U.S. CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

DIRECTIVE NUMBER:
5430-001

DIRECTIVE TITLE:
Public Release of CBP Directives and Policy Directorate Memorandums

EFFECTIVE DATE:
9 May 2022
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Public Release of CBP Directives and Policy Directorate Memorandums

1. **PURPOSE.** This directive mandates that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Directives requiring the Commissioner’s signature and CBP Policy Memorandums issued by the Office of the Commissioner, Policy Directorate (PD Memos) be released publicly unless they contain information that should not and/or cannot be released for personnel safety, privacy, or legal reasons.

2. **BACKGROUND.** Prior to this directive’s approval, CBP infrequently and inconsistently published policy documents. This resulted in an increasing number of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and letters from Congress, state and local governments, and nongovernmental organizations seeking to obtain copies of CBP policy documents. In some instances, it also contributed to public misunderstanding about whether CBP was adhering to its own policies and standards. Maintaining the public’s trust is vital to CBP’s mission and this directive is part of a broader accountability and transparency effort to maintain and foster that trust. The public release of CBP Directives and PD Memos, where appropriate, is consistent with the best practices and transparency recommendations from a variety of outside organizations and independent assessments. The public release of CBP Directives and PD Memos also aligns CBP with similar transparency initiatives underway across the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and throughout the U.S. Government.

CBP understands and acknowledges the importance of embracing a culture of transparency and strives to carry out its homeland security and law enforcement mission with the highest standards of honor, integrity, and professionalism. This directive prioritizes and promotes transparency through the consistent public release of CBP Directives and PD Memos. This directive also establishes and implements safeguards to ensure FOIA Exempted Information is appropriately redacted from documents before public release to ensure the safety and privacy of CBP personnel. As set forth below, this directive describes the process for publicly releasing CBP Directives and PD Memos and, when necessary, the procedures for requesting and applying redactions prior to public release.

3. **SCOPE.** This policy applies only to CBP Directives and PD Memos submitted for CBP Commissioner approval and signature on and/or after the effective date of this directive. This directive does not apply to CBP Intelligence Enterprise Directives signed by the CBP Key Intelligence Official. This directive is not intended to impact, alter, or constrain the execution or implementation of any individual CBP office’s internal, administrative, and/or field policies, signed at the Executive Assistant Commissioner-level or below.

4. **POLICY.**

4.1 All CBP Directives and PD Memos are required to undergo a specific series of internal review and clearance processes prior to public release and/or placement on an authorized, publicly accessible Government website.
4.2 CBP will take available and appropriate actions to embrace a culture of transparency, strengthen community engagement, increase its openness with the public as well as the media, and enhance Governmental accountability through the public release of CBP Directives and PD Memos.

4.3 To ensure the full range of operational, legal, technical, procedural, and transparency issues associated with a policy have been appropriately considered, all CBP Directives and PD Memos (as defined below) must follow the standardized approach outlined in this directive.

4.4 If it is determined that a CBP Directive or PD Memo contains FOIA Exempted Information that should not and/or cannot be publicly released, this directive sets the clear expectation that every effort will be made to release the document in a redacted form rather than withholding release of the document in full.

5. **AUTHORITIES/REFERENCES.**


5.2 6 U.S.C. § 211, *Establishment of U.S. Customs and Border Protection; Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and Operational Offices.*

5.3 *Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015*, as amended.


5.7 DHS Delegation No. 07010.3 Revision 03.1, *Delegation of Authority to the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection*, dated May 11, 2006 (Revision dated November 25, 2019).


5.9 DHS Directive No. 112-01 Revision 01, *Directives System*, dated September 26, 2011.


6. **DEFINITIONS.**

6.1 **CBP Directive and PD Memo Public Release:** The public release of CBP Directives and PD Memos (as defined in this directive) to external, public-facing information platforms (e.g., CBP.gov).
6.2 **CBP Directive:** A policy document that establishes guidelines, responsibilities, and/or procedures requiring the Commissioner’s approval and signature. CBP Directives broadly articulate and build on CBP mission-sets and priorities by formalizing programmatic purposes, authorities, responsibilities, and procedures. CBP Directives are used to officially guide, instruct, govern, and/or communicate CBP-wide policy and procedures that enable effective operations across CBP.

