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CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Title 29
Labor

Parts 900 to 1899

Revised as of July 1, 2024

Containing a codification of documents
of general applicability and future effect

As of July 1, 2024

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Cite this Code: CFR

To cite the regulations in this volume use title, part and section number. Thus, 29 CFR 901.1 *refers to title 29, part 901, section 1.*

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OLIVER A. POTTS,
Director,
Office of the Federal Register
July 1, 2024

THIS TITLE

Title 29—LABOR is composed of nine volumes. The parts in these volumes are arranged in the following order: Parts 0–99, parts 100–499, parts 500–899, parts 900–1899, parts 1900–§ 1910.999, part 1910.1000–end of part 1910, parts 1911–1925, parts 1926–1999, and part 2000 to end. The contents of these volumes represent all current regulations codified under this title as of July 1, 2024.

The OMB control numbers for title 29 CFR part 1910 appear in § 1910.8. For the convenience of the user, § 1910.8 appears in the Finding Aids section of the volume containing § 1910.1000 to the end.

For this volume, Gabrielle E. Burns was Chief Editor. The Code of Federal Regulations publication program is under the direction of John Hyrum Martinez, assisted by Stephen J. Frattini.

Title 29—Labor

(This volume contains parts 900 to 1899)

SUBTITLE B—REGULATIONS RELATING TO LABOR (CONTINUED)

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PART 900 [RESERVED]

PART 901—POLICY STATEMENT ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING DISPUTES AND APPLICABLE PROCEDURES

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901.2 Policy of Commission.
901.3 Participation by Commission.
901.4 Handling of disputes by Commission.
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901.6 Authority of Executive Director.
901.7 Inquiries and correspondence with Commission.

AUTHORITY: E.O. 11482; 3 CFR, 1969 Comp., p. 139.

SOURCE: 35 FR 4752, Mar. 19, 1970, unless otherwise noted.

§ 901.1 Scope and application.

The Construction Industry Collective Bargaining Commission hereby states its policy and sets forth procedures for handling disputes involving the standard labor and management organizations in the building and construction industry. These procedures are pursuant to the authority set forth in Executive Order 11482, dated September 22, 1969. Section 6 of the order states that, ''The Commission is authorized to issue such rules and regulations, and to adopt such procedures governing its affairs, including the conduct of its disputes settlement functions, as shall be necessary and appropriate to effectuate the objectives of this order.''

§ 901.2 Policy of Commission.

Section 3(c) of the Executive order provides that it is an objective of the Commission ''to establish more effective machinery for the resolution of disputes over the terms of collective bargaining agreements which at the same time recognizes the interests of each branch of the industry and preserves existing procedures that have been effective.'' Accordingly, it is the policy of the Commission:

(a) To encourage each branch of the industry without such a procedure to establish its own procedures to facilitate the settlement of disputes over the terms and application of collective bargaining agreements.

(b) To encourage each branch of the industry having such a procedure, but which procedure is limited in application, to expand the application of such procedure.

(c) To encourage parties in each branch of construction with a procedure to utilize that machinery in all possible cases.

(d) To encourage the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to refer disputes wherever possible to such machinery established in various branches of the industry.

§ 901.3 Participation by Commission.

(a) The Commission will consider participation in specific disputes which conform with the following criteria:

(1) The disputes will have a significant impact on construction activity in the area involved.

(2) The dispute concerns negotiations for a new or expiring agreement, or a question of interpretation or application of an existing agreement, where all other internal methods of resolution have been exhausted.

(b) The Commission will normally refrain from participating in specific disputes where;

(1) The dispute involved concerns jurisdiction of work.

(2) The parties have failed to utilize an independent disputes handling procedure presently in existence or subsequently established. (A number of such procedures exists currently in several branches of the industry.)

(3) The parties have not fully utilized the service of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

(c) In setting forth a disputes procedure the Commission emphasizes that it is not intended to provide a substitute for the collective bargaining process. Nor is it a means to bypass or neglect existing mediation facilities or industry branch dispute settling procedures. The standard procedure for the Commission to accept cognizance over a collective bargaining dispute is through referral to the Commission by the Director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. The Commission will exercise its judgment in accepting or declining specific disputes. The staff of the Commission is directed to maintain close contact with the

Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service on all aspects of bargaining in the construction industry and to see that critical disputes are brought to the attention of the appropriate International Union and the national offices of an appropriate contractor association.

§ 901.4 Handling of disputes by Commission.

The Commission will determine the particular method of dispute handling appropriate for each dispute. Section 5(a) of the Executive order states,

> The Commission or a panel designated by the Commission may, with the assistance of national labor organizations and national contractor associations where appropriate, seek to mediate such dispute, or make an investigation of the facts of the dispute and make such recommendations to the parties for the resolution thereof as it determines appropriate.

§ 901.5 Agreement to refrain from strike or lockout.

As part of its conditions for entering the dispute, the Commission may request the parties to continue the terms or conditions of employment without the occurrence of a strike or lockout for a 30-day period, as set forth in section 5(a) of the Executive Order, to enhance the functions of mediation and other related activities.

§ 901.6 Authority of Executive Director.

The Commission delegates authority to the Executive Director to accept or reject requests for Commission involvement in those instances where a Commission meeting would not occur in sufficient time prior to a contract expiration date to permit such involvement.

§ 901.7 Inquiries and correspondence with Commission.

Inquiries to the Commission about the status of disputes or other matters should be directed as follows:

Executive Director, Construction Industry Collective Bargaining Commission, room 5220, Department of Labor Building, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20210. Telephone: (202) 961–3736.

PARTS 902–999 [RESERVED]

CHAPTER X—NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD

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ABBREVIATION USED IN THIS CHAPTER:
NMB = *National Mediation Board.*

PART 1200 [RESERVED]

PART 1201—DEFINITIONS

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1201.1 Carrier.
1201.2 Exceptions.
1201.3 Determination as to electric lines.
1201.4 Employee.
1201.5 Exceptions.
1201.6 Representatives.

AUTHORITY: 44 Stat. 577, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 151–163.

SOURCE: 11 FR 177A–922, Sept. 11, 1946, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 13 FR 8740, Dec. 30, 1948.

§ 1201.1 Carrier.

The term *carrier* includes any express company, sleeping car company, carrier by railroad, subject to the Interstate Commerce Act (24 Stat. 379, as amended; 49 U.S.C. 1 *et seq.*), and any company which is directly or indirectly owned or controlled by or under common control with any carrier by railroad and which operates any equipment or facilities or performs any service (other than trucking service) in connection with the transportation, receipt, delivery, elevation, transfer in transit, refrigeration or icing, storage, and handling of property transported by railroad, and any receiver, trustee, or other individual or body, judicial or otherwise, when in the possession of the business of any such ''carrier.''

§ 1201.2 Exceptions.

(a) The term ''carrier'' shall not include any street, interurban, or suburban electric railway, unless such railway is operating as a part of a general steam-railroad system of transportation, but shall not exclude any part of the general steam-railroad system of transportation now or hereafter operated by any other motive power.

(b) The term ''carrier'' shall not include any company by reason of its being engaged in the mining of coal, the supplying of coal to carrier where delivery is not beyond the tipple, and the operation of equipment or facilities therefor or any of such activities.

§ 1201.3 Determination as to electric lines.

The Interstate Commerce Commission is hereby authorized and directed upon request of the Mediation Board or upon complaint of any part interested to determine after hearing whether any line operated by electric power falls within the terms of this part.

§ 1201.4 Employee.

The term *employee* as used in this part includes every person in the service of a carrier (subject to its continuing authority to supervise and direct the manner of rendition of his service) who performs any work defined as that of an employee or subordinate official in the orders of the Interstate Commerce Commission now in effect, and as the same may be amended or interpreted by orders hereafter entered by the Commission pursuant to the authority which is hereby conferred upon it to enter orders amending or interpreting such existing orders: *Provided, however,* That no occupational classification made by order of the Interstate Commerce Commission shall be construed to define the crafts according to which railway employees may be organized by their voluntary action, nor shall the jurisdiction or powers of such employee organizations be regarded as in any way limited or defined by the provisions of this Act or by the orders of the Commission.

§ 1201.5 Exceptions.

The term ''employee'' shall not include any individual while such individual is engaged in the physical operations consisting of the mining of coal, the preparation of coal, the handling (other than movement by rail with standard locomotives) of coal not beyond the mine tipple, or the loading of coal at the tipple.

§ 1201.6 Representatives.

The term *representative* means any person or persons, labor union, organization, or corporation designated either by a carrier or group of carriers or by its or their employees, to act for it or them.

PART 1202—RULES OF PROCEDURE

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AUTHORITY: 44 Stat. 577, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 151–163.

SOURCE: 11 FR 177A–922, Sept. 11, 1946, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 13 FR 8740, Dec. 30, 1948.

§ 1202.1 Mediation.

The mediation services of the Board may be invoked by the parties, or either party, to a dispute between an employee or group of employees and a carrier concerning changes in rates of pay, rules, or working conditions not adjusted by the parties in conference; also, concerning a dispute not referable to the National Railroad Adjustment Board or appropriate airline adjustment board, when not adjusted in conference between the parties, or where conferences are refused. The National Mediation Board may proffer its services in case any labor emergency is found by it to exist at any time.

§ 1202.2 Interpretation of mediation agreements.

Under section 5, Second, of title I of the Railway Labor Act, in any case in which a controversy arises over the meaning or application of any agreement reached through mediation, either party to said agreement, or both, may apply to the National Mediation Board for an interpretation of the meaning or application of such agreement. Upon receipt of such request, the Board shall, after a hearing of both sides, give its interpretation within 30 days.

§ 1202.3 Representation disputes.

If any dispute shall arise among a carrier's employees as to who are the representatives of such employees designated and authorized in accordance with the requirements of the Railway Labor Act, it is the duty of the Board, upon request of either party to the dispute, to investigate such dispute and certify to both parties, in writing, the name or names of individuals or organizations that have been designated and authorized to represent the employees involved in the dispute, and to certify the same to the carrier.

§ 1202.4 Secret ballot.

In conducting such investigation, the Board is authorized to take a secret ballot of the employees involved, or to utilize any other appropriate method of ascertaining the names of their duly designated and authorized representatives in such manner as shall insure the choice of representatives by the employees without interference, influence, or coercion exercised by the carrier. Except in unusual or extraordinary circumstances, in a secret ballot the Board shall determine the choice of representative based on the majority of valid ballots cast.

[75 FR 26088, June 10, 2010]

§ 1202.5 Rules to govern elections.

In the conduct of a representation election, the Board shall designate who may participate in the election, which may include a public hearing on craft or class, and establish the rules to govern the election, or may appoint a committee of three neutral persons who after hearing shall within 10 days designate the employees who may participate in the election.

§ 1202.6 Access to carrier records.

Under the Railway Labor Act the Board has access to and has power to make copies of the books and records of the carriers to obtain and utilize such information as may be necessary to fulfill its duties with respect to representatives of carrier employees.

§ 1202.7 Who may participate in elections.

As mentioned in §1202.3, when disputes arise between parties to a representation dispute, the National Mediation Board is authorized by the Act to determine who may participate in the selection of employees representatives.

§ 1202.8 Hearings on craft or class.

