

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
for the Paperwork Reduction Act
Current Information Collection Submission
Rule 17f-2(e)**

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Necessity of Information Collection

Congress added Section 17(f) to the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (“Exchange Act”)¹ in 1975 as part of the Securities Acts Amendments of 1975² in order to respond to a large number of securities thefts that occurred in the late 1960s. Testimony before the Senate Permanent Subcommittee of Investigations between 1971 and 1974 indicated that the trafficking in stolen securities certificates was profitable for organized crime and that the failure to have available to the financial community a means of easily identifying security-risk personnel was a contributing factor to that problem. Specifically, Section 17(f)(2) requires every member of a national securities exchange, broker, dealer, registered transfer agent, and registered clearing agency to require that each of its partners, directors, officers, and employees be fingerprinted and submit such fingerprints to the U.S. Attorney General for identification and processing. This section also authorized the Commission to, by rule, exempt from the provisions of this paragraph any class of partners, directors, officers, and employees of any such member, broker, dealer, registered transfer agent, and registered clearing agency.

On March 16, 1976, the Commission adopted Rule 17f-2 under the Exchange Act. The general purposes of Rule 17f-2 are: (1) to identify security risk personnel (i.e., persons with criminal history records for serious offenses); (2) to provide criminal record information so that employers can make fully informed employment decisions; (3) to deter persons with a criminal record from seeking employment or association with covered entities. The rule attempts to achieve these purposes primarily by requiring, subject to certain exceptions, every partner, director, officer, and employee of every member of a national securities exchange, broker, dealer, registered transfer agent, and registered clearing agency to be fingerprinted and submit such fingerprints to the U.S. Attorney General or its designee.

Paragraph (e) of the rule requires members of national securities exchanges, brokers, dealers, registered transfer agents, and registered clearing agencies (“covered entities”) that claim an exemption from the fingerprint requirements of Rule 17f-2 to prepare and maintain a statement supporting their claim for exemption and specifies the information that must be included in these statements.

¹ 15 U.S.C. 78q(f).

² Pub. L. No. 94-29, 89 Stat. 97 (June 4, 1975).

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

The Commission uses the information filed pursuant to Rule 17f-2(e) to assist the Commission and other regulatory agencies to monitor and review the appropriateness of the covered entities' claims of exemptions to fingerprinting its personnel. Without Rule 17f-2(e), the Commission could not perform its duties as statutorily required.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

Rule 17f-2(e)(2) requires covered entities to make and keep current a copy of the notice required by Rule 17f-2(e) in an easily accessible place at the organization's principal office and at the office employing the persons for whom exemptions are claimed and shall be made available upon request for inspection by the Commission, appropriate regulatory agency (if not the Commission) or other designated examining authority. The covered entities typically utilize computer systems to make and keep the required copies of such notices.

4. Duplication

No other reporting requirement with respect to the information required to be reported under Rule 17f-2(e) currently exists.

5. Effect on Small Entities

No information is requested from small entities.

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

If information were collected less frequently, the Commission's ability to monitor compliance of registered clearing agencies would be weakened.

7. Inconsistencies with Guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.8(d)

There are no special circumstances. This collection is consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.8(d).

8. Consultations Outside the Agency

The required Federal Register notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published. No public comments were received.

9. Payment or Gift

There are no payments or gifts to respondents.

10. Confidentiality

Not applicable; no assurance of confidentiality is provided by Rule 17f-2(e). The rule does not require respondents to submit personally-identifying information.

11. Sensitive Questions

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked.

12. Burden of Information Collection

Based on our experience with Rule 17f-2(e), we estimate that approximately 75 respondents will incur an average burden of 30 minutes per year to comply with this rule, which represents the time it takes for a staff person at a covered entity to properly document a claimed exemption from the fingerprinting requirements of Rule 17f-2 (.4 hrs, constituting a reporting type of burden), and to properly retain that document according to the entities record retention policies and procedures (.1 hrs, constituting a recordkeeping type of burden). The total annual burden for all covered entities is approximately 38 hours (75 entities times .5 hours, rounded up).

13. Costs to Respondents

The work associated with the burden of 38 hours per year is typically performed by the covered entities' staff. There is no cost to respondents other than the internal wage or salary costs associated with generating and maintaining the documentation as described in Item 12, above.

14. Costs to Federal Government

Federal Government costs from Rule 17f-2(e) are appropriate regulatory agency staff time and related overhead needed to check during periodic inspections that the notices are being kept. Costs to the Federal Government due to Rule 17f-2(e) are therefore zero.

15. Changes in Burden

While there are no changes to the overall burden, the burden types have been amended, in that the total 0.5 hrs burden is comprised of 0.4 hrs of a reporting burden (reflecting generation of the documentation by a staff person at a covered entity), and 0.1 hrs of a recordkeeping burden (representing the time and resources for the respondent to properly retain that document according to the respondent's record retention policies and procedures).

16. Information Collection Planned for Statistical Purposes

The collection of information for Rule 17f-2(e) is not utilized for statistical purposes.

17. Display of OMB Approval Date

The Commission is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

This collection complies with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not involve statistical methods.