

rules and regulations has been expressly and exclusively granted to any other regulatory agency). 12 U.S.C. 1819 "Seventh" and "Tenth"; 5 U.S.C. 552.

#### *Regulatory Flexibility Act*

The Board of Directors has concluded that the proposed rule will not impose a significant economic hardship on small institutions. Therefore, the Board of Directors hereby certifies pursuant to section 605 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 605) that the proposed rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small business entities within the meaning of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*).

#### *Paperwork Reduction Act*

The Board of Directors has determined that this proposed regulation does not contain any information collection requirements that require the approval of the Office of Management and Budget pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

#### **List of Subjects in 12 CFR Part 309**

Banks, banking, Credit, Freedom of information, Privacy.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation is proposing to revise Part 309 of Chapter III of title 12, of the Code of Federal Regulations to read as follows:

### **PART 309—DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION**

Sec.

309.1 Purpose and scope.

309.2 Definitions.

309.3 Federal Register publication.

309.4 Publicly available records.

309.5 Procedures for requesting records.

309.6 Disclosure of exempt records.

309.7 Service of process.

**Authority:** 5 U.S.C. 552; 12 U.S.C. 1819 "Seventh" and "Tenth".

#### **§ 309.1 Purpose and scope.**

This part sets forth the basic policies of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation regarding information it maintains and the procedures for obtaining access to such information.

#### **§ 309.2 Definitions.**

For purposes of this part:

(a) The term *depository institution*, as used in § 309.6, includes depository institutions that have applied to the Corporation for federal deposit insurance, closed depository institutions, presently operating federally insured depository institutions, foreign banks, branches of

foreign banks, and all affiliates of any of the foregoing.

(b) The terms *Corporation* or *FDIC* mean the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

(c) The words *disclose* or *disclosure*, as used in § 309.6, mean to give access to a record, whether by producing the written record or by oral discussion of its contents. Where the Corporation employee authorized to release Corporation documents makes a determination that furnishing copies of the documents is necessary, the words *disclose* or *disclosure* include the furnishing of copies of documents or records. In addition, *disclose* or *disclosure* as used in § 309.6 is synonymous with the term *transfer* as used in the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3401 *et seq.*).

(d) The term *examination* includes, but is not limited to, formal and informal investigations of irregularities involving suspected violations of federal or state civil or criminal laws, or unsafe and unsound practices as well as such other investigations as may be conducted pursuant to law.

(e) The term *record* includes records, files, documents, reports, correspondence, books, and accounts, or any portion thereof.

(f) The term *report of examination* includes, but is not limited to, examination reports resulting from examinations of depository institutions conducted jointly by Corporation examiners and state banking authority examiners or other federal financial institution examiners, as well as reports resulting from examinations conducted solely by Corporation examiners. The term also includes compliance examination reports.

(g) The term *customer financial records*, as used in § 309.6, means an original of, a copy of, or information known to have been derived from, any record held by a depository institution pertaining to a customer's relationship with the depository institution but does not include any record that contains information not identified with or identifiable as being derived from the financial records of a particular customer. The term *customer* as used in § 309.6 refers to individuals or partnerships of five or fewer persons.

(h) The term *Director of the Division having primary authority* includes Deputies to the Chairman and directors of FDIC Divisions and Offices that create, maintain custody, or otherwise have primary responsibility for the handling of FDIC records or information.

#### **§ 309.3 Federal Register publication.**

The FDIC publishes the following information in the **Federal Register** for the guidance of the public:

(a) Descriptions of its central and field organization and the established places at which, the officers from whom, and the methods whereby, the public may secure information, make submittals or requests, or obtain decisions;

(b) Statements of the general course and method by which its functions are channeled and determined, including the nature and requirements of all formal and informal procedures available;

(c) Rules of procedure, descriptions of forms available or the places at which forms may be obtained, and instructions as to the scope and contents of all papers, reports or examinations;

(d) Substantive rules of general applicability adopted as authorized by law, and statements of general policy or interpretations of general applicability formulated and adopted by the FDIC;

(e) Every amendment, revision or repeal of the foregoing; and

(f) General notices of proposed rule-making.

#### **§ 309.4 Publicly available records.**

The following records are available upon request or, as noted, available for public inspection during normal business hours, at the listed offices. Certain records are also available on the Internet at the following address: <http://www.fdic.gov>. To the extent permitted by law, the FDIC may delete identifying details when it makes available or publishes a final opinion, final order, statement of policy, interpretation or staff manual or instruction. Fees for furnishing records under this section are as set forth in § 309.5(c).

(a) At the Office of Corporate Communications, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 550-17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20429, (202) 898-6996:

(1) Documents, including press releases, financial institution letters and proposed and adopted regulations, published by the FDIC and pertaining to its operations and those of insured depository institutions that it supervises.

(2) Reports on the competitive factors involved in merger transactions and the bases for approval of merger transactions as required by sections 18(c)(4) and 18(c)(9) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1828(c)(4) and (9)).

(3) Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Public Evaluations.