

OPM GOVT-6

System Name:

Personnel Research and Test Validation Records.

System Location(s):

Division for Human Resources Products & Services, Center for Talent Services, Room 6500, Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20415-9200; OPM's Service Centers, and agency personnel offices (or other designated offices) conducting personnel research.

Categories of Individuals Covered by the System:

Current and former Federal employees, applicants for Federal employment, current and former State and local government employees, and applicants for State and local government employment, selected private sector employees, and applicants for sample comparison groups.

Categories of Records in the System:

These records include information on education and employment history, test scores, responses to test items and questionnaires, interview data, and ratings of supervisors regarding the individuals to whom the records pertain. Additional information (race, national origin, disability status, and background) is collected from applicants for certain examinations.

Authority for Maintenance of the System:

5 U.S.C. 1303, 3301, and 4702.

Purpose(s):

These records are collected, maintained, and used by the OPM or other Federal agencies for the construction, analysis, and validation of written tests and other assessment instruments used in personnel selection and appraisal, other assessment instruments used in personnel selection and appraisal, and for research on and evaluation of personnel/organizational management and staffing methods, including workforce effectiveness studies. Agencies and OPM may provide each other with data collected in support of these functions. Such research includes studies extending over a period of time (longitudinal studies). Private sector data are used in research only, to evaluate Federal study results against non-Federal comparison groups. Race and national origin data are used by OPM or other agencies to evaluate the role and effects of selection procedures in the total employee staffing process. Use of these race and national origin data is limited to such evaluation, oversight and research projects conducted by the employing agencies or the Office. The records may also be used by OPM or other Federal agencies to locate individuals for personnel research. Data are collected on a project-by-project basis under conditions assuring the confidentiality of the information. No personnel action or selection is made using these research records.

Routine Uses of Records Maintained in the System, Including Categories of Users and the Purposes of such Uses:

Under normal circumstances, no individually identifiable records will be provided. However, under those unusual circumstances when an individually identifiable record is required, proper safeguards will be maintained to protect the information collected from unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. Such protection must be specified in writing by the requester and, to the satisfaction of the agency official responsible for maintaining the data, indicate that the proposed use of the data is in compliance with the letter and spirit of the Privacy Act. Under these circumstances, the routine uses are as follows:

a. By the OPM or employing agency maintaining the records to locate individuals for personnel research or survey responses and in the production of summary descriptive statistics and analytical studies in support of the function for which the records are collected and maintained, or for related workforce studies. While published statistics and studies do not contain individual identifiers, in some instances the selection of elements of data included in the study may be structured in such a way as to make the data individually identifiable by inference.

b. To furnish personnel records and information to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for use in determining the existence of adverse impact in the total selection program, reviewing allegations of discrimination, or assessing the status of compliance with Federal law.

c. To furnish information to the Merit Systems Protection Board or the Office of the Special Counsel in connection with actions by offices relating to allegations of discriminatory practices on the part of an agency or one of its employees.

d. To disclose, in response to a request for discovery or for appearance of a witness, information that is relevant to the subject matter involved in a pending judicial or administrative proceeding.

e. To disclose information to another Federal agency, to a court, or a party in litigation before a court or in an administrative proceeding being conducted by a Federal agency, when the Government is a party to the judicial or administrative proceeding.

f. To disclose information to the Department of Justice, or in a proceeding before a court, adjudicative body, or other administrative body before which the agency is authorized to appear, when:

1. The agency, or any component thereof; or

2. Any employee of the agency in his or her official capacity; or

3. Any employee of the agency in his or her individual capacity where the Department of Justice or the agency has agreed to represent the employee; or

4. The United States, where the agency determines that litigation is likely to affect the agency or any of its components, is a party to litigation or has an interest in such litigation, and the use of such records by the Department of Justice or the agency is deemed by the agency to be relevant and necessary to the litigation, provided, however, that in each case it has been determined that the disclosure is compatible with the purpose for which the records were collected.

g. To provide information to a congressional office from the record of an individual in response to a request from that congressional office made at the request of that individual.

h. To provide aggregate data to non-Federal organizations participating in workforce studies. These data will be limited to individuals associated with the organization requesting the data or to data aggregated for all organizations in a study.

i. To disclose information to contractors, grantees, or volunteers performing or working on a contract, service, grant, cooperative agreement, or job for the Federal Government.

j. To disclose research records to a court or other body in camera when tests and other assessment instruments are involved.