In the event the contesting parties or organizations are unable to agree on the employees eligible to participate in the selection of representatives, and either party makes application by letter for a formal hearing before the Board to determine the dispute, the Board may in its discretion hold a public hearing, at which all parties interested may present their contentions and argument, and at which the carrier concerned is usually invited to present factual information. At the conclusion of such hearings the Board customarily invites all interested parties to submit briefs supporting their views, and after considering the evidence and briefs, the Board makes a determination or finding, specifying the craft or class of employees eligible to participate in the designation of representatives.

§ 1202.9 Appointment of arbitrators.

Section 5, Third, (a) of the Railway Labor Act provides in the event mediation of a dispute is unsuccessful, the Board endeavors to induce the parties to submit their controversy to arbitration. If the parties so agree, and the arbitrators named by the parties are unable to agree upon the neutral arbitrator or arbitrators, as provided in section 7 of the Railway Labor Act, it becomes the duty of the Board to name such neutral arbitrators and fix the compensation for such service. In performing this duty, the Board is required to appoint only those whom it deems wholly disinterested in the controversy, and to be impartial and without bias as between the parties thereto.

§ 1202.10 Appointment of referees.

Section 3, Third, (e) title I of the act makes it the duty of the National Mediation Board to appoint and fix the compensation for service a neutral person known as a ''referee'' in any case where a division of the National Railroad Adjustment Board becomes deadlocked on an award, such referee to sit with the division and make an award. The National Mediation Board in appointing referees is bound by the same requirements that apply in the appointment of neutral arbitrators as outlined in §1202.9

§ 1202.11 Emergency boards.

Under the terms of section 10 of the Railway Labor Act, if a dispute between a carrier and its employees is not adjusted through mediation or the other procedures prescribed by the act, and should, in the judgment of the National Mediation Board, threaten to interrupt interstate commerce to a degree such as to deprive any section of the country of essential transportation service, the Board shall notify the President, who may thereupon, in his discretion, create an emergency board to investigate and report to him respecting such dispute. An emergency board may be composed of such number of persons as the President designates, and persons so designated shall not be pecuniarily or otherwise interested in any organization of employees or any carrier. The compensation of emergency board members is fixed by the President. An emergency board is created separately in each instance, and is required to investigate the facts as to the dispute and report thereon to the President within 30 days from the date of its creation.

§ 1202.12 National Air Transport Adjustment Board.

Under section 205, title II, of the Railway Labor Act, when in the judgment of the National Mediation Board it becomes necessary to establish a permanent national board of adjustment for the air carriers subject to the act to provide for the prompt and orderly settlement of disputes between the employees and the carriers growing out of grievances, or out of the application or interpretation of working agreements, the Board is empowered by its order made, published, and served, to direct the air carriers and labor organizations, national in scope, to select and designate four representatives to constitute a Board known as the National Air Transport Adjustment Board. Two

members each shall be selected by the air carriers and the labor organizations of their employees. Up to the present time, it has not been considered necessary to establish the National Air Transport Adjustment Board.

§ 1202.13 Air carriers.

By the terms of title II of the Railway Labor Act, which was approved April 10, 1936, all of title I, except section 3, which relates to the National Railroad Adjustment Board, was extended to cover every common carrier by air engaged in interstate or foreign commerce, and every carrier by air transporting mail for or under contract with the United States Government, and to all employees or subordinate officials of such air carriers.

§ 1202.14 Labor members of Adjustment Board.

Section 3, First, (f) of title I of the Railway Labor Act relating to the settlement of disputes among labor organizations as to the qualification of any such organization to participate in the selection of labor members of the Adjustment Board, places certain duties upon the National Mediation Board. This section of the act is quoted below:

(f) In the event a dispute arises as to the right of any national labor organization to participate as per paragraph (c) of this section in the selection and designation of the labor members of the Adjustment Board, the Secretary of Labor shall investigate the claim of such labor organization to participate, and if such claim in the judgment of the Secretary of Labor has merit, the secretary shall notify the Mediation Board accordingly, and within 10 days after receipt of such advice the Mediation Board shall request those national labor organizations duly qualified as per paragraph (c) of this section to participate in the selection and designation of the labor members of the Adjustment Board to select a representative. Such representatives, together with a representative likewise designated by the claimant, and a third or neutral party designated by the Mediation Board, constituting a board of three, shall within 30 days after the appointment of the neutral member investigate the claims of the labor organization desiring participation and decide whether or not it was organized in accordance with section 2, hereof, and is otherwise properly qualified to participate in the selection of the labor members of the Adjustment Board, and the findings of such boards of three shall be final and binding.

§ 1202.15 Length of briefs in NMB hearing proceedings.

(a) In the event briefs are authorized by the Board or the assigned Hearing Officer, principal briefs shall not exceed fifty (50) pages in length and reply briefs, if permitted, shall not exceed twenty-five (25) pages in length unless the participant desiring to submit a brief in excess of such limitation requests a waiver of such limitation from the Board which is received within five (5) days of the date on which the briefs were ordered or, in the case of a reply brief, within five (5) days of receipt of the principal brief, and in such cases the Board may require the filing of a summary of argument, suitably paragraphed which shoud be a succinct, but accurate and clear, condensation of the argument actually made in the brief.

(b) The page limitations provided by this section (§1202.15) are exclusive of those pages containing the table of contents, tables of citations and any copies of administrative or court decisions which have been cited in the brief. All briefs shall be submitted on standard 8½ × 11 inch paper with double spaced type.

(c) Briefs not complying with this section (§1202.15) will be returned promptly to their initiators.

[44 FR 10601, Feb. 22, 1979]

PART 1203—APPLICATIONS FOR SERVICE

Sec.
1203.1 Mediation services.
1203.2 Investigation of representation disputes.
1203.3 Interpretation of mediation agreements.

AUTHORITY: 44 Stat. 577, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 151–163.

§ 1203.1 Mediation services.

Applications for the mediation services of the National Mediation Board under section 5, First, of the Railway Labor Act, may be made on printed forms N.M.B. 2, copies of which may be secured from the Board's Chief of Staff's Office or on the Internet at

www.nmb.gov. Such applications and all correspondence connected therewith should be submitted in duplicate. The application should show the exact nature of the dispute, the number of employees involved, name of the carrier and name of the labor organization, date of agreement between the parties, if any, date and copy of notice served by the invoking party to the other and date of final conference between the parties. Application should be signed by the highest officer of the carrier who has been designated to handle disputes under the Railway Labor Act, or by the chief executive of the labor organization, whichever party files the application. These applications, after preliminary investigation in the Board's offices, are given docket number in series ''A'' and the cases are assigned for mediation to Board members or to mediators on the Board's staff.

[11 FR 177A–923, Sept. 11, 1946. Redesignated at 13 FR 8740, Dec. 30, 1948, as amended at 64 FR 40287, July 26, 1999]

§ 1203.2 Investigation of representation disputes.

Applications for the services of the National Mediation Board under section 2, Ninth, of the Railway Labor Act to investigate representation disputes among carriers' employees may be made on printed forms NMB–3, copies of which may be secured from the Board's Representation and Legal Department or on the internet at *www.nmb.gov*. Such applications and all correspondence connected therewith should be filed in duplicate and the applications should be accompanied by signed authorization cards from the employees composing the craft or class involved in the dispute. The applications should show specifically the name or description of the craft or class of employees involved, the name of the invoking organization or employee seeking certification, or the name of the employee seeking decertification, the name of the organization currently representing the employees, if any, and the estimated number of employees in each craft or class involved. The applications should be signed by the chief executive of the invoking organization, some other authorized officer of the organization, or by the invoking employee. These disputes are given docket numbers in the series ''R''.

[84 FR 35989, July 26, 2019]

§ 1203.3 Interpretation of mediation agreements.

(a) Applications may be filed with the Board's Chief of Staff under section 5, Second, of the Railway Labor Act, for the interpretation of agreements reached in mediation under section 5, First. Such applications may be made by letter from either party to the mediation agreement stating the specific question on which an interpretation is desired.

(b) This function of the National Mediation Board is not intended to conflict with the provisions of section 3 of the Railway Labor Act. Providing for interpretation of agreements by the National Railroad Adjustment Board. Many complete working agreements are revised with the aid of the Board's mediating services, and it has been the Board's policy that disputes involving the interpretation or application of such agreements should be handled by the Adjustment Board. Under this section of the law the Board when called upon may only consider and render an interpretation on the specific terms of an agreement actually signed in mediation, and not for matters incident or corollary thereto.

[11 FR 177A–923, Sept. 11, 1946. Redesignated at 13 FR 8740, Dec. 30, 1948, as amended at 64 FR 40287, July 26, 1999]

PART 1204—LABOR CONTRACTS

Sec.

1204.1 Making and maintaining contracts.
1204.2 Arbitrary changing of contracts.
1204.3 Filing of contracts.

AUTHORITY: 44 Stat. 577, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 151–163.

SOURCE: 11 FR 177A–924, Sept. 11, 1946, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 13 FR 8740, Dec. 30, 1948.

§ 1204.1 Making and maintaining contracts.

It is the duty of all carriers, their officers, agents, and employees to exert every reasonable effort to make and

maintain contracts covering rates of pay, rules, and working conditions.

§ 1204.2 Arbitrary changing of contracts.

No carrier, its officers, or agents shall change the rates of pay, rules, or working conditions of its employees, as a class as embodied in agreements except in the manner prescribed in such agreements or in section 6 of the Railway Labor Act.

§ 1204.3 Filing of contracts.

Section 5, Third, (e) of the Railway Labor Act requires all carriers to file with the National Mediation Board copies of all contracts in effect with organizations representing their employees, covering rates of pay, rules, and working conditions. Several thousand of such contracts are on file in the Board's Washington office and are available for inspection by interested parties.

PART 1205—NOTICES IN RE: RAILWAY LABOR ACT

Sec.

1205.1 Handling of disputes.
1205.2 Employees' Bill of Rights.
1205.3 General Order No. 1.
1205.4 Substantive rules.

AUTHORITY: 44 Stat. 577, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 151–163.

SOURCE: 11 FR 177A–924, Sept. 11, 1946, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 13 FR 8740, Dec. 30, 1948.

§ 1205.1 Handling of disputes.

Section 2, Eighth, of the Railway Labor Act provides that every carrier shall notify its employees by printed notices in such form and posted at such times and places as shall be specified by order of the Mediation Board and requires that all disputes between a carrier and its employees will be handled in accordance with the requirements of the act. In such notices there must be printed verbatim, in large type, the third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs of said section 2, Eighth, of the Railway Labor Act.

§ 1205.2 Employees' Bill of Rights.

The provisions of the third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs of section 2 are by law made a part of the contract of employment between the carrier and each employee and shall be binding upon the parties regardless of any other express or implied agreements between them. Under these provisions the employees are guaranteed the right to organize without interference of management, the right to determine who shall represent them, and the right to bargain collectively through such representatives. This section makes it unlawful for any carrier to require any person seeking employment to sign any contract promising to join or not to join a labor organization. Violation of the foregoing provisions is a misdemeanor under the law and subjects the offender to punishment.

§ 1205.3 General Order No. 1.

General Order No. 1, issued August 14, 1934, is the only order the Board has issued since its creation in 1934. This order sent to the President of each carrier coming under the act transmitted a sample copy of the Mediation Board's Form MB–1 known as ''Notice in re: Railway Labor Act.'' The order prescribes that such notices are to be standard as to contents, dimensions of sheet, and size of type and that they shall be posted promptly and maintained continuously in readable condition on all the usual and customary bulletin boards giving information to employees and at such other places as may be necessary to make them accessible to all employees. Such notices must not be hidden by other papers or otherwise obscured from view.

§ 1205.4 Substantive rules.

