

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS



December 6, 2018
PA-18-03

MEMORANDUM

TO: Designated Agency Ethics Officials

FROM: Emory A. Rounds, III
Director

SUBJECT: Prompt Release of Public Financial Disclosure Reports

The U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE) reminds Designated Agency Ethics Officials (DAEOs) of their obligation to promptly make available copies of public financial disclosure reports filed with their agency. Pursuant to the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (the Act), all public financial disclosure reports must be made available within 30 days of filing with the agency regardless of whether the agency has reviewed or certified the report. *See* 5 U.S.C. app. § 105(b)(1).

Financial disclosure is vital to promoting public confidence by increasing accountability and transparency for officials at the highest levels of government. Failure to make reports promptly available in response to appropriate requests significantly undermines this confidence. Therefore, DAEOs should ensure that requests for these reports are responded to expeditiously. Although limited delays in releasing reports may be unavoidable, agencies should take steps to minimize such delays and release reports as soon as possible.^[1] Moreover, agencies may not deny a request for any reason other than those outlined in the Act. *See* 5 U.S.C. app. § 105(b)(2).

DAEOs are also reminded that the Act authorizes OGE to monitor and investigate compliance with the public financial disclosure requirements by agency ethics officials responsible for receiving, reviewing, and making available public reports. *See* 5 U.S.C. app. § 402(b)(3). OGE will continue to exercise this authority through its oversight and compliance activities, including the program review process.

^[1] Agency heads and DAEOs should routinely consider whether appropriate budgetary, staff, and technological resources have been dedicated to the ethics program to ensure that public requests for financial disclosure reports are responded to promptly. *See* 5 C.F.R. part 2638, subpart A.

