

NSF -19

System Name:

Medical Examination Records for Service in the Polar Regions.

System Location(s):

National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230; Antarctic Support Associates (ASA) and subcontractors, 61 Inverness Drive East, Suite 300, Englewood, CO 80112; U.S. Antarctic facilities; Polar Ice Coring Office (PICO), University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Categories of Individuals Covered by the System:

This system covers all individuals being considered for Antarctic assignment (under the auspices of the USAP), or for assignment to selected, isolated locations in the Arctic region. Individuals covered may include NSF and other government agency employees, civilian contract employees, personnel conducting the research supported by NSF or other entities, and members of the uniformed services supporting NSF's polar research programs.

Note:

Records concerning current and former federal employees are also covered by OPM/GOVT-10.

Categories of Records in the System:

Documents relating to pre-deployment physicals: Medical history, clinical test results (e.g., blood, urine analyses, EKGs); physical exam notes; dental exams, X-rays, dentist's notes; and notes by medical reviewers determining medical qualifications. Includes psychological screening records when performed on winter-over candidates, and any additional tests/evaluation associated with requests for medical waivers. Medical files, clinic notes, and associated records created in the course of providing medical treatment or consultation by any of the medical care providers in the Arctic or Antarctica.

Authority for Maintenance of the System:

16 U.S.C. 2401, et seq., 42 U.S.C. 1870, 44 U.S.C. 3101.

Purpose(s):

The National Science Foundation's Office of Polar Programs is responsible for ensuring that personnel traveling to Antarctica under the auspices of the United States Antarctic Program (USAP) meet certain medical standards, as outlined in 45 CFR part 675 (62 FR 31521 (June 10,

1997). Those traveling to selected, isolated locations in the Arctic region must meet similar standards. Candidates for deployment must undergo a medical and dental examination to determine whether they are physically qualified for deployment. Candidates who anticipate spending the austral winter in Antarctica (where evacuation may be impossible) are subject to additional evaluation, including a determination of psychological adaptability to such an isolated environment. This medical screening process requires that certain medical records be generated on individuals participating in the USAP.

The records are used primarily for three purposes: (1) To determine the individual's fitness for Arctic/Antarctic assignment; (2) to assist in determining an appropriate course of medical/dental treatment should the individual seek medical care with any medical care provider while in the Arctic or Antarctica; and (3) to provide documentation for addressing quality of care issues associated with these medical functions.

Routine Uses of Records Maintained in the System, Including Categories of Users and the Purposes of such Uses:

Information from this system may be disclosed to:

1. Individuals involved in determining an individual's fitness for deployment, or in providing medical services or treatment. Such individuals include (a) designated medical care practitioners and their administrative support personnel involved in determining an individual's fitness for Arctic/Antarctic assignment, including waiver requests; and (b) medical care providers in NSF-supported stations and field camps in the polar regions where the individual is assigned;
2. The personal physician or examining physician of the individual about whom the records pertain when disclosure is necessary to obtain additional information necessary to make a determination on fitness, or provide medical treatment;
3. Medical experts either individually or as a panel to provide expertise and advice on quality of medical care issues in the polar regions;
4. Representatives of employing organizations, including academic institutions, and investigators on a grant (if a prospective field team member has requested a waiver) to inform them whether an individual is approved for deployment or not.
5. An emergency point of contact designated by the individual when the individual seeking deployment is unreachable and additional information is needed to order to make a determination on a waiver request before deployment deadlines, or when necessary to provide medical treatment during deployment;
6. Federal, state, or local agencies, or foreign governments when disclosure is necessary to obtain records in connection with an investigation by the NSF;
7. Information from the system may be given to another Federal agency, a court, or a party in litigation before a court or in an administrative proceeding being conducted by a Federal agency

when the Government is a party to the judicial or administrative proceeding, or when NSF determines that the litigation or proceeding is likely to affect the Agency.

8. The Department of Justice, to the extent disclosure is compatible with the purpose for which the record was collected and is relevant and necessary to litigation or anticipated litigation, in which one of the following is a party or has an interest: (a) NSF or any of its components; (b) an NSF employee in his/her official capacity; (c) an NSF employee in his/her individual capacity when the Department of Justice is representing or considering representing the employee; or (d) the United States, when NSF determines that litigation is likely to affect the Agency.

Policies and Practice for Storing, Retrieving, Accessing, Retaining, and Disposing of Records in the System:

Storage:

Paper records are kept in locked file cabinets or area with limited access. Records may also be prepared and maintained in electronic format with password protection.

Retrievability:

The records are retrieved by the name of the individual or by the individual's social security number.

Safeguards:

These records are available only to those persons whose official duties require such access. They are kept in locked file cabinets or locations with limited access. Electronic records are password protected.

Retention and Disposal:

Except for those records covered by OPM/GOVT-10, records are destroyed approximately eight years after the individual's last Antarctic or Arctic deployment.

System Manager(s) and Address(es):

Safety and Health Officer, Office of Polar Programs. Point of contact: Associate Program Manager for Safety and Health, Polar Research Support Section, Office of Polar Programs, Office of the Director, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Room 755, Arlington, VA 22230.

Notification Procedure:

To determine whether this system of records contains a record pertaining to the requesting individual, write to the system manager at the above address.

Record Access Procedures:

See notification procedure.

Contesting Record Procedures:

Individuals desiring to contest or amend information maintained in this system of records should write to the system manager at the above address.

Record Source Categories:

Information in these records is obtained from individuals who intend to deploy to the Arctic or Antarctica and from personal physicians and medical examiners of the deploying individuals; from NSF staff and NSF records; and from non-NSF persons and records, to the extent necessary to carry out the duties described in the NSF Medical Examination procedures. All individuals desiring to deploy to the Arctic or Antarctica under the auspices of the National Science Foundation must provide the requested information.

Systems Exempted from Certain Provisions of the Act:

None.