
40 C.F.R. § 2.205

Final confidentiality determination by EPA legal office.

- (a) *Role of EPA legal office.* (1) The appropriate EPA legal office (see paragraph (i) of this section) is responsible for making the final administrative determination of whether or not business information covered by a business confidentiality claim is entitled to confidential treatment under this subpart.
- (2) When a request for release of the information under 5 U.S.C. 552 is pending, the EPA legal office's determination shall serve as the final determination on appeal from an initial denial of the request.
- (i) If the initial denial was issued under § 2.204(b)(1), a final determination by the EPA legal office is necessary only if the requestor has actually filed an appeal.
- (ii) If the initial denial was issued under § 2.204(d)(1), however, the EPA legal office shall issue a final determination in every case, unless the request has been withdrawn. (Initial denials under § 2.204(d)(1) are of a procedural nature, to allow further inquiry into the merits of the matter, and a requestor is entitled to a decision on the merits.) If an appeal from such a denial has not been received by the EPA Freedom of Information Officer on the tenth working day after issuance of the denial, the matter shall be handled as if an appeal had been received on that day, for purposes of establishing a schedule for issuance of an appeal decision under § 2.117 of this part.
- (b) *Comment period; extensions; untimeliness as waiver of claim.* (1) Each business which has been furnished the notice and opportunity to comment prescribed by § 2.204(d)(1) and § 2.204(e) shall furnish its comments to the office specified in the notice in time to be postmarked or hand delivered to that office not later than the date specified in the notice (or the date established in lieu thereof under this section).
- (2) The period for submission of comments may be extended if, before the comments are due, a request for an extension of the comment period is made by the business and approved by the EPA legal office. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the EPA legal office will not approve such an extension without the consent of any person whose request for release of the information under 5 U.S.C. 552 is pending.
- (3) The period for submission of comments by a business may be shortened in the manner described in paragraph (g) of this section.
- (4) If a business's comments have not been received by the specified EPA office by the date they are due (including any approved extension), that office shall promptly inquire whether the business has complied with paragraph (b)(1) of this section. If the business has complied with paragraph (b)(1) but the comments have been lost in transmission, duplicate comments shall be requested.

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