6.3 **FOIA Exempted Information:** Information falling in the categories outlined in sub-sections 6.3.1-6.3.9 below in which CBP reasonably foresees that disclosure would harm an interest protected by a FOIA exemption or where disclosure is prohibited by law.

6.3.1 **Classified Information - FOIA Exemption (b)(1):** Information specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive Order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and are in fact properly classified pursuant to such Executive Order.

6.3.2 **Personnel Rules and Practices - FOIA Exemption (b)(2):** Information related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency.

6.3.3 **Information Exempted by Statute - FOIA Exemption (b)(3):** Information specifically exempted from disclosure by statute if that statute requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue; or establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld; and if enacted after the date of enactment of the OPEN FOIA Act of 2009, specifically cites to 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(3).

6.3.4 **Trade Secrets and Confidential Commercial Information - FOIA Exemption (b)(4):** Trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential.

6.3.5 **Privileged Information - FOIA Exemption (b)(5):** Inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters that would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency, provided the deliberative process privilege shall not apply to records created 25 years or more before the date on which the records were requested.

6.3.6 **Personal Information - FOIA Exemption (b)(6):** Personnel, medical, and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

6.3.7 **Certain Law Enforcement Information - FOIA Exemption (b)(7):** Records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes that (A) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings; (B) would deprive a person of the right to a fair trial or impartial adjudication; (C) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy; (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source, including a state, local, or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a confidential basis, and, in the case of a record or information compiled by a law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, and/or information furnished by a confidential source; (E) would disclose techniques\(^1\) and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure reasonably risked circumvention of the law; or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual.

\(^1\) A “technique” is defined as the body of specific methods and specialized procedures utilized to conduct investigations, prosecutions, audits, or law enforcement operations; generally unknown to the public.
6.3.8 Information About Financial Institutions - FOIA Exemption (b)(8): Information contained in or related to examination, operating or condition reports prepared by, on behalf of, or for the use of an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions.

6.3.9 Information About Wells - FOIA Exemption (b)(9): Geological or geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

6.4 Office of the Commissioner - Policy Directorate Memorandums (PD Memos): A CBP policy statement that is drafted by PD and approved and signed by the Commissioner. PD Memos facilitate the effective and timely communication of Commissioner-issued priorities, mission objectives, and CBP-wide policy updates to CBP offices and personnel.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES.

7.1 CBP Commissioner.

7.1.1 Serves as the final review and approval authority for all CBP Directives and PD Memos.

7.1.2 Retains final, discretionary authority over all decisions relating to the proactive public release of CBP Directives and PD Memos and/or the degree to which those documents are (or are not) redacted, to the extent permitted by law.

7.2 Office of the Commissioner, Policy Directorate.

7.2.1 Oversees, on behalf of the Commissioner, the development and implementation of CBP Directives and PD Memos, and the assignment of policy classification numbers to all documents signed by the Commissioner.

7.2.2 Participates in group meetings with CBP’s Office of Chief Counsel (OCC), Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR), Privacy and Diversity Office-FOIA Division (PDO-FOIA), and authoring office(s) to collaboratively review and reach a consensus (prior to the Commissioner’s signature) regarding any proposed redactions to the content of a CBP Directive or PD Memo or requests to designate a document as exempt from public release.

7.3 CBP, Office of the Executive Secretariat (OES).

7.3.1 Reviews CBP Directive and PD Memo approval packages prior to the Commissioner’s signature and ensures that the CBP Directive or PD Memo have been vetted through the appropriate public release clearance process and that the Commissioner’s cover memorandum contains the required notation (outlined in Section 8 below) requesting that the policy document be cleared for public release in its entirety, released with redactions, or exempted from release.