The only substantive rules issued by the National Mediation Board are those authorized under section 2, Ninth, of the Railway Labor Act to implement the procedure of determining employee representation.

[12 FR 2451, Apr. 16, 1947. Redesignated at 13 FR 8740, Dec. 30, 1948, as amended at 64 FR 40287, July 26, 1999]

PART 1206—HANDLING REPRESENTATION DISPUTES UNDER THE RAILWAY LABOR ACT

Sec.
1206.1 Run-off elections.
1206.2 Percentage of valid authorizations required to determine existence of a representation dispute.
1206.3 Age of authorization cards.
1206.4 Time limits on applications.
1206.5 Decertification of representatives.
1206.6 Eligibility of dismissed employees to vote.
1206.7 Construction of this part.
1206.8 Amendment or rescission of rules in this part.

AUTHORITY: 44 Stat. 577, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 151–163.

SOURCE: 12 FR 3083, May 10, 1947, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 13 FR 8740, Dec. 30, 1948.

§ 1206.1 Run-off elections.

(a) In an election among any craft or class where three or more options (including the option for no representation) receive valid votes, if no option receives a majority of the legal votes cast, or in the event of a tie vote, the Board shall authorize a run-off election.

(b) In the event a run-off election is authorized by the Board, the two options which received the highest number of votes cast in the first election shall be placed on the run-off ballot. No blank line on which voters may write in the name of any organization, individual, or no representation will be provided on the run-off ballot.

(c) Employees who were eligible to vote at the conclusion of the first election shall be eligible to vote in the run-off election except:

(1) Those employees whose employment relationship has terminated; and

(2) Those employees who are no longer employed in the craft or class.

[77 FR 75549, Dec. 21, 2012, as amended at 84 FR 35989, July 26, 2019]

§ 1206.2 Percentage of valid authorizations required to determine existence of a representation dispute.

(a) Upon receipt of an application requesting that an organization or individual be certified as the representative of any craft or class of employees, or to decertify the current representative and have no representative, a showing of proved authorizations (checked and verified as to date, signature, and employment status) from at least fifty (50) percent of the craft or class must be made before the National Mediation Board will authorize an election or otherwise determine the representation desires of the employees under the provisions of section 2, Ninth, of the Railway Labor Act.

(b) Any intervening individual or organization must also produce proved authorizations (checked and verified as to date, signature, and employment status) from at least fifty (50) percent of the craft or class of employees involved to warrant placing the name of the intervenor on the ballot.

[77 FR 75549, Dec. 21, 2012, as amended at 84 FR 35989, July 26, 2019]

§ 1206.3 Age of authorization cards.

Authorizations must be signed and dated in the employee's own handwriting or witnessed mark. No authorizations will be accepted by the National Mediation Board in any employee representation dispute which bear a date prior to one year before the date of the application for the investigation of such dispute.

§ 1206.4 Time limits on applications.

Except in unusual or extraordinary circumstances, the National Mediation Board will not accept an application for investigation of a representation dispute among employees of a carrier:

(a) For a period of two (2) years from the date of a certification or decertification covering the same craft or class of employees on the same carrier, and

(b) For a period of one (1) year from the date on which:

(1) The Board dismissed a docketed application after having conducted an election among the same craft or class of employees on the same carrier and less than a majority of valid ballots cast were for representation; or

(2) The Board dismissed a docketed application covering the same craft or class of employees on the same carrier because no dispute existed as defined in §1206.2 of these rules; or

(3) The Board dismissed a docketed application after the applicant withdrew an application covering the same craft or class of employees on the same carrier after the application was docketed by the Board.

[44 FR 10602, Feb. 22, 1979, as amended at 75 FR 26088, May 11, 2010; 84 FR 35989, July 26, 2019]

§ 1206.5 Decertification of representatives.

Employees who no longer wish to be represented may seek to decertify the current representative of a craft or class in a direct election. The employees must follow the procedure outlines in § 1203.2.

[84 FR 35989, July 26, 2019]

§ 1206.6 Eligibility of dismissed employees to vote.

Dismissed employees whose requests for reinstatement account of wrongful dismissal are pending before proper authorities, which includes the National Railroad Adjustment Board or other appropriate adjustment board, are eligible to participate in elections among the craft or class of employees in which they are employed at time of dismissal. This does not include dismissed employees whose guilt has been determined, and who are seeking reinstatement on a leniency basis.

[12 FR 3083, May 10, 1947. Redesignated at 13 FR 8740, Dec. 30, 1948, and further redesignated at 77 FR 75549, Dec. 21, 2012. And further redesignated at 84 FR 35989, July 26, 2019]

§ 1206.7 Construction of this part.

The rules and regulations in this part shall be liberally construed to effectuate the purposes and provisions of the act.

[12 FR 3083, May 10, 1947. Redesignated at 13 FR 8740, Dec. 30, 1948, and further redesignated at 77 FR 75549, Dec. 21, 2012. And further redesignated at 84 FR 35989, July 26, 2019]

§ 1206.8 Amendment or rescission of rules in this part.

(a) The Board may at any time amend or rescind any rule or regulation in this part by following the public rulemaking procedures under the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) and after providing the opportunity for a public hearing.

(b) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this section shall not apply to any rule or proposed rule to which the third sentence of section 553(b) of the Administrative Procedure Act applies.

(c) Any interested person may petition the Board, in writing, for the issuance, amendment, or repeal of a rule or regulation in this part. An original and three copies of such petition shall be filed with the Board in Washington, DC, and shall state the rule or regulation proposed to be issued, amended, or repealed, together with a statement of grounds in support of such petition.

[77 FR 75549, Dec. 21, 2012. Redesignated at 84 FR 35989, July 26, 2019]]

PART 1207—ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL ADJUSTMENT BOARDS

Sec.

1207.1 Establishment of special adjustment boards (PL Boards).
1207.2 Requests for Mediation Board action.
1207.3 Compensation of neutrals.
1207.4 Designation of PL Boards, filing of agreements, and disposition of records.

AUTHORITY: 44 Stat. 577, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 151–163.

SOURCE: 31 FR 14644, Nov. 17, 1966, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1207.1 Establishment of special adjustment boards (PL Boards).

Public Law 89–456 (80 Stat. 208) governs procedures to be followed by carriers and representatives of employees in the establishment and functioning of special adjustment boards, hereinafter referred to as PL Boards. Public Law 89–456 requires action by the National Mediation Board in the following circumstances:

(a) *Designation of party member of PL Board.* Public Law 89–456 provides that within thirty (30) days from the date a written request is made by an employee representative upon a carrier, or by a carrier upon an employee representative, for the establishment of a PL Board, an agreement establishing such a Board shall be made. If, however, one party fails to designate a

member of the Board, the party making the request may ask the Mediation Board to designate a member on behalf of the other party. Upon receipt of such request, the Mediation Board will notify the party which failed to designate a partisan member for the establishment of a PL Board of the receipt of the request. The Mediation Board will then designate a representative on behalf of the party upon whom the request was made. This representative will be an individual associated in interest with the party he is to represent. The designee, together with the member appointed by the party requesting the establishment of the PL Board, shall constitute the Board.

(b) *Appointment of a neutral to determine matters concerning the establishment and/or jurisdiction of a PL Board.* (1) When the members of a PL Board constituted in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section, for the purpose of resolving questions concerning the establishment of the Board and/or its jurisdiction, are unable to resolve these matters, then and in that event, either party may ten (10) days thereafter request the Mediation Board to appoint a neutral member to determine these procedural issues.

(2) Upon receipt of this request, the Mediation Board will notify the other party to the PL Board. The Mediation Board will then designate a neutral member to sit with the PL Board and resolve the procedural issues in dispute. When the neutral has determined the procedural issues in dispute, he shall cease to be a member of the PL Board.

(c) *Appointment of neutral to sit with PL Boards and dispose of disputes.* (1) When the members of a PL Board constituted by agreement of the parties, or by the appointment of a party member by the Mediation Board, as described in paragraph (a) of this section, are unable within ten (10) days after their failure to agree upon an award to agree upon the selection of a neutral person, either member of the Board may request the Mediation Board to appoint such neutral person and upon receipt of such request, the Mediation Board shall promptly make such appointment.

(2) A request for the appointment of a neutral under paragraph (b) of this section or this paragraph (c) shall;

(i) Show the authority for the request—Public Law 89–456, and

(ii) Define and list the proposed specific issues or disputes to be heard.

§ 1207.2 Requests for Mediation Board action.

(a) Requests for the National Mediation Board to appoint neutrals or party representatives should be made on NMB Form 5.

(b) Those authorized to sign request on behalf on parties:

(1) The ''representative of any craft or class of employees of a carrier,'' as referred to in Public Law 89–456, making request for Mediation Board action, shall be either the General Chairman, Grand Lodge Officer (or corresponding officer of equivalent rank), or the Chief Executive of the representative involved. A request signed by a General Chairman or Grand Lodge Officer (or corresponding officer of equivalent rank) shall bear the approval of the Chief Executive of the employee representative.

(2) The ''carrier representative'' making such a request for the Mediation Board's action shall be the highest carrier officer designated to handle matters arising under the Railway Labor Act.

(c) Docketing of PL Board agreements: The National Mediation Board will docket agreements establishing PL Board, which agreements meet the requirements of coverage as specified in Public Law 89–456. No neutral will be appointed under §1207.1(c) until the agreement establishing the PL Board has been docketed by the Mediation Board.

§ 1207.3 Compensation of neutrals.

(a) *Neutrals appointed by the National Mediation Board.* All neutral persons appointed by the National Mediation Board under the provisions of §1207.1 (b) and (c) will be compensated by the Mediation Board in accordance with legislative authority. Certificates of appointment will be issued by the Mediation Board in each instance.

(b) *Neutrals selected by the parties.* (1) In cases where the party members of a

PL Board created under Public Law 89–456 mutually agree upon a neutral person to be a member of the Board, the party members will jointly so notify the Mediation Board, which Board will then issue a certificate of appointment to the neutral and arrange to compensate him as under paragraph (a) of this section.

(2) The same procedure will apply in cases where carrier and employee representatives are unable to agree upon the establishment and jurisdiction of a PL Board, and mutually agree upon a procedural neutral person to sit with them as a member and determine such issues.

§ 1207.4 Designation of PL Boards, filing of agreements, and disposition of records.

(a) *Designation of PL Boards.* All special adjustment boards created under Public Law 89–456 will be designated PL Boards, and will be numbered serially, commencing with No. 1, in the order of their docketing by the National Mediation Board.

(b) *Filing of agreements.* The original agreement creating the PL Board under Public Law 89–456 shall be filed with the National Mediation Board at the time it is executed by the parties. A copy of such agreement shall be filed by the parties with the Administrative Officer of the National Railroad Adjustment Board, Chicago, Ill.

(c) *Disposition of records.* Since the provisions of section 2(a) of Public Law 89–456 apply also to the awards of PL Boards created under this Act, two copies of all awards made by the PL Boards, together with the record of proceedings upon which such awards are based, shall be forwarded by the neutrals who are members of such Boards, or by the parties in case of disposition of disputes by PL Boards without participation of neutrals, to the Administrative Officer of the National Railroad Adjustment Board, Chicago, Ill., for filing, safekeeping, and handling under the provisions of section 2(q), as may be required.

PART 1208—AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

Sec.

