

Department of Justice – *Justice Manual*

Section 1-7.000 – *Confidentiality and Media Contacts Policy*

1-7.100 – *General Need for Confidentiality*

Much of DOJ’s work involves non-public, sensitive matters. Disseminating non-public, sensitive information about DOJ matters could violate federal laws, employee non-disclosure agreements, and individual privacy rights; put a witness or law enforcement officer in danger; jeopardize an investigation or case; prejudice the rights of a defendant; or unfairly damage the reputation of a person.

DOJ personnel should presume that non-public, sensitive information obtained in connection with work is protected from disclosure, except as needed to fulfill official duties of DOJ personnel, and as allowed by court order, statutory or regulatory prescription, or case law and rules governing criminal and civil discovery. Other than as necessary to fulfill DOJ official duties, disclosure of such information to anyone, including to family members, friends, or even colleagues, is prohibited and could lead to disciplinary action. Unauthorized disclosures of sensitive personal or proprietary information could lead to criminal prosecution or administrative action.