Policies and Practice for Storing, Retrieving, Accessing, Retaining, and Disposing of Records in the System:

Storage:

These records are maintained in file folders, disks, magnetic tape, CD Rom, and optical disks.

Retrievability:

Records are generally maintained by project. Personal information can be retrieved by name or personal identifier only for certain research projects such as those involving longitudinal studies.

Safeguards:

Records are kept in locked files in a locked room with access limited to authorized staff. Access to tape, disk, and other files used in data processing will be only by authorized staff.

Retention and Disposal:

Records are retained for 2 years after completion of the project unless needed in the course of litigation or other administrative actions involving a research or test validation survey. Records collected for longitudinal studies will be maintained indefinitely. Manual records are destroyed by shredding or burning and magnetic tapes and disks are erased.

System Manager(s) and Address(es):

Deputy Associate Director, Center for HR Systems Requirements and Strategies, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, Room 6H31, NW., Washington, DC 20415.

Notification Procedure:

Individuals wishing to inquire whether this system of records contains information about them should contact the system manager, the OPM regional office servicing the State where they are employed, or their employing agency's personnel office. Individuals must furnish the following information for their records to be located and identified:

- a. Full name.
- b. Date of birth.
- c. If known, the title, time, and/or place of the research study in which the individual participated.
- d. Social security number.
- e. Signature.

Record Access Procedures:

Specific materials in this system have been exempted from Privacy Act provisions at 5 U.S.C. 552a(d), regarding access to records. The section of this notice titled "Systems Exempted from Certain Provisions of the Act" indicates the kinds of material exempted and the reasons for exempting them from access. Individuals wishing to request access to non-exempt records should contact the appropriate office listed in the Notification Procedure section. Individuals must furnish the following information for their records to be located and identified:

- a. Full name.
- b. Date of birth.
- c. If known, the title, time, and/or place of the research study in which the individual participated.
- d. Social security number.
- e. Signature.

Individuals requesting access must also comply with the OPM's Privacy Act regulations on verification of identity and access to records (5 CFR part 297).

Contesting Record Procedures:

Specific materials in this system have been exempted from Privacy Act provisions at 5 U.S.C. 552a(d) regarding amendment of records. The section of this notice titled 'Systems Exempted from Certain Provisions of the Act' indicates the kinds of materials exempted and the reasons for exempting them from amendment. Individuals wishing to request amendment of any non-exempt records should contact the appropriate office listed in the Notification Procedure section. Individuals must furnish the following information for their records to be located and identified:

- a. Full name.
- b. Date of birth.
- c. If known, the title, time, and/or place of the research study in which the individual participated.
- d. Social security number.
- e. Signature.

Individuals requesting amendment must also comply with the OPM's Privacy Act regulations on verification of identity and amendment of records (5 CFR part 297).

Record Source Categories:

Individual applicants and employees; supervisors; assessment center assessors; and agency or Office personnel files and records (e.g., race, sex, national origin, and disability status data from OPM/GOVT-1 and OPM/GOVT- 7 systems of records).

Exemptions Claimed for the System:

This system contains testing and examination materials that are used solely to determine individual qualifications for appointment, career development, or promotion in the Federal service. The Privacy Act, at 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(6), permits an agency to exempt all such testing and examination material and information from certain provisions of the Act, when the disclosure of the material would compromise the objectivity or fairness of the testing or

examination process. OPM has claimed exemptions from the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552a(d), which relates to access to and amendment of records.

This system contains records required to be maintained and used solely for statistical purposes. The Privacy Act, at 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(4), permits an agency to exempt all such statistical records from certain provisions of the Act, when the disclosure of the material would compromise the objectivity and fairness of these records. OPM has claimed exemptions from the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552a(d), which relates to access to and amendment of records.

The specific materials exempted include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Answer keys.
- b. Assessment center and interview exercises.
- c. Assessment center and interview exercise reports.
- d. Assessor guidance material.
- e. Assessment center observation reports.
- f. Assessment center and interview summary reports.
- g. Other applicant appraisal methods, such as performance tests, work samples and simulations, miniature training and evaluation exercises, interviews, and reports.
- h. Item analyses and similar data that contain test keys and item response data.
- i. Ratings given for validating examinations.
- j. Rating schedules, including crediting plans and scoring formulas for other selection procedures.
- k. Ratings sheets.
- l. Test booklets, including the written instructions for their preparation and automated versions of tests and related selection materials and their complete documentation.
- m. Test item files.
- n. Test answer sheets.
- o. Those portions of research and development files that could specifically reveal the contents of the above exempt documents.
- p. Performance appraisals for research purposes.