1208.1 General provisions.
1208.2 Requests for records or information under the Freedom of Information Act.
1208.3 Proactive disclosure of information.
1208.4 Material relating to representation function.
1208.5 Material relating to mediation function.
1208.6 Fees under the Freedom of Information Act.
1208.7 Subpoenas and other requests for testimony and production of documents in legal proceedings where the NMB is not a party.

AUTHORITY: 44 Stat. 577, as amended; 45 U.S.C. 151–163.

SOURCE: 82 FR 8895, Feb. 1, 2017, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1208.1 General provisions.

(a) The purpose of this part is to set forth the regulations of the NMB regarding the availability and disclosure of information in its possession and to implement the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). These regulations establish procedures for requesting access to records maintained by the NMB and should be read together with the FOIA, the 1987 Office of Management and Budget Guidelines for FOIA Fees, Executive Order 12,600, and the NMB's other rules and regulations.

(b) Public policy and the successful effectuation of the NMB's mission require that Board members and the employees of the NMB maintain a reputation for impartiality and integrity. Labor and management and other interested parties participating in mediation efforts must have assurance, as must labor organizations, carriers, and individuals involved in questions of representation, that confidential information disclosed to Board members and employees of the NMB will not be divulged, voluntarily or by compulsion.

(c) Notwithstanding this general policy, the Board will under all circumstances endeavor to make public as much information as can be allowed. The Board will withhold information under the FOIA only if it reasonably foresees that disclosure would harm an interest protected by one of the exemptions described in the FOIA or when

disclosure is prohibited by law. When full disclosure is not possible, the NMB will consider whether partial disclosure of information is possible and will take necessary steps to segregate and release nonexempt information.

(d) The NMB will preserve all correspondence pertaining to requests it receives under the FOIA, as well as copies of all requested records, until disposition or destruction is authorized pursuant to Title 44 of the United States Code or the General Records Schedule 14 of the National Archives and Records Administration. The NMB will not dispose of or destroy records while they are the subject of a pending request, appeal, or lawsuit under the FOIA.

§ 1208.2 Requests for records or information under the Freedom of Information Act.

(a) *Requests for records.* (1) All requests for NMB records shall be filed in writing by emailing *FOIA@nmb.gov* or mailing the request to the Chief FOIA Officer, National Mediation Board, 1301 K Street NW., Suite 250E, Washington, DC 20005. Additional information about submitting requests is available at *www.nmb.gov*. Requesters must provide contact information, such as their phone number, email address, and/or mailing address, to assist in communications about the request.

(2) The request shall reasonably describe the records being sought in a manner which permits identification and location of the records. To the extent possible, requesters should include specific information that may help the NMB identify the requested records, such as the date, title or name, author, recipient, subject matter, case or file number, or reference number. Before submitting a request, a requester may contact the NMB's FOIA Public Liaison to discuss the records sought or to receive assistance in describing the records.

(3) The request shall include any request for waiver of fees, clearly outlining the reasons for any such request.

(4) Requests may specify the preferred form or format (including electronic formats) for the records sought. The NMB will accommodate such requests if the record is readily reproducible in that form or format.

(5) Upon receipt of a request for the records, the Chief FOIA Officer shall assign the request a FOIA tracking number and record the date and time received, the name and address of the requester, and the nature of the records requested. If the request will take more than 10 working days to process, the Chief FOIA Officer will acknowledge the request in writing, providing the requester with an individualized tracking number and a brief description of records sought.

(6) All time limitations established pursuant to this section with respect to processing initial requests and appeals shall commence at the time a written request for records is received at the Board's offices in Washington, DC, or via email.

(b) *Processing the request*—(1) *Time limits.* Within 20 working days after a request for records is received, the Chief FOIA Officer shall determine whether to comply with the request and immediately notify the requester, unless an extension is taken under paragraph (b)(2) of this section. The NMB may make one request for additional information from the requester or clarify a fee issue with the requester and may toll the 20-day period while awaiting receipt of the additional information.

(2) *Extension of time.* In unusual circumstances as specified in this paragraph, the Chief FOIA Officer may extend the time for initial determination on requests up to a total of 10 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal public holidays). Extensions shall be made by written notice to the requester within 20 working days of receipt of the request and shall set forth the reason for the extension, provide the date on which a determination is expected to be dispatched, and make available the NMB's Public Liaison to assist with any disputes between the requester and the NMB. Where the extension exceeds 10 working days, the Chief FOIA Officer will notify the requester of the right to seek dispute resolution services from the Office of Government Information Services. As used in this paragraph ''unusual circumstances'' means, but only to the

extent necessary to the proper processing of the request:

(i) The need to search for, collect, and appropriately examine a voluminous amount of separate and distinct records which are demanded in a single request; or

(ii) The need for consultation, according to the procedures set forth in paragraph (b)(4), with another agency having substantial interest in the determination of the request.

(3) *Expedited processing.* The Chief FOIA Officer shall process a request on an expedited basis whenever a requester demonstrates a compelling need. A request for expedited processing may be made at any time.

(i) For purposes of this section, ''compelling need'' means that a failure to obtain the requested records on an expedited basis could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual or, with respect to a request made by a person primarily engaged in disseminating information, urgency to inform the public concerning actual or alleged Federal Government activity.

(ii) The Chief FOIA Officer shall make a determination of whether to provide expedited processing, and notice of the determination shall be provided to the person making the request, within 10 days after the date of the request.

(4) *Consultations and referrals.* (i) When the NMB receives a request for a record (or a portion thereof) in its possession that originated with another federal agency, the Chief FOIA Officer shall refer the request and record to that agency for direct response to the requester. The Chief FOIA Officer will notify the requester of any referral and provide the requester with the name and FOIA contact information of the agency to which the request was referred.

(ii) In instances where a record is requested that originated with the NMB and another federal agency has a significant interest in the record (or a portion thereof), the NMB shall consult with that federal agency before responding to a requester.

(iii) All consultations and referrals received by the NMB will receive a tracking number and be processed according to the date that the first agency received the request.

(5) *Requests for business information provided to the NMB.* Business information is financial or commercial information obtained by the NMB from a submitter that may be protected from disclosure under Exemption 4 of the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4).

(i) When the NMB has reason to believe that requested information may fall under Exemption 4, it will promptly provide written notice to the submitter. The notice will either describe the requested business information or include a copy of the requested records. The NMB shall provide the submitter with seven days (excepting Saturdays, Sunday, and legal public holidays) to provide a statement of any objection to disclosure.

(ii) The NMB will consider the submitter's objections in deciding whether to disclose business information. If the NMB decides to disclose business information over such objection, it shall provide written notice to the submitter of its reasons for not sustaining the objections, a description of information to be disclosed, and the disclosure date.

(iii) Whenever the NMB provides a submitter with notice and the opportunity to object under paragraph (b)(5)(ii) of this section, it shall also inform the requestor that the request is being processed according to these provisions and there may be a subsequent delay in processing.

(iv) A submitter of confidential business information must use good faith efforts to designate any portion of its submission that it considers to be protected from disclosure under Exemption 4. These designations expire 10 years after the date of the submission unless the submitter requests and provides justification for a longer designation period.

(6) *Response to requests.* Within 20 days (excepting Saturdays, Sunday, and legal public holidays) after the receipt of a request, the requester shall be notified of the determination and the right to seek assistance from the NMB's FOIA Public Liaison. If the request for records is not granted in full, the final response letter shall also include:

(i) A reference to the specific exemption or exemptions under the FOIA authorizing the withholding of the record or parts of the record and a brief explanation of how the exemption applies to the record withheld.

(ii) A statement that the denial may be appealed within 90 days by writing to the Chairman, by emailing *FOIA@nmb.gov*, or by writing to National Mediation Board, 1301 K Street NW., Suite 250E, Washington, DC 20005, and that judicial review will thereafter be available in the district in which the requester resides, or has his principal place of business, or the district in which Agency records are situated, or the District of Columbia.

(iii) A notification of the right to seek dispute resolution services from the Office of Government Information Services.

(7) *Treatment of delay as a denial.* If no determination has been dispatched at the end of the 20-day period, or the last extension thereof, the requester may deem the request denied, and exercise a right of appeal, in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section. When no determination can be dispatched within the applicable time limit, the Chief FOIA Officer shall continue to process the request and shall inform the requester of the reason for the delay, the date on which a determination may be expected to be dispatched, and of the right to treat the delay as a denial and to appeal to the Chairman of the Board in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) *Appeals to the Chairman of the Board.* (1) When a request for records has been denied in whole or in part by the Chief FOIA Officer or other person authorized to deny requests, the requester may, within 90 days of its receipt, appeal the denial to the Chairman of the Board. Appeals to the Chairman shall be in writing, addressed to the Chairman, National Mediation Board, Washington, DC 20005 or emailed to *FOIA@nmb.gov*.

(2) The Chairman of the Board will act upon the appeal within 20 working days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal public holidays) of its receipt unless an extension is made under paragraph (c)(3) of this section.

(3) In unusual circumstances as defined in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, the time for action on an appeal may be extended up to 10 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal public holidays). Written notice of such extension shall be made prior to the expiration of the 20-day response period, setting forth the reason for the extension and the date on which a determination is expected to be dispatched.

(4) If no determination on the appeal has been dispatched at the end of the 20-day period or the last extension thereof, the requester is deemed to have exhausted administrative remedies, giving rise to a right of review in a district court of the United States, as specified in 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4). When no determination can be dispatched within the applicable time limit, the appeal will nevertheless continue to be processed; on expiration of the time limit the requester shall be informed of the reason for the delay, of the date on which a determination may be expected to be dispatched, and of a right to seek judicial review in the United States district court in the district in which they reside or have their principal place of business, the district in which the Board records are situated or the District of Columbia. The requester may be asked to forego judicial review until determination of the appeal.

§ 1208.3 Proactive disclosure of information.

The NMB shall, in conformance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(2), maintain and make available for public inspection, by posting on its Web site (unless the Board determines by order published in the FEDERAL REGISTER that such publication would be unnecessary or impracticable) the following information: Final opinions, including concurring and dissenting opinions made in representation cases; statements of policy and interpretation made by the NMB but not published in the FEDERAL REGISTER; administrative staff materials, such as the Representation Manual; frequently requested materials, defined as those released in response to a FOIA request and for which the Agency has received at least three requests or those records that because of the nature of their subject matter the Agency determines are

likely to become the subject of subsequent requests; and a general index of records available under this section.

§ 1208.4 Material relating to representation function.

(a) The documents constituting the record of a case, such as the notices of hearing, motions, rulings, findings upon investigation, determinations of craft or class, dismissals, withdrawals, and certifications, are matters of official record and shall be made available on the NMB's Web site.

(b) This part notwithstanding, the NMB will treat as confidential evidence submitted in connection with the showing of interest in a representation dispute, including authorization cards and signature samples, and other personally identifying information received during an investigation.

§ 1208.5 Material relating to mediation function.

All files, reports, letters, memoranda, and documents relating to the mediation function of the NMB, with the exception of procedural or administrative materials, such as applications, docket letters, or public meeting notices, in the custody of the NMB or its employees relating to or acquired in their mediatory capacity under the Railway Labor Act are hereby declared to be confidential. No such confidential documents or the material contained therein shall be disclosed to any unauthorized person, or be taken or withdrawn, copied or removed from the custody of the NMB or its employees by any person or by any agent of such person or their representative without the explicit consent of the NMB.

§ 1208.6 Fees under the Freedom of Information Act.

