

§ 5b.8 Appeals of refusals to correct or amend records.

(a) *Processing the appeal.* (1) A subject individual who disagrees with a refusal to correct or amend his record may appeal the refusal in writing. All appeals shall be made to the following appeal authorities, or their designees, or successors in function:

(i) Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management for records of the Office of the Secretary, or where the initial refusal to correct or amend was made by another appeal authority. The appeal authority for an initial refusal by the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management is the Under Secretary.

(ii) Assistant Secretary for Health for records of the Public Health Service including Office of Assistant Secretary for Health; Health Resources Administration; Health Services Administration; Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration; Center for Disease Control; National Institutes of Health; and Food and Drug Administration.

(iii) Assistant Secretary for Education for records of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Institute of Education, and Office of Education.

(iv) Assistant Secretary for Human Development for records of the Office of Human Development.

(v) Commissioner of Social Security for records of the Social Security Administration.

(vi) Administrator, Social and Rehabilitation Service for the records of the Social and Rehabilitation Service.

(2) An appeal will be completed within 30 working days from its receipt by the appeal authority; *except that*, the appeal authority may for good cause extend this period for an additional 30 days. Should the appeal period be extended, the subject individual appealing the refusal to correct or amend the record will be informed in writing of the extension and the circumstances of the delay. The subject individual's request to amend or correct the record, the responsible Department official's refusal to correct or amend, and any other pertinent material relating to the appeal will be reviewed. No hearing will be held.

(3) If the appeal authority agrees that the record subject to the appeal should be corrected or amended, the record will be amended and the subject individual will be informed in writing of the correction or amendment. Where an accounting was made of prior disclosures of the record, all previous recipients of the record will be informed of the corrective action taken.

(4) If the appeal is denied, the subject individual will be informed in writing:

(i) Of the denial and the reasons for the denial;

(ii) That he has a right to seek judicial review of the denial; and,

(iii) That he may submit to the responsible Department official a concise statement of disagreement to be associated with the disputed record and disclosed whenever the record is disclosed.

(b) *Notation and disclosure of disputed records.* Whenever a subject individual submits a statement of disagreement to the responsible Department official in accordance with paragraph (a)(4)(iii) of this section, the record will be noted to indicate that it is disputed. In any subsequent disclosure, a copy of the subject individual's statement of disagreement will be disclosed with the record. If the responsible Department official deems it appropriate, a concise statement of the appeal authority's reasons for denying the subject individual's appeal may also be disclosed with the record. While the subject individual will have access to this statement of reasons, such statement will not be subject to correction or amendment. Where an accounting was made of prior disclosures of the record, all previous recipients of the record will be provided a copy of the subject individual's statement of disagreement, as well as the statement, if any, of the appeal authority's reasons for denying the subject individual's appeal.