7.3.2 Routes CBP Directives and PD Memos that are slated for full or redacted public release to the Publication and Branding Review Board (PBRB) for pre-public release clerical editing, branding review, and clearance prior to receiving the Commissioner’s signature.

7.3.3 Coordinates with authoring office(s) to ensure the final version of CBP Directives and PD Memos receive clearance from CBP’s Section 508 Compliance Team after receiving the Commissioner’s signature.
7.3.4 Routes CBP Directives and PD Memos that have received the Commissioner’s signature and clearance for full or redacted public release and undergone 508 Compliance verification to the Office of Public Affairs (OPA)-Digital Engagement Division (DED) and PDO-FOIA for eventual upload onto CBP.gov.

7.3.5 Ensures OPA is included on the distribution list for all CBP Directives and PD Memos slated for full or partial public release.

7.4 CBP, Office of Chief Counsel.

7.4.1 Reviews draft CBP Directives and PD Memos for legal sufficiency and advises authoring office(s) on legal questions related to information disclosures.

7.4.2 Participates in meetings with OPR, PD, PDO-FOIA, and authoring office(s) to provide legal advice to those offices as they collaboratively review and reach a consensus (prior to the Commissioner’s review and signature) regarding any proposed redactions to the content of a CBP Directive or PD Memo or requests to designate a document as exempt from public release.

7.5 CBP, Office of Information and Technology (OIT).

7.5.1 Oversees the implementation of CBP’s technology and information accessibility accommodations (508 Compliance) as required by Sections 501, 504, and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

7.5.2 Coordinates with PD to ensure the five most recently approved CBP Directives or PD Memos are posted on CBP’s SharePoint homepage.

7.6 OPR, Security Management Division.

7.6.1 Develops, implements, and monitors policies and procedures regarding the proper safeguarding, handling, and transmission of Classified National Security Information and Sensitive But Unclassified information.

7.6.2 Provides guidance and training to CBP personnel on the implementation/management of Information Security policies and programs including any/all information designated as: For Official Use Only, Law Enforcement Sensitive, and Sensitive Security Information.

7.6.3 Participates in group meetings with OCC, PD, PDO-FOIA, and authoring office(s) to collaboratively review and reach a consensus (prior to the Commissioner’s review and signature) regarding any proposed redactions to the content of a CBP Directive or PD Memo or requests to designate a document as exempt from public release.

7.7 CBP, Office of Public Affairs.

7.7.1 Ensures all CBP Directives and PD Memos slated for public release receive appropriate clerical editing, branding incorporation, and are assigned a CBP Publication Number from OPA-PBRB prior to the Commissioner’s final review and signature.

7.7.2 Ensures all CBP Directives and PD Memos that have been cleared for public release during the preceding fiscal quarter are uploaded by OPA-DED onto CBP.gov’s “Accountability and Transparency” page (or its equivalent successor) during the last week of the fiscal quarter.
Determines whether any press releases or policy summaries should accompany the quarterly release of CBP Directives and PD Memos and, if necessary, ensures OPA’s Media Division develops those press releases and/or policy summaries in coordination with PD.

PDO, Freedom of Information Act Division.

Coordinates, when necessary, with relevant CBP offices to assess and identify specific CBP Directives and PD Memos that are, or are likely to become, the subject of repeated FOIA requests and works to ensure those documents (unless exempt from publication) are uploaded onto CBP.gov’s “FOIA Reading Room” webpage (or its equivalent successor) in accordance with this directive.

Participates in group meetings with OCC, OPR, PD, and authoring office(s) to collaboratively review and reach a consensus (prior to the Commissioner’s review and signature) regarding any proposed redactions to the content of a CBP Directive or PD Memo or requests to designate a document as exempt from public release.