(a) *In general.* The NMB will charge for processing requests under the FOIA in accordance with the provisions of this section and with Office of Management and Budget Guidelines. For purposes of assessing fees, the FOIA establishes three categories of requesters: Commercial use requesters, non-commercial scientific or educational institutions or news media requesters, and all other requesters. Different fees are assessed depending on the category. Requesters may seek a fee waiver. The NMB will consider requests for fee waivers in accordance with the requirements in paragraph (k) of this section. To resolve any fee issues that arise under this section, the NMB may contact a requester for additional information. The NMB ordinarily will collect all applicable fees before sending copies of records to a requester. Requesters must pay fees by check or money order made payable to the United States Treasury.

(b) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

Commercial use request is a request that asks for information for a use or a purpose that furthers a commercial, trade, or profit interest, which can include furthering those interests through litigation. An agency's decision to place a requester in the commercial use category will be made on a case-by-case basis based on the requester's intended use of the information. The NMB will notify requesters of their placement in this category.

Direct costs are those expenses that an agency incurs in searching for and duplicating (and, in the case of commercial use requests, reviewing) records in order to respond to a FOIA request. For example, direct costs include the salary of the employee performing the work (*i.e.*, the basic rate of pay for the employee, plus 16 percent of that rate to cover benefits) and the cost of operating computers and other electronic equipment, such as photocopiers and scanners. Direct costs do not include overhead expenses such as the costs of space, and of heating or lighting a facility.

Duplication is reproducing a copy of a record, or of the information contained in it, necessary to respond to a FOIA request. Copies can take the form of paper, audiovisual materials, or electronic records, among others.

Educational institution is any school that operates a program of scholarly research. A requester in this fee category must show that the request is made in connection with his or her role

at the educational institution. Agencies may seek verification from the requester that the request is in furtherance of scholarly research, and agencies will advise requesters of their placement in this category.

Noncommercial scientific institution is an institution that is not operated on a ''commercial'' basis, as defined in this paragraph (b) and that is operated solely for the purpose of conducting scientific research the results of which are not intended to promote any particular product or industry. A requester in this category must show that the request is authorized by and is made under the auspices of a qualifying institution and that the records are sought to further scientific research and are not for a commercial use. The NMB will advise requesters of their placement in this category.

Representative of the news media is any person or entity that gathers information of potential interest to a segment of the public, uses its editorial skills to turn the raw materials into a distinct work, and distributes that work to an audience. The term ''news'' means information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public. Examples of news media entities include television or radio stations that broadcast ''news'' to the public at large and publishers of periodicals that disseminate ''news'' and make their products available through a variety of means to the general public, including news organizations that disseminate solely on the Internet. A request for records supporting the news-dissemination function of the requester will not be considered to be for a commercial use. ''Freelance'' journalists who demonstrate a solid basis for expecting publication through a news media entity will be considered as a representative of the news media. A publishing contract would provide the clearest evidence that publication is expected; however, agencies can also consider a requester's past publication record in making this determination. The NMB will advise requesters of their placement in this category.

Review is the examination of a record located in response to a request in order to determine whether any portion of it is exempt from disclosure. Review time includes processing any record for disclosure, such as doing all that is necessary to prepare the record for disclosure, including the process of redacting the record and marking the appropriate exemptions. Review costs are properly charged even if a record ultimately is not disclosed. Review time also includes time spent both obtaining and considering any formal objection to disclosure made by a confidential business information submitter under §1208.2(b)(5), but it does not include time spent resolving general legal or policy issues regarding the application of exemptions.

Search is the process of looking for and retrieving records or information responsive to a request. Search time includes page-by-page or line-by-line identification of information within records and the reasonable efforts expended to locate and retrieve information from electronic records.

(c) *Charging fees.* In responding to FOIA requests, the NMB will charge the following fees unless a waiver or reduction of fees has been granted under paragraph (k) of this section. Because the fee amounts provided below already account for the direct costs associated with a given fee type, the NMB will not add any additional costs to charges calculated under this section.

(1) *Search.* (i) Requests made by educational institutions, noncommercial scientific institutions, or representatives of the news media are not subject to search fees. The NMB will charge search fees for all other requesters, subject to the restrictions of paragraph (d) of this section. The NMB may properly charge for time spent searching even if it does not locate any responsive records or determines that the records are entirely exempt from disclosure.

(ii) For each quarter hour spent by personnel searching for requested records, including electronic searches that do not require new programming, direct costs will be charged.

(iii) The NMB will also charge direct costs associated with conducting any search that requires the creation of a new computer program to locate the requested records. The NMB will notify the requester of the costs associated with creating such a program, and the

requester must agree to pay the associated costs before the costs may be incurred.

(2) *Duplication*. The NMB will charge duplication fees to all requesters, subject to the restrictions of paragraph (d) of this section. The NMB will honor a requester's preference for receiving a record in a particular form or format where it can readily reproduce it in the form or format requested. Where photocopies are supplied, the NMB will provide one copy per request at the cost of 15 cents per page. For copies of records produced on tapes, disks, or other media, the NMB will charge the direct costs of producing the copy, including operator time. Where paper documents must be scanned in order to comply with a requester's preference to receive the records in an electronic format, the requester must also pay the direct costs associated with scanning those materials. For other forms of duplication, the NMB will charge the direct costs.

(3) *Review*. The NMB will charge review fees to requesters who make commercial use requests. Review fees will be assessed in connection with the initial review of the record, *i.e.*, the review conducted by the NMB to determine whether an exemption applies to a particular record or portion of a record. No charge will be made for review at the administrative appeal stage of exemptions applied at the initial review stage. However, if a particular exemption is deemed to no longer apply, any costs associated with the re-review of the records in order to consider the use of other exemptions may be assessed as review fees. Review fees will be charged at the same rates as those charged for a search under paragraph (c)(1)(ii) of this section.

(d) *Restrictions on charging fees*. (1) When the NMB determines that a requester is an educational institution, non-commercial scientific institution, or representative of the news media, and the records are not sought for commercial use, it will not charge search fees.

(2)(i) If the NMB fails to comply with the time limits described in section 1208.2(b)(1) in which to respond to a request, it may not charge search fees, or, in the instances of requests from requesters described in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, may not charge duplication fees, except as described in paragraph (d)(2)(ii) through (iv) of this section.

(ii) If the NMB has determined that unusual circumstances as defined in section 1208.2(b)(2) apply and the NMB provided timely written notice to the requester in accordance with that section, a failure to comply with the time limit shall be excused for an additional 10 days.

(iii) If the NMB has determined that unusual circumstances apply and more than 5,000 pages are necessary to respond to the request, the NMB may charge search fees, or, in the case of requesters described in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, may charge duplication fees, if the following steps are taken. The NMB must have provided timely written notice of unusual circumstances to the requester in accordance with the FOIA and must have discussed with the requester via written mail, email, or telephone (or made not less than three good-faith attempts to do so) how the requester could effectively limit the scope of the request in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(6)(B)(ii). If this exception is satisfied, the NMB may charge all applicable fees incurred in the processing of the request.

(iv) If a court has determined that exceptional circumstances exist, as defined by the FOIA, a failure to comply with the time limits shall be excused for the length of time provided by the court order.

(3) No search or review fees will be charged for a quarter-hour period unless more than half of that period is required for search or review.

(4) Except for requesters seeking records for a commercial use, the NMB will provide without charge:

(i) The first 100 pages of duplication (or the cost equivalent for other media); and

(ii) The first two hours of search.

(5) No fee will be charged when the total fee, after deducting the 100 free pages (or its cost equivalent) and the first two hours of search, is equal to or less than $25.

(e) *Notice of anticipated fees in excess of $25.00*. (1) When the NMB determines

or estimates that the fees to be assessed in accordance with this section will exceed $25.00, the Agency must notify the requester of the actual or estimated amount of the fees, including a breakdown of the fees for search, review or duplication, unless the requester has indicated a willingness to pay fees as high as those anticipated. If only a portion of the fee can be estimated readily, the NMB will advise the requester accordingly. If the request is not for noncommercial use, the notice will specify that the requester is entitled to the statutory entitlements of 100 pages of duplication at no charge and, if the requester is charged search fees, two hours of search time at no charge, and will advise the requester whether those entitlements have been provided.

(2) If the NMB notifies the requester that the actual or estimated fees are in excess of $25.00, the request will not be considered received and further work will not be completed until the requester commits in writing to pay the actual or estimated total fee, or designates some amount of fees the requester is willing to pay, or in the case of a noncommercial use requester who has not yet been provided with the requester's statutory entitlements, designates that the requester seeks only that which can be provided by the statutory entitlements. The requester must provide the commitment or designation in writing, and must, when applicable, designate an exact dollar amount the requester is willing to pay. The NMB is not required to accept payments in installments.

(3) If the requester has indicated a willingness to pay some designated amount of fees, but the NMB estimates that the total fee will exceed that amount, it will toll the processing of the request when it notifies the requester of the estimated fees in excess of the amount the requester has indicated a willingness to pay. The NMB will inquire whether the requester wishes to revise the amount of fees the requester is willing to pay or modify the request. Once the requester responds, the time to respond will resume from where it was at the date of the notification.

(4) The NMB will make available its FOIA Public Liaison or other FOIA professional to assist any requester in reformulating a request to meet the requester's needs at a lower cost.

(f) *Charges for other services.* Although not required to provide special services, if the NMB chooses to do so as a matter of administrative discretion, the direct costs of providing the service will be charged. Examples of such services include certifying that records are true copies, providing multiple copies of the same document, or sending records by means other than first class mail.

(g) *Charging interest.* The NMB may charge interest on any unpaid bill starting on the 31st day following the date of billing the requester. Interest charges will be assessed at the rate provided in 31 U.S.C. 3717 and will accrue from the billing date until payment is received by the Agency. The NMB will follow the provisions of the Debt Collection Act of 1982 (Pub. L. 97–365, 96 Stat. 1749), as amended, and its administrative procedures, including the use of consumer reporting agencies, collection agencies, and offset.

(h) *Aggregating requests.* When the NMB reasonably believes that a requester or a group of requesters acting in concert is attempting to divide a single request into a series of requests for the purpose of avoiding fees, it may aggregate those requests and charge accordingly. The NMB may presume that multiple requests of this type made within a 30-day period have been made in order to avoid fees. For requests separated by a longer period, the NMB will aggregate them only where there is a reasonable basis for determining that aggregation is warranted in view of all the circumstances involved. Multiple requests involving unrelated matters cannot be aggregated.

(i) *Advance payments.* (1) For requests other than those described in paragraphs (i)(2) or (i)(3) of this section, the NMB will not require the requester to make an advance payment before work is commenced or continued on a request. Payment owed for work already completed (*i.e.*, payment before copies are sent to a requester) is not an advance payment.

(2) When the NMB determines or estimates that a total fee to be charged under this section will exceed $250.00, it may require that the requester make an advance payment up to the amount of the entire anticipated fee before beginning to process the request. The NMB may elect to process the request prior to collecting fees when it receives a satisfactory assurance of full payment from a requester with a history of prompt payment.

(3) Where a requester has previously failed to pay a properly charged FOIA fee within 30 calendar days of the billing date, the NMB may require that the requester pay the full amount due, plus any applicable interest on that prior request, and it may require that the requester make an advance payment of the full amount of any anticipated fee before beginning to process a new request or continuing to process a pending request or any pending appeal. Where the NMB has a reasonable basis to believe that a requester has misrepresented the requester's identity in order to avoid paying outstanding fees, it may require that the requester provide proof of identity.

