

§ 388.112 - Requests for privileged treatment for documents submitted to the Commission.

(a) *Scope.* (1) By following the procedures specified in this section, any person submitting a document to the Commission may request privileged treatment for some or all of the information contained in a particular document that it claims is exempt from the mandatory public disclosure requirements of the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552 (FOIA), and should be withheld from public disclosure. For the purposes of the Commission's filing requirements, information subject to an outstanding claim of exemption from disclosure under FOIA, including critical energy infrastructure information (CEII), will be referred to as privileged material.

(2) Any person submitting documents containing CEII as defined in § 388.113, or seeking access to such information should follow the procedures in this chapter.

(b) *Procedures for filing and obtaining privileged or CEII material.* (1) General Procedures. A person requesting that material be treated as privileged information or CEII must include in its filing a justification for such treatment in accordance with the filing procedures posted on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov>. A person requesting that a document filed with the Commission be treated as privileged or CEII must designate the document as privileged or CEII in making an electronic filing or clearly indicate a request for such treatment on a paper filing. The cover page and pages or portions of the document containing material for which privileged treatment is claimed should be clearly labeled in bold, capital lettering, indicating that it contains privileged, confidential and/or Critical Energy Infrastructure Information, as appropriate, and marked "DO NOT RELEASE." The filer also must submit to the Commission a public version with the information that is claimed to be privileged material redacted, to the extent practicable.

(2) Procedures for Proceedings with a Right to Intervene. The following procedures set forth the methods for filing and obtaining access to material that is filed as privileged in complaint proceedings and in any proceeding to which a right to intervention exists:

(i) If a person files material as privileged material or CEII in a complaint proceeding or other proceeding to which a right to intervention exists, that person must include a proposed form of protective agreement with the filing, or identify a protective agreement that has already been filed in the proceeding that applies to the filed material. This requirement does not apply to material submitted in hearing or settlement proceedings, or if the only material for which privileged treatment is claimed consists of landowner lists or privileged information filed under §§ 380.12(f), (m), (o) and 380.16(f) of this chapter.

(ii) The filer must provide the public version of the document and its proposed form of protective agreement to each entity that is required to be served with the filing.

(iii) Any person who is a participant in the proceeding or has filed a motion to intervene or notice of intervention in the proceeding may make a written request to the filer for a copy of the complete, non-public version of the document. The request must include an executed copy of the protective agreement

and a statement of the person's right to party or participant status or a copy of their motion to intervene or notice of intervention. Any person may file an objection to the proposed form of protective agreement. A filer, or any other person, may file an objection to disclosure, generally or to a particular person or persons who have sought intervention.

(iv) If no objection to disclosure is filed, the filer must provide a copy of the complete, non-public document to the requesting person within 5 days after receipt of the written request that is accompanied by an executed copy of the protective agreement. If an objection to disclosure is filed, the filer shall not provide the non-public document to the person or class of persons identified in the objection until ordered by the Commission or a decisional authority.

(v) For material filed in proceedings set for trial-type hearing or settlement judge proceedings, a participant's access to material for which privileged treatment is claimed is governed by the presiding official's protective order.

(vi) For landowner lists, information filed as privileged under §§ 380.12(f), (m), (o) and 380.16(f), forms filed with the Commission, and other documents not covered above, access to this material can be sought pursuant to a FOIA request under § 388.108 or a CEII request under § 388.113 of this chapter. Applicants are not required under paragraph (b)(2)(iv) of this section to provide intervenors with landowner lists and the other materials identified in the previous sentence.

(c) *Effect of privilege or CEII claim.* (1) For documents filed with the Commission:

(i) The documents for which privileged or CEII treatment is claimed will be maintained in the Commission's document repositories as non-public until such time as the Commission may determine that the document is not entitled to the treatment sought and is subject to disclosure consistent with §§ 388.108 or 388.113 of this chapter. By treating the documents as nonpublic, the Commission is not making a determination on any claim of privilege or CEII status. The Commission retains the right to make determinations with regard to any claim of privilege or CEII status, and the discretion to release information as necessary to carry out its jurisdictional responsibilities.

(ii) The request for privileged or CEII treatment and the public version of the document will be made available while the request is pending.

(2) For documents submitted to Commission staff. The notification procedures of paragraphs (d), (e), and (f) of this section will be followed before making a document public.

(d) *Notification of request and opportunity to comment.* When a FOIA or CEII requester seeks a document for which privilege or CEII status has been claimed, or when the Commission itself is considering release of such information, the Commission official who will decide whether to release the information or any other appropriate Commission official will notify the person who submitted the document and give the person an opportunity (at least five calendar days) in which to comment in writing on the request. A copy of this notice will be sent to the requester.

(e) *Notification before release.* Notice of a decision by the Commission, the Chairman of the Commission, the Director, Office of External Affairs, the General Counsel or General Counsel's designee, a presiding officer in a proceeding under part 385 of this chapter, or any other appropriate official to deny a claim of privilege, in whole or in part, or to make a limited release of CEII, will be given to any person claiming that the information is privileged or CEII no less than 5 calendar days before disclosure. The notice will briefly explain why the person's objections to disclosure are not sustained by the Commission. A copy of this notice will be sent to the FOIA or CEII requester.

(f) Notification of suit in Federal courts. When a FOIA requester brings suit to compel disclosure of information for which a person has claimed privileged treatment, the Commission will notify the person who submitted the documents of the suit.