

CHAPTER 14

HANDLING AND SAFEGUARDING OF ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED DOCUMENTS

1. GENERAL. This chapter supplements the USDA Correspondence Management Regulation of administratively controlled material designated "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY."
2. MARKING RESTRICTED INFORMATION. Sensitive situations sometimes require limited handling of correspondence. Such correspondence may be designated "For Official Use Only."
 - a. **For Official Use Only Information.** For Official Use Only is an administrative (unclassified) marking placed on correspondence or documents to limit access to specific offices or individuals. *Marking documents For Official Use Only will not constitute a Department of Defense security classification*, nor is it a justification for withholding information under the Freedom of Information Act.
 - b. **Responsibility for Marking.** The Agency employee who first receives material "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" or who originates such material is responsible for marking it and for indicating the length of time the restriction will remain in effect.
 - c. **Restriction Period.** The restriction period may be a date or event (for example, "after publication") after which the restriction is no longer applicable. Use the term "FOR LIFE OF RECORD" instead of "INDEFINITE RETENTION."
 - d. **Reprints.** The marking "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" does not relate to or conflict with the Department's regulations on marking reprints. Reprints bought by the Department must bear the mark "Purchased by the United States Department of Agriculture for Official Use" in order to be mailed as official mail.
3. RELEASE OF "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" MATERIAL. Records marked "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" may be given to cooperators or collaborators who must have the exact data in connection with their work with the Department. Papers will not be marked "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" to avoid stocking copies to answer requests for such material.
4. ENVELOPE PREPARATION AND TRANSMISSION. "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" material will be transmitted in a sealed envelope. Do not use U.S. Government messenger (chain mail) envelopes as they cannot be sealed.

5. DISPOSITION OF "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" MATERIAL. Records marked "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" and eligible for disposal will be destroyed by tearing into small pieces (shredding), burning, or other means of preventing recovery of the information.

6. TRANSFER TO FEDERAL RECORDS CENTER (FRC). "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" materials determined to have record value may be transferred to an FRC after they have served their usefulness for administrative purposes. The same restrictions on availability will apply until the date or event allowing removal of the restriction.