(4) In cases in which the NMB requires advance payment, the request will not be considered received and further work will not be completed until the required payment is received. If the requester does not pay the advance payment within 30 calendar days after the date of the fee determination, the request will be closed.

(j) *Other statutes specifically providing for fees.* The fee schedule of this section does not apply to fees charged under any statute that specifically requires the NMB to set and collect fees for particular types of records. In instances where records responsive to a request are subject to a statutorily-based fee schedule program, the NMB must inform the requester of the contact information for that program.

(k) *Requirements for waiver or reduction of fees.* (1) Requesters may seek a waiver of fees by submitting a written application demonstrating how disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.

(2) The NMB will furnish records responsive to a request without charge or at a reduced rate when it determines, based on all available information, that the factors described in paragraphs (k)(2)(i) through (iii) of this section are satisfied:

(i) Disclosure of the requested information would shed light on the operations or activities of the government. The subject of the request must concern identifiable operations or activities of the Federal Government with a connection that is direct and clear, not remote or attenuated.

(ii) Disclosure of the requested information is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of those operations or activities. This factor is satisfied when the following criteria are met:

(A) Disclosure of the requested records must be meaningfully informative about government operations or activities. The disclosure of information that already is in the public domain, in either the same or a substantially identical form, would not be meaningfully informative if nothing new would be added to the public's understanding.

(B) The disclosure must contribute to the understanding of a reasonably broad audience of persons interested in the subject, as opposed to the individual understanding of the requester. A requester's expertise in the subject area as well as the requester's ability and intention to effectively convey information to the public must be considered. Agencies will presume that a representative of the news media will satisfy this consideration.

(iii) The disclosure must not be primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. To determine whether disclosure of the requested information is primarily in the commercial interest of the requester, agencies will consider the following criteria:

(A) The NMB will identify whether the requester has any commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure. A commercial interest includes any commercial, trade, or profit interest. Requesters must be

given an opportunity to provide explanatory information regarding this consideration.

(B) If there is an identified commercial interest, the NMB must determine whether that is the primary interest furthered by the request. A waiver or reduction of fees is justified when the requirements of paragraphs (k)(2)(i) and (ii) of this section are satisfied and any commercial interest is not the primary interest furthered by the request. The NMB will presume that when a news media requester has satisfied the factors in paragraphs (k)(2)(i) and (ii) of this section, the request is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. Disclosure to data brokers or others who merely compile and market government information for direct economic return will not be presumed to primarily serve the public interest.

(3) Where only some of the records to be released satisfy the requirements for a waiver of fees, a waiver will be granted for those records.

(4) Requests for a waiver or reduction of fees should be made when the request is first submitted and should address the criteria referenced above. A requester may submit a fee waiver request at a later time so long as the underlying record request is pending or on administrative appeal. When a requester who has committed to pay fees subsequently asks for a waiver of those fees and that waiver is denied, the requester must pay any costs incurred up to the date the fee waiver request was received.

§ 1208.7 Subpoenas and other requests for testimony and production of documents in legal proceedings where the NMB is not a party.

(a) In legal proceedings between private litigants, a subpoena or other demand for the production of records held by the Agency or for oral or written testimony of a current or former NMB employee should be addressed to the General Counsel, National Mediation Board, 1301 K Street NW., Suite 250E, Washington, DC 20005. No other official or employee of the NMB is authorized to accept service of a demand or subpoena on behalf of the Agency.

(b) No current or former employee may produce official records or information or provide testimony in response to a demand or subpoena unless authorized by the General Counsel.

(c) The General Counsel may grant an employee permission to testify or produce official records or information in response to a demand or subpoena. In making this determination, the General Counsel shall consider whether:

(1) Release of the requested records or testimony is prohibited under § 1208.5;

(2) The disclosure is appropriate under the rules of procedure governing the case or matter;

(3) The requested testimony or records are privileged under the relevant substantive law concerning privilege;

(4) Disclosure would violate a statute or regulation;

(5) Disclosure would reveal trade secrets without the owner's consent; and

(6) Allowing testimony or production of records would be in the best interest of the NMB or the United States.

PART 1209—PUBLIC OBSERVATION OF NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD MEETINGS

Sec.

1209.01 Scope and purpose.
1209.02 Definitions.
1209.03 Conduct of National Mediation Board business.
1209.04 Open meetings.
1209.05 Closing of meetings; reasons therefor.
1209.06 Action necessary to close meetings; record of votes.
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1209.09 Requests for records under Freedom of Information Act.
1209.10 Capacity of public observers.

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(g).

SOURCE: 42 FR 60739, Nov. 29, 1977, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1209.01 Scope and purpose.

(a) The provisions of this part are intended to implement the requirements of section 3(a) of the Government in the Sunshine Act, 5 U.S.C. 552b.

(b) It is the policy of the National Mediation Board that the public is entitled to the fullest practicable information regarding its decisionmaking processes. It is the purpose of this part to provide the public with such information while protecting the rights of individuals and the ability of the agency to carry out its responsibilities.

§ 1209.02 Definitions.

For purposes of this part:

(a) The terms *Board* or *Agency* mean the National Mediation Board, a collegial body composed of three members appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(b) The term *meeting* means the deliberations of at least two members of the Board where such deliberations determine or result in the joint conduct or disposition of official agency business, but does not include deliberations required or permitted or with respect to any information proposed to be withheld under by 5 U.S.C. 552b(d) or (e)/5 U.S.C. 552b(c).

§ 1209.03 Conduct of National Mediation Board business.

Members shall not jointly conduct or dispose of agency business other than in accordance with this part.

§ 1209.04 Open meetings.

Every portion of every Board meeting shall be open to public observation except as otherwise provided by § 1209.05 of this part.

§ 1209.05 Closing of meetings; reasons therefor.

(a) Except where the Board determines that the public interest requires otherwise, meetings, or portions thereof, shall not be open to public observation where the deliberations concern the issuance of a subponea, the Board's participation in a civil action or proceeding or an arbitration, or the initiation, conduct or disposition by the Board of any matter involving a determination on the record after opportunity for a hearing, or any court proceeding collateral or ancillary thereto.

(b) Except where the Board determines that the public interest requires otherwise, the Board also may close meetings, or portions thereof, when the deliberations concern matters or information falling within the scope of 5 U.S.C. 552b (c)(1) (secret matters concerning national defense or foreign policy); (c)(2) (internal personnel rules and practices); (c)(3) (matters specifically exempted from disclosure by statute); (c)(4) (trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential); (c)(5) (matters of alleged criminal conduct or formal censure); (c)(6) (personal information where disclosure would cause a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy); (c)(7) (certain materials or information from investigatory files compiled for law enforcement purposes); or (c)(9)(B) (disclosure would significantly frustrate implementation of a proposed agency action).

§ 1209.06 Action necessary to close meetings; record of votes.

A meeting shall be closed to public observation under § 1209.05, only when a majority of the members of the Board who will participate in the meeting vote to take such action.

(a) When the meeting deliberations concern matters specified in § 1209.05(a), the Board members shall vote at the beginning of the meeting, or portion thereof, on whether to close such meeting, or portion thereof, to public observation, and on whether the public interest requires that a meeting which may properly be closed should nevertheless be open to public observation A record of such vote, reflecting the vote of each member of the Board, shall be kept and made available to the public at the earliest practicable time.

(b) When the meeting deliberations concerns matters specified in § 1209.05(b), the Board shall vote on whether to close such meeting, or portion thereof, to public ovservation, and on whether the public interest requires that a meeting which may properly be closed should nevertheless be open to public observation. The vote shall be taken at a time sufficient to permit inclusion of information concerning the open or closed status of the meeting in the public announcement thereof. A single vote may be taken with respect to a series of meetings at which the deliberations will concern the same particular matters where subsequent

meetings in the series are scheduled to be held within one day after the vote is taken.

(c) Whenever any person whose interests may be directly affected by deliberations during a meeting, or a portion thereof, requests that the Board close that meeting, or portion thereof, to public observation for any of the reasons specified in 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(5) (matters of alleged criminal conduct or formal censure), (c)(6) (personal information where disclosure would cause a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy), or (c)(7) (certain materials or information from investigatory files compiled for law enforcement purposes), the Board members participating in the meeting upon request of any one member of the Board, shall vote on whether to close such meeting, or any portion thereof, for that reason. A record of such vote, reflecting the vote of each member of the Board participating in the meeting, shall be kept and made available to the public within one day after the vote is taken.

(d) After public announcement of a meeting as provided in §1209.07 of this part, a meeting, or portion thereof, announced as closed may be opened or a meeting, or portion thereof, announced as open may be closed, only if a majority of the members of the Board who will participate in the meeting determine by a recorded vote that Board business so requires and that an earlier announcement of the change was not possible. The change made and the vote of each member on the change shall be announced publicly at the earliest practicable time.

(e) Before a meeting may be closed pursuant to §1209.05 the General Counsel of the Board shall certify that in his or her opinion the meeting may properly be closed to public observation. The certification shall set forth each applicable exemptive provision for such closing. The certification shall be retained by the agency and made publicly available as soon as practicable.

§1209.07 Notice of meetings; public announcement and publication.

(a) A public announcement setting forth the time, place and subject matter of meetings or portions thereof closed to public observation pursuant to the provisions of §1209.05(a) of this part, shall be made at the earaliest practicable time.

(b) Except for meetings closed to public observation pursuant to the provisions of §1209.05(a) of this part, the agency shall make public announcement of each meeting at least 7 days before the scheduled date of the meeting. The announcement shall specify the time, place and subject matter of the meeting, whether it is to be open to public observation or closed, and the name, address and phone number of an agency official designated to respond to requests for information about the meeting. The 7 day period for advance notice may be shortened only upon a determination by a majority of the members of the Board who will participate in the meeting that agency business requires that such meeting be called at an earlier date, in which event the public announcement shall be made at the earliest practicable time. A record of the vote to schedule a meeting at an earlier date shall be kept and made available to the public.

(c) Within one day after a vote to close a meeting, or any portion thereof, pursuant to the provisions of §1209.05(b) of this part, the agency shall make publicly available a full written explanation of its action closing the meeting, or portion thereof, together with a list of all persons expected to attend the meeting and their affiliation.

(d) If after a public announcement required by paragraph (b) of this section has been made, the time and place of the meeting are changed, a public announcement of such changes shall be made at the earliest practicable time. The subject matter of the meeting may be changed after public annmouncment thereof only if a majority of the members of the Board who will participate in the meeting determine that agency business so requires and that no earlier announcement of the change was possible. When such a change in subject matter is approved a public announcement of the change shall be made at the earliest practicable time. A record of the vote to change the subject matter of the meeting shall be kept and made available to the public.

(e) All announcements or changes thereof issued pursuant to the provisions of paragraphs (b) and (d) of this section, or pursuant to the provisions of §1209.06(d), shall be submitted for publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER immediately following their release to the public.

(f) Announcement of meeting made pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be posted on a bulletin board maintained for such purpose at the Board's offices, 1425 K Street, NW., Washington, DC. Interested individuals or organizations may request the Chief of Staff, National Mediation Board, Washington, DC 20572 to place them on a mailing list for receipt of such announcements.

[42 FR 60739, Nov. 29, 1977, as amended at 64 FR 40287, July 26, 1999]

§1209.08 Transcripts, recordings or minutes of closed meetings; retention; public availability.