Redacts and records information contained in CBP Directives and PD Memos once redactions have been agreed upon and indicates the applicable FOIA exemption(s) in the record where the redaction was applied.

Ensures CBP Directives and PD Memos that have been signed by the Commissioner and cleared for public release receive appropriate keyword tagging to ensure optimal accessibility.

All CBP Offices, Executive Leadership.

Ensure all CBP Directives sponsored or authored by their office adhere to the procedures and procedures outlined in this directive and direct the regular review, revision, or cancellation of their office’s directives, as appropriate, to ensure CBP-wide policy consistency.

Coordinate with CBP offices who are the owners of any draft CBP Directive content being submitted for public release to ensure (once the draft content is finalized) that there are no public release concerns and/or that any exempt information is redacted appropriately.

PROCEDURES.

All CBP Directives and PD Memos submitted for the Commissioner’s review and signature on and/or after the effective date of this directive must be packaged and routed for formal review, signature, and public release in accordance with one of the three clearance processes outlined below.

Default Process - CBP Directives and PD Memos with No Identified Public Release Concerns.

If, after a draft CBP Directive or PD Memo has completed all formal review and feedback stages, the authoring office(s) identify no FOIA Exempted Information concerns in the document, the draft CBP Directive or PD Memo shall fall within this clearance process.

It is expected that the majority of CBP Directives and PD Memos submitted for the Commissioner’s signature will fall into this clearance process.

Authoring office(s) must coordinate with OES to ensure CBP Directives and PD Memos complete the PBRB’s pre-public release clerical editing, branding review, and clearance process prior to receiving the Commissioner’s signature.
8.2.4 Authoring office(s) must formally record all concurrences using CBP’s standard Blue-Sheet routing and clearance process and record (in the Blue-Sheet’s “Office Comments” section) that all interested parties have no public release concerns.

8.2.5 Authoring office(s) who designate a CBP Directive fit for public release in its entirety may submit the document approval package for the Commissioner’s signature via traditional routing procedures and must explicitly note in the Commissioner’s cover memorandum that “all relevant CBP offices have been consulted on the final content of the Directive and no concerns were raised regarding public release of the Directive in its entirety.”

8.2.6 Unless an objection to public release is specifically noted by the Commissioner, once a document approval package containing the language above receives the Commissioner’s signature, the CBP Directive or PD Memo is considered cleared for public release once the document has undergone a final accessibility review from CBP’s 508 Compliance Team.

8.2.7 OES will coordinate with authoring office(s) to ensure all CBP Directives and PD Memos that receive the Commissioner’s signature and clearance for public release are routed for review and approved by CBP’s 508 Compliance Team.

8.2.8 OES will route all signed CBP Directives and PD Memos that have been cleared for public release by the Commissioner and completed 508 Compliance verification to OPA-DED and PDO-FOIA for eventual upload onto CBP.gov.

8.2.9 During the last week of each fiscal quarter, OPA-DED and PDO-FOIA will upload all signed CBP Directives and PD Memos that were cleared for public release during that fiscal quarter onto CBP.gov’s “Accountability and Transparency” and “FOIA Reading Room” pages.

8.3 CBP Directives and PD Memos with Content Requiring Redaction(s) Prior to Public Release.

8.3.1 If, during the formal review of a draft CBP Directive or PD Memo, the authoring office(s) and/or other impacted offices identify information that may fall under a FOIA exemption, this information may require redaction prior to public release of the final document and must follow the requirements outlined below.

8.3.2 Authoring office(s) and other impacted CBP offices must document their rationale or justification for each proposed redaction in writing and submit that documentation to OCC, OPR, PD, and PDO-FOIA (via each office’s Taskings mechanisms) in advance of a group meeting to discuss the proposed redactions.

