



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Office of the  
Chief Financial  
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Financial Systems

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Bulletin: CS 06-01

Date: August 16, 2006

To: All Users of USDA Financial and Administrative Systems

Subject: USDA Financial Management and Administrative Systems Personal Identifiable Information Protections

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this bulletin is to promulgate policy and procedures that must be followed for the protection of the Personal Identifiable Information (PII) covered in the Privacy Act of 1974 in the USDA corporate financial management and administrative applications when Privacy Act data is downloaded from any of those applications.

## **BACKGROUND**

Recently, there have been disclosures of security breaches in Federal information systems that stored PII. The disclosure of this information could be potentially used for identity theft of U.S. citizens, employees of the Federal Government, and others who contract with the government to provide goods and services. The financial management and administrative applications store this type of information to conduct financial management activities of USDA.

It is the responsibility of each employee and agency within the USDA to ensure that employees and contractors who have access to this type of data protect the data when it is downloaded, printed, or placed on a USDA desktop. Employees or contractors are not to download the data to any media such as a laptop, USB Thumb Drive Memory Card, or any other removable media such as compact discs, or to a non-secure workstation. USDA or the individual employee or contractor could face legal action under the Privacy Act of 1974 if there is a disclosure of PII from the data in the USDA financial and administrative applications.

## **POLICY**

Users of the financial and administrative applications may only download information from the application databases containing PII if it is absolutely necessary to perform their work assignments. If this data is downloaded to a desktop, it should only be a USDA-issued computer on the USDA network. The Encrypted File System (EFS) available in current versions of Microsoft Windows, the built-in encryption function in Microsoft Excel or Word, or inexpensive

encryption software in compression software (i.e., WinZip) or similar programs must be used on the desktop to protect this type of data. Downloading PII to a personal laptop or removable media is prohibited. PII data that is printed should be marked "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" and locked up when not in use or under your control, and shredded when it is disposed of. Any PII data downloaded to a desktop shall be deleted from the desktop within 90 days. Employees or contractors who violate privacy safeguards may be subject to disciplinary actions, a fine of up to \$5,000, or both.

## **PROCEDURES**

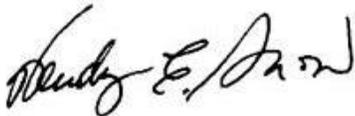
In order to ensure PII that is downloaded from the financial and administrative applications, agency Security Administrators or Security Officers will review the downloaded data to confirm that the data is still needed or that it is erased within the 90-day time limit. On a quarterly basis, beginning in the last quarter of FY 2006, Security Administrators and Security Officers of the agencies will send a memorandum to the ACFO-FS Information System Security Program Managers certifying that the downloaded data has been reviewed and that any PII data over the 90-day limit has been deleted.

## **INQUIRIES**

If you have questions about this bulletin, contact the ACFO-FS Information System Security Program Managers at **(504) 426-5615** or **(504) 426-5939**.

## **EFFECTIVE DATE**

This bulletin is effective immediately.



WENDY E. SNOW

Associate Chief Financial Officer for Financial Systems