(a) For every meeting or portion thereof closed under the provisions of §1209.05, the presiding officer shall prepare a statement setting forth the time and place of the meeting and the persons present, which statement shall be retained by the agency. For each such meeting or portion thereof there also shall be maintained a complete transcript or electronic recording of the proceedings, except that for meetings closed pursuant to §1209.05(a) the Board may, in lieu of a transcript or electronic recording, maintain a set of minutes fully and accurately summarizing any action taken, the reason therefor and views thereof, documents considered, and the members' vote on each roll call vote.

(b) The agency shall maintain a complete verbatim transcript, a complete electronic recording, or a complete set of minutes for each meeting or portion thereof closed to public observation, for a period of at least one year after the close of the agency proceeding of which the meeting was a part, but in no event for a period of less than two years after such meeting.

(c) The agency shall make promptly available to the public copies of transcripts, electronic recordings or minutes maintained as provided in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, except to the extent the items therein contain information which the agency determines may be withheld pursuant to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552b(c).

(d) Upon request in accordance with the provisions of this paragraph and except to the extent they contain information which the agency determines may be withheld pursuant to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552b(c), copies of transcripts or minutes, or transcriptions of electronic recordings including the identification of speakers, shall be furnished subject to the payment of duplication costs in accordance with the schedule of fees set forth in §1208.06 of the Board's Rules, and the actual cost of transcription. Requests for copies of transcripts or minutes, or transcriptions of electronic recordings of Board meetings shall be directed to the Chief of Staff, National Mediation Board, Washington, DC 20572. Such requests shall reasonably identify the records sought and include a statement that whatever costs are involved in furnishing the records will be acceptable or, alternatively, that costs will be acceptable up to a specified amount. The Board may determine to require prepayment of such costs.

[42 FR 60739, Nov. 29, 1977, as amended at 64 FR 40287, July 26, 1999]

§1209.09 Requests for records under Freedom of Information Act.

Requests to review or obtain copies of agency records other than notices or records prepared under this part may be pursued in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552). Part 1208 of the Board's Rules addresses the requisite procedures under that Act.

§1209.10 Capacity of public observers.

The public may attend open Board meetings for the sole purpose of observation. Observers may not participate in meetings unless expressly invited or otherwise interfere with the conduct and disposition of agency business. When a portion of a meeting is closed to the public, observers will leave the meeting room upon request to enable discussion of the exempt matter therein under consideration.

PARTS 1210–1299 [RESERVED]

CHAPTER XII—FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE

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PART 1400—STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND DISCIPLINE

Subpart A—General

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Subpart B—Employees: Ethical and Other Conduct and Responsibilities

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1400.735–20 Code of Professional Conduct for FMCS Mediators.
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Subpart F—Disciplinary Actions and Penalties

1400.735–60 Disciplinary actions.
1400.735–61 Notice to and appeal of employee.

AUTHORITY: E.O. 11222, 30 FR 6469, 3 CFR, 1965 Supp.; 5 CFR 735.104.

SOURCE: 33 FR 5765, Apr. 13, 1968, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 1400.735–3 Advice and counseling service.

The Director will designate a counselor for the Service on all matters relating to the conduct and responsibilities of employees, and special Government employees, under the Executive order. The counselor is responsible for providing individual employees with interpretations on questions of conflicts of interest, and other matters covered by this part. (Due to the small size of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, it is unrealistic to designate deputy counselors, and therefore, all questions concerning matters covered in this part should be directed to the one counselor appointed by the Director.)

Subpart B—Employees: Ethical and Other Conduct and Responsibilities

§ 1400.735–19 Influencing Members of Congress.

No money appropriated to the Service shall be used by any employee of the Service to pay for any personal service, printed or written matter, or other devices intended to influence any Member of Congress regarding any legislation or appropriation before the Congress.

§ 1400.735–20 Code of Professional Conduct for FMCS Mediators.

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service has a Code of Professional Conduct for FMCS Mediators. Mediators in the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the responsibilities outlined therein.

[88 FR 4728, Jan. 25, 2023]

§ 1400.735–21 Miscellaneous statutory provisions.

Each employee shall acquaint himself with the statutes that relate to his ethical and other conduct as an employee of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and of the Government. The attention of all employees is directed to the following statutory provisions and to the accompanying chart of penalties and statutory references:

(a) House Concurrent Resolution 175, 85th Congress, 2d session, 72 Stat. B12, the ''Code of Ethics for Government Service.''

(b) Chapter 11 of title 18, United States Code, relating to bribery, graft, and conflicts of interest, as appropriate to the employees concerned.

(c) The prohibition against lobbying with appropriated funds (18 U.S.C. 1913).

(d) The prohibitions against disloyalty and striking (5 U.S.C. 7311, 18 U.S.C. 1918).

(e) The prohibition against the employment of a member of a Communist organization (50 U.S.C. 784).

(f) The prohibitions against (1) the disclosure of classified information (18 U.S.C. 798, 50 U.S.C. 783); and (2) the disclosure of confidential information (18 U.S.C. 1905).

(g) The provisions relating to the habitual use of intoxicants to excess (5 U.S.C. 7352).

(h) The prohibition against the misuse of a Government vehicle (31 U.S.C. 638a (c)).

(i) The prohibition against the misuse of the franking privilege (18 U.S.C. 1719).

(j) The prohibition against the use of deceit in an examination of personnel action in connection with Government employment (18 U.S.C. 1917).

(k) The prohibition against fraud or false statements in a Government matter (18 U.S.C. 1001).

(l) The prohibition against mutilating or destroying a public record (18 U.S.C. 2071).

(m) The prohibition against counterfeiting and forging transportation requests (18 U.S.C. 508).

(n) The prohibitions against (1) embezzlement of Government money or property (18 U.S.C. 641); (2) failing to account for public money (18 U.S.C. 643); and (3) embezzlement of the money or property of another person in the possession of an employee by reason of his employment (18 U.S.C. 654).

(o) The prohibition against unauthorized use of documents relating to claims from or by the Government (18 U.S.C. 285).

(p) The prohibitions against political activities in subchapter III of chapter 73 of title 5, United States Code and 18 U.S.C. 602, 603, 607, and 608.

(q) The prohibition against an employee acting as the agent of a foreign principal registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (18 U.S.C. 219).

(r) Penalties: The following table, copied from the Federal Personnel Manual, lists maximum penalties for some of the more serious offenses.

Prohibition	Statute and United States Code	Maximum penalty
A–1. Gifts to official superiors	5 U.S.C. 7351	Removal.
A–2. Conflicts of interest:		
a. Receiving compensation in relation to claims contracts, etc.	18 U.S.C. 203	$10,000 fine; 2 years imprisonment or both; and removal.
b. Prosecuting claims against and other matters affecting the Government.	18 U.S.C. 205	$10,000 fine; 2 years imprisonment or both.
c. Prosecuting claims involving matters connected with former duties—disqualification of partners.	18 U.S.C. 207	$10,000 fine; 2 years imprisonment or both.
d. Interested persons acting as Government agents.	18 U.S.C. 208	$10,000 fine; 2 years imprisonment or both.
e. Salaries from other than Government sources.	18 U.S.C. 209	$5,000 fine; 1 year imprisonment or both.
A–3. Lobbying with appropriated funds	18 U.S.C. 1913	$500 fine; 1 year imprisonment or both; and removal.
A–4. Denial of rights to petition Congress	5 U.S.C. 7102	No specific penalty provided.
A–5. Failure to make return or report	18 U.S.C. 2075	$1,000 fine.
A–6. Disloyalty and striking	5 U.S.C. 7311; 18 U.S.C. 1918.	$1,000 fine, 1 year and a day imprisonment or both; and removal.
A–7. Employment of member of proscribed communist organization.	50 U.S.C. 784 et seq	$10,000 fine; 5 years imprisonment or both; and removal.
A–8. Disclosure of classified information	18 U.S.C. 798; 50 U.S.C. 783.	$10,000 fine; 10 years imprisonment or both; and removal.
A–9. Disclosure of confidential information	18 U.S.C. 1905	$1,000 fine; 1 year imprisonment or both; and removal.
A–10. Habitual use of intoxicants to excess	5 U.S.C. 7352	Removal.
A–11. Misuse of Government vehicles	31 U.S.C. 638a(c)	Removal.
A–12. Misuse of franking privilege	18 U.S.C. 1719	$300 fine.
A–13. Deceit in examinations and personnel actions.	5 U.S.C. 1917	$1,000 fine; 1 year imprisonment or both.
A–14. Fraud and false statements	18 U.S.C. 1001	$10,000 fine; 5 years imprisonment or both.
A–15. Unlawful mutilating or destroying public records.	18 U.S.C. 2071(b)	$2,000 fine; 3 years imprisonment or both; and removal.
A–16. Bribery and graft:		
a. Bribery of public officials	18 U.S.C. 201	$20,000 fine or three times the money or thing received, whichever is greater; 15 years imprisonment or both; and removal.
b. Acceptance or solicitation to obtain appointive office.	18 U.S.C. 211	$1,000 fine; 1 year imprisonment or both.
A–17. Counterfeiting and forgery of transportation requests.	18 U.S.C. 508	$5,000 fine; 10 years imprisonment or both.
A–18. Embezzlement and theft:		
a. Taking money, property, or records	18 U.S.C. 641	$10,000 fine; 10 years imprisonment or both.
b. Failure to render accounts for public money.	18 U.S.C. 643	Fine equal to amount embezzled; imprisonment not more than 10 years or both.
c. Wrongfully converting property of another	18 U.S.C. 654	Same as penalty immediately above.

Prohibition	Statute and United States Code	Maximum penalty
A–19. Taking or using papers related to claims	18 U.S.C. 285	$5,000 fine; 5 years imprisonment or both.

Subpart F—Disciplinary Actions and Penalties

§ 1400.735–60 Disciplinary actions.

The Service shall take prompt disciplinary action against an employee committing prohibited activity, or whose conduct is prejudicial to the best interests of the Service, or of a nature to bring discredit to it. There are four major types of disciplinary action possible, following the above proceedings.

(a) *Reprimand.* An official reprimand usually shall be issued to an employee or special Government employee for a first offense which is not serious.

(b) *Suspension.* Under Civil Service and Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service regulations, an employee or special Government employee may be suspended without pay during the course of an investigation of alleged criminal, infamous, dishonest, immoral, or notoriously disgraceful conduct. Also, an employee may be suspended without pay for a definite period of time because of some offense of a less serious nature for which more drastic action is not justified.

(c) *Demotion.* When such action will ''promote the efficiency of the Service,'' an employee or special Government employee may be demoted because of some offense for which more drastic action is not justified.

(d) *Separation.* The Service is responsible for the prompt dismissal of unsatisfactory, incompetent, or unfit employees. Separation (dismissal or removal) can be the penalty for a single breach of conduct that is extremely serious in nature.

§ 1400.735–61 Notice to and appeal of employee.

The Director of Administrative Management will prepare charges and institute proceedings, which in all cases will be in accordance with Civil Service procedures for disciplinary actions against status employees. Such proceedings will include notification to the employee of his appeal rights.

PART 1401—PUBLIC INFORMATION

Subpart A—Information in Response to Subpoenas

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: Sec. 202, 61 Stat. 136, as amended; 5 U.S.C. 552.

SOURCE: 40 FR 8169, Feb. 26, 1975, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Information in Response to Subpoenas

§ 1401.1 Purpose and scope.

This subpart contains the regulations of the Service concerning procedures to be followed when a subpoena, order, or other demand of a court or other authority is issued for the production or disclosure of (a) any material contained in the files of the Service; (b) any information relating to material contained in the files of the Service; or (c) any information or material acquired by any person as a part of the performance of his official duties or because of his official status, while such person was an employee of the Service.

