervisory or intermediate review
- should be forwarded directly to OE-Farm according to subparagraph C.

An Ethics Assistant, OE-Farm will receive, review, and certify OGE Form 450's.

Notice PM-2641

3 Responsibilities (Continued)

D Reviewing and Certifying OGE Form 450's (Continued)

KCHRO and AO's shall review and certify received OGC Form 450's according to the following.

Step	Reviewing and Processing Instructions for OGE Form 450's
1	Stamp the date received in the "Date Received by Agency" box located at the top of OGE Form 450.
2	Review for completeness and accuracy.
3	Check to determine if any non-Federal entities listed in Part I: Assets and Income or Part III: Outside Positions, does any business with FSA. If so, the reviewer must notate the back of OGE Form 450.
4	Initial and date all notations
5	Sign and date the "Signature and Title of Supervisor/Other Intermediate Reviewer" box.
6	<p>Ensure that the following documents are in each filers' OGE Form 450 file:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OGE Form 450 for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current report (2008) • last year's report (2007), if OGE Form 450 was filed • following year's report (2006), if OGE 450-A was filed <p>Note: Contact the FSA Record Officer to transfer records to an approved Record Center when OGE Form 450's are 6 years old.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • position description for the last 2 years (if different), including the cover sheet • all outside employment approvals, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approval memos with documentation • FSA-322 • formal advisories, such as guidance notes or e-mails for the last 2 years • extension request, if applicable.

Notice PM-2641

3 Responsibilities (Continued)

D Reviewing and Certifying OGE Form 450's (Continued)

Step	Reviewing and Processing Instructions for OGE Form 450's
7	Compile a list of annual OGE Form 450 filers using the Excel spreadsheet that will be provided to each Servicing Administrative Office electronically.
8	After conducting the intermediate review, file the annual OGE Form 450's in the individual's OGE Form 450 file folders.
9	Continue to maintain the OGE Form 450 files in a locked file or a secured location using an appropriate system of records, until specific instructions about transferring records to OE-Farm is received.

E Forwarding all OGE Form 450 Files to OE-Farm

Subsequent detailed instructions will be provided to all servicing offices with procedures for forwarding OGE Form 450 files to OE-Farm.

4 Contact

A Questions about OGE Form 450

Employees shall direct questions about OGE Form 450, according to the following.

IF the employee is...	THEN direct questions to...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • located in the National Office • AO, EO, Management Operations Officer, or Administrative Specialists located in the State Office and APFO 	Tonya Willis, Ethics Specialist, at 202-720-0055.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an FSA employee located in Kansas City or St Louis 	the servicing Human Resources Specialist in KCHRO, ELRS at 816-926-6643.
a Federal employee located in the State or County Office	AO in the State.
an APFO employee	Management Operations Officer in APFO.

Employee Notification Letter to Complete OGE Form 450

[Date]

SUBJECT: Confidential Financial Disclosure Report and Annual Ethics Training

TO: [Name of Employee Who Is Required to Submit the OGE Form 450]

FROM: [Name and Title]

Due to the nature and responsibilities of your position with the Farm Service Agency, you are required to submit a Confidential Financial Disclosure Report (OGE Form 450) on an annual basis. Employees within the Executive Branch of the Federal Government engaged in certain duties are required to report their outside activities, and personal financial interests on the OGE Form 450. Specific duties and responsibilities requiring disclosure include, but are not limited to, those involving the exercise of judgment in making a Government decision or in taking a Government action on:

- contracting or procurement
- administering or monitoring grants subsidies
- regulating or auditing private or other non-Federal enterprises; or
- other activities where the decision or action has an economic impact on the interest of any non-Federal enterprise.

No OGE Optional Form 450-A Will Be Accepted In 2008. Because this is an election year, everyone must file the longer OGE Form 450. You can find the OGE Form 450 on the USDA Office of Ethics web site at <http://www.usda-ethics.net/forms/index.htm>. This site will answer any questions you may have about the Federal ethics laws and regulations and will make your reporting more convenient.

If you are an annual filer, your OGE Form 450, along with any request for approval of outside employment, is due to the [KCHRO/State Office] by May 15,2008. If you are a first-time filer, or a filer whose position and/or responsibilities has changed, your OGE Form 450 is due to [KCHRO/State Office] within 30 days of notification to file.

Our address is [KCHRO/State Office address]. If you have any questions regarding your report, you may contact us at [KCHRO/State Office phone number]. If you anticipate not being able to mail or deliver the OGE Form 450 to the address above on or before the due date, please send an email to [Servicing Administrative Office] before the due date to request an extension.

As a reminder, annual ethics training must be completed by November 17 of each year. Please do so by completing three ethics training modules of your choice on AgLearn at <http://www.aglearn.usda.gov/>.