8.3.2.1 Documents outlining the rationale or justifications of proposed redactions to the final content of a draft CBP Directive or PD Memo must explicitly cite which of the FOIA Exempted Information categories (outlined in sub-sections 6.3.1 - 6.3.9 of this directive) apply to the content proposed for redaction and explain the linkage between the exemption categories and each proposed redaction.

8.3.3 Once all initial redaction proposals and justifications have been consolidated, subject matter experts from the authoring office(s) will expeditiously coordinate a group meeting with OCC, OPR, PD, and PDO-FOIA to discuss the proposed redactions request and the documented justification(s) provided by the impacted offices.
8.3.4 If agreement cannot be reached on all proposed redactions during the initial meeting, the parties shall expeditiously hold up to two additional meetings to address remaining disagreements relating to proposed redactions.

8.3.5 If, after three meetings, the authoring office(s) and reviewing parties remain unable to reach a consensus regarding the proposed redactions, an additional memorandum will be drafted by the authoring office(s) and included in the approval package summarizing the dispute(s), outlining the justifications for and against publicly releasing the document, and requesting a decision on the proposed redactions from the Commissioner.

8.3.6 It is expected that this resolution process shall not extend longer than two weeks from the initial meeting but may be extended if all reviewing parties agree to an extension.

8.3.7 Once the group has reached a consensus regarding the application of any proposed redactions, the authoring office(s) will submit the final redaction proposal and justification document (see sub-section 8.3.2.1) to PDO-FOIA who will complete the redaction process.

8.3.8 After all redactions have been applied and cross-referenced with the applicable FOIA exemption(s) categories, the authoring office(s) must coordinate with OES to route the redacted CBP Directive or PD Memo to the PBRB for clerical editing and branding clearance.

8.3.9 Once the redacted CBP Directive or PD Memo receives PBRB clearance, OES and the authoring office(s) will submit the final approval package, which must include:

8.3.9.1 An unredacted, final draft of the CBP Directive or PD Memo.

8.3.9.2 A final draft of the CBP Directive or PD Memo that includes any redactions necessary prior to public release.

8.3.9.3 A notation within the Commissioner’s cover memorandum stating, “all relevant CBP offices have reviewed and agreed to the redactions proposed for this CBP Directive or PD Memo and deem the redacted version fit for public release.”

8.3.10 Unless an objection to the redaction(s) is specifically noted by the Commissioner, once an approval package containing the language above receives the Commissioner’s signature and has undergone 508 Compliance verification, the CBP Directive or PD Memo is considered cleared for public release in its redacted form.

8.3.11 OES will coordinate with authoring office(s) to ensure all CBP Directives and PD Memos that receive the Commissioner’s signature and clearance for public release are routed for review and approved by CBP’s Section 508 Compliance Team.

8.3.12 OES will route all signed CBP Directives and PD Memos that have been cleared for public release by the Commissioner and completed 508 Compliance verification to OPA-DED and PDO-FOIA for eventual upload onto CBP.gov.

8.3.13 During the last week of each fiscal quarter, OPA-DED and PDO-FOIA will upload all CBP Directives and PD Memos that were cleared for public release during that fiscal quarter onto CBP.gov’s “Accountability and Transparency” and “FOIA Reading Room” pages.
8.4 CBP Directives and PD Memos Deemed Entirely Exempt from Public Release.

8.4.1 If, after all formal review stages are completed, the authoring office(s) and/or other impacted offices determine that the content within the final draft CBP Directive or PD Memo contains no nonexempt information that can be reasonably segregated from FOIA Exempted Information, or that the nonexempt information is inextricably intertwined with FOIA Exempted Information such that reasonable segregation is not possible, the authoring office(s) may submit a request that the document, in its entirety, not be publicly released.

8.4.2 Authoring office(s) and other impacted CBP offices must document the justification(s) for their public release exemption request in writing and submit that documentation to OCC, OPR, PD, and PDO-FOIA (via each office’s Taskings mechanisms) in advance of a group meeting to discuss the public release exemption request.

8.4.2.1 Documents outlining the rationale and justifications for exempting a CBP Directive or PD Memo from public release must explicitly cite which of the FOIA Exempted Information categories (outlined in sub-sections 6.3.1 - 6.3.9 of this directive) apply throughout the CBP Directive or PD Memo and explain the linkage between the exemption categories and the document’s overall content.

8.4.3 Once CBP offices have documented their rationale and justification for the public release exemption request, subject matter experts from the authoring office(s) will coordinate a group meeting with OCC, OPR, PD, and PDO-FOIA to discuss the public release exemption request and the documented justification(s) provided by the impacted offices.

8.4.4 If the parties above can identify reasonably segregable nonexempt information, or nonexempt information that is not inextricably intertwined with FOIA Exempted Information such that reasonable segregation is possible, the request to withhold the document from public release in its entirety will be denied and the authoring office(s) will be instructed to reroute the document in accordance with Sections 8.3 - 8.3.13 of this directive.

8.4.5 If the parties all agree that the CBP Directive or PD Memo should be exempt from public release in its entirety, they may submit an approval package for the Commissioner’s final review and signature via traditional routing procedures with a notation provided in the cover memo that states, “all relevant CBP offices have reviewed the final content of the draft Directive or PD Memo and agree that it should be exempt from public release.”

8.4.6 If agreement cannot be reached on the proposed public release exemption during the initial meeting, the parties shall hold up to two additional meetings to resolve any pending concerns and establish a consensus regarding the exemption proposal.

8.4.7 If, after three meetings, the authoring office(s) and reviewing parties remain unable to reach a consensus regarding the proposed public release exemption, an additional memorandum will be drafted and included in the approval package outlining the dispute(s) to request a decision on the proposed exemption from the Commissioner.

8.4.8 It is expected that this resolution process shall not extend longer than two weeks from the initial meeting but may be extended if all reviewing parties agree to an extension.
8.4.9 Unless an objection to the public release exemption request is specifically noted by the Commissioner, once a document approval package containing the language above receives the Commissioner’s signature, the CBP Directive or PD Memo is considered effective and implemented but not cleared for public release.

8.4.10 CBP Directives and PD Memos exempt from public release in their entirety are not required to complete the PBRB’s pre-public release clerical editing, branding review, and clearance process prior to the Commissioner’s signature.

8.5 Post-Commissioner Signature - Internal Dissemination and Public Release Processes.

8.5.1 OES will coordinate with authoring office(s) to ensure all CBP Directives and PD Memos that receive the Commissioner’s signature and clearance for public release are routed for review and approved by CBP’s Section 508 Compliance Team.

8.5.2 OES will route all CBP Directives and PD Memos that have been cleared for public release by the Commissioner and completed 508 Compliance verification to OPA-DED and PDO-FOIA for eventual upload onto CBP.gov.

8.5.3 During the last week of each fiscal quarter, OPA-DED and PDO-FOIA will upload all signed CBP Directives and PD Memos that were cleared for public release during that fiscal quarter onto CBP.gov’s “Accountability and Transparency” and “FOIA Reading Room” pages.

8.5.4 After a CBP Directive or PD Memo has been cleared by the Commissioner for public release and completed 508 Compliance verification, OIT will coordinate with PD to ensure the five most recently approved CBP Directives and PD Memos are posted on CBP’s SharePoint homepage.

9. POINT OF CONTACT. Any questions regarding this directive, the processes that it establishes, and/or the requirements outlined above can be directed to PD Taskings.

10. NO PRIVATE RIGHTS CREATED. This document is an internal policy statement of CBP and does not create or confer any rights, privileges, or benefits for any person or party.

Chris Magnus
Commissioner
U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Date 5/9/27

Attachment 1 – CBP Policies Public Release Process Flowchart
Attachment 2 – CBP Directives - Development Guide, Requirements, and Template
Attachment 3 – Redactions Justification Worksheet