§ 1401.2 Production of records or testimony by FMCS employees.

(a) Public policy and the successful effectuation of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service's mission require that commissioners and employees maintain a reputation for impartiality and integrity. Labor and management or other interested parties participating in mediation efforts must have the assurance and confidence that information disclosed to commissioners and other employees of the Service will not subsequently be divulged, voluntarily or because of compulsion, unless authorized by the Director of the Service.

(b) No officer, employee, or other person officially connected in any capacity with the Service, currently or formerly shall, in response to a subpoena, subpoena duces tecum, or other judicial or administrative order, produce any material contained in the files of the Service, disclose any information acquired as part of the performance of his official duties or because of his official status, or testify on behalf of any party to any matter pending in any judicial, arbitral or administrative proceeding, without the prior approval of the Director.

§ 1401.3 Procedure in the event of a demand for production, disclosure, or testimony.

(a) Any request for records of the Service, whether it be by letter, by subpoena duces tecum or by any other written demand, shall be handled pursuant to the procedures established in subpart B of this part, and shall comply with the rules governing public disclosure.

(b) Whenever any subpoena or subpoena duces tecum calling for production of records or testimony as described above shall have been served upon any officer, employee or other person as noted in §1401.2(b), he will, unless notified otherwise appear in answer thereto, and unless otherwise expressly directed by the Director, respectfully decline to produce or present such records or to give such testimony, by reason of the prohibitions of this section, and shall state that the production of the record(s) involved will be handled by the procedures established in this part.

Subpart B—Production or Disclosure of Information

SOURCE: 86 FR 53543, Sept. 28, 2021, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1401.20 Purpose and scope.

This subpart contains the rules that the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (''FMCS'' or ''the Agency'') follows in processing requests for records under the Freedom of Information Act (''FOIA''), 5 U.S.C. 552. The regulations in this subpart should be read in conjunction with the text of the FOIA and the Uniform Freedom of Information Act Fee Schedule and Guidelines published by the Office of Management and Budget (''OMB Guidelines''). Requests made by individuals for records about themselves under the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a, are processed in accordance with Privacy Act criteria as well as under this subpart.

§ 1401.21 Proactive disclosures and other disclosure requirements.

(a) The FMCS will make available for public inspection in an electronic format on the Agency's website any record that has been requested 3 or more times. The Agency has a FOIA Public Liaison who can assist individuals in locating records particular to an agency. The FMCS FOIA Public Liaison's contact information is available on the FMCS FOIA web page (*www.fmcs.gov/foia*).

(b) The FMCS will withhold information under FOIA only if the Agency ''reasonably foresees'' that disclosure would harm an interest protected by an exemption or as otherwise allowed by law.

(c) Partial disclosures are appropriate for use by the FMCS when full disclosure is inappropriate or impossible. If a record contains both disclosable and exempt information, the exempt information will be redacted and the remaining record will be disclosed unless the two are so inextricably intertwined that it is not possible to separate them. Records disclosed in part shall be marked or annotated to show both the amount and the

location of the information redacted and the applicable exemption.

(d) All existing FMCS records are subject to disposition according to Agency record retention schedules and the General Records Schedules promulgated by the National Archives and Records Administration.

§ 1401.22 Requirements for making requests.

(a) *General information.* (1) A requester can submit requests through one of the following ways: Submitting a request through the public portal on the FMCS FOIA website; sending an electronic request to the Office of General Counsel, *foia@fmcs.gov;* or writing directly to the FMCS FOIA office at 250 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20427. Any additional requirements for submitting a request to the Agency are listed in paragraphs (a)(2) and (3) of this section and in the submitted form available by selecting ''FOIA'' at the bottom of the FMCS website *www.fmcs.gov/foia.*

(2) A requester who is making a request for records about the requester must comply with the verification of identity requirements as determined by the FMCS to include providing documentation and completing a verification of identity form.

(3) Where a request for records pertains to another individual, a requester may receive greater access by submitting either a notarized authorization signed by that individual or a declaration made in compliance with the requirements set forth in 28 U.S.C. 1746 by that individual authorizing disclosure of the records to the requester, or by submitting proof that the individual is deceased (*e.g.*, a copy of a death certificate or an obituary). As an exercise of administrative discretion, the Agency can require a requester to supply additional information, if necessary, to verify that a particular individual has consented to disclosure.

(b) *Description of records sought.* Requesters must describe the records sought in sufficient detail to enable agency personnel to locate them with a reasonable amount of effort. To the extent possible, requesters should include specific information that may help the Agency identify the requested records, such as the date, title or name, author, recipient, subject matter of the record, case number, file designation, or reference number. Before submitting requests, requesters may contact the Agency's FOIA Public Liaison, as identified at *www.fmcs.gov/foia,* to discuss the records they seek and to receive assistance in describing the records. If after receiving a request the FMCS determines that it does not reasonably describe the records sought, the FMCS will inform the requester what additional information is needed or why the request is otherwise insufficient. If a request does not reasonably describe the records sought, the FMCS's response to the request may be delayed.

(c) *Format for requests.* Requests may specify the preferred form or format (including electronic formats) for the records. The FMCS will accommodate the request if the record is readily reproducible in that form or format.

(d) *Content of requests.* Requesters must provide contact information, such as their full name, organization, phone number, email address, and/or mailing address, to assist the Agency in communicating with them and providing released records.

§ 1401.23 Responsibility for responding to requests.

(a) *In general.* Where the FMCS first receives a request for a record and maintains that record, it is responsible for responding to the request. In determining which records are responsive to a request, the Agency ordinarily will include only records in its possession as of the date that it begins its search. If any other date is used, the Agency must inform the requester of that date. If the FMCS uses any other date due to needing to clarify the request or obtain a fee agreement, it must inform the requester of that date. A record that is excluded from the requirements of the FOIA, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(c), is not considered responsive to a request.

(b) *Authority to grant or deny requests.* The Director of FMCS or designee is authorized to grant or to deny any requests for records that are maintained by the Agency.

(c) *Consultation, referral, and coordination.* When reviewing records in response to a request, the Agency will determine whether another agency of the Federal Government is better able to determine whether the record is exempt from disclosure under the FOIA. As to any such record, the Agency must proceed in one of the following ways:

(1) *Consultation.* When records originated with the agency processing the request but contain information of interest to another agency or other Federal Government office, the FMCS will generally consult with that other entity prior to making a release determination.

(2) *Referral.* (i) Ordinarily, when the FMCS is the originating agency, it is presumed to be in the best position to make the disclosure determination. When the FMCS believes that a different agency is best able to determine whether to disclose the record, the FMCS typically will request the other agency make the final response to the requester.

(ii) Whenever the FMCS refers any part of the responsibility for responding to a request to another agency, it will document the referral, maintain a copy of the record that it refers, and notify the requester of the referral, informing the requester of the name(s) of the agency to which the record was referred, including that agency's FOIA contact information.

(3) *Coordination.* The standard referral procedure in paragraph (c)(2) of this section will not be followed where disclosure of the identity of the agency to which the referral would be made could harm an interest protected by an applicable exemption, such as the exemptions that protect personal privacy or national security interests. In such instances, FMCS would coordinate with the originating agency to seek its views on whether the records should be exempt from disclosure. FMCS will issue the final response to the requester.

(d) *Classified information.* On receipt of any request involving classified information, the FMCS will determine whether the information is currently and properly classified in accordance with applicable classification rules. Whenever a request involves a record containing information that has been classified or may be appropriate for classification by another agency under any applicable executive order concerning the classification of records, FMCS must refer the responsibility for responding to the request regarding that information to the agency that classified the information, or that should consider the information for classification. Whenever the FMCS's record contains information that has been derivatively classified (for example, when it contains information classified by another agency), the FMCS must refer the responsibility for responding to that portion of the request to the agency that classified the underlying information.

(e) *Timing of responses to consultations and referrals.* All consultations and referrals received by the FMCS will be handled according to the date that the first agency received the perfected FOIA request.

§ 1401.24 Timing of responses to requests.

(a) *In general.* The FMCS ordinarily will respond to requests according to their order of receipt. A request may be made directly to the FMCS by referring to procedures described on *www.fmcs.gov* or by email to *foia@fmcs.gov*.

(b) *Timing of response.* The obligation to respond to a request for records arises on the first business day when the request is received by the Office of General Counsel.

(c) *Multi-track processing.* FMCS designates a specific track for requests that are granted expedited processing, in accordance with the standards set forth in paragraph (e) of this section. FMCS may also designate additional processing tracks that distinguish between simple and more complex requests based on the estimated amount of work or time needed to process the request. Among the factors an agency may consider are the number of records requested, the number of pages involved in processing the request, and the need for consultations or referrals. FMCS must advise requesters of the track into which their request falls and, when appropriate, should offer the

requesters an opportunity to narrow or modify their request so that it can be placed in a different processing track.

(d) *Unusual circumstances.* Whenever the FMCS cannot meet the statutory time limit for processing a request because of ''unusual circumstances,'' as defined in the FOIA, and the FMCS extends the time limit on that basis, the FMCS must, before expiration of the 20-day response period, notify the requester in writing of the unusual circumstances involved and of the date by which the Agency estimates it will complete processing of the request. Where the extension exceeds 10 working days, the FMCS will provide the requester with an opportunity to modify the request or arrange an alternative time period for processing the original or modified request. The FMCS will make available its designated FOIA contact or its FOIA Public Liaison for this purpose. The name and contact information for the FMCS's FOIA Public Liaison is available at *www.fmcs.gov* by selecting FOIA at the bottom of the screen. FMCS will also alert requesters to the availability of the Office of Government Information Services to provide dispute resolution services. Whenever the FMCS extends the time limits by more than ten additional working days, the FMCS must notify the requester of the right to seek dispute resolution services from the Office of the Government Information Services (OGIS).

(e) *Aggregating requests.* To satisfy unusual circumstances under the FOIA, agencies may aggregate requests in cases where it reasonably appears that multiple requests, submitted either by a requester or by a group of requesters acting in concert, constitute a single request that would otherwise involve unusual circumstances. Agencies cannot aggregate multiple requests that involve unrelated matters.

(f) *Expedited processing.* (1) The Agency will process requests and appeals on an expedited basis whenever it is determined that they involve:

(i) Circumstances in which the lack of expedited processing could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual; or

(ii) An urgency to inform the public about an actual or alleged Federal Government activity, if made by a person who is primarily engaged in disseminating information.

(2) A request for expedited processing may be made at any time. When making a request for expedited processing of an administrative appeal, the request should be submitted to the FMCS's Office of the Director via *foia@fmcs.gov* or through the online portal located at *www.fmcs.gov/foia.*

(3) A requester who seeks expedited processing must submit a statement, certified to be true and correct, explaining in detail the basis for making the request for expedited processing. For example, under paragraph (c) of this section, a requester who is not a full-time member of the news media must establish that the requester is a person whose primary professional activity or occupation is information dissemination, though it need not be the requester's sole occupation. Such a requester also must establish a particular urgency to inform the public about the government activity involved in the request—one that extends beyond the public's right to know about government activity generally. The existence of numerous articles published on a given subject can be helpful in establishing the requirement that there be an ''urgency to inform'' the public on the topic. As a matter of administrative discretion, the FMCS may waive the formal certification requirement in this paragraph (f)(3).

(4) The FMCS must notify the requester within 10 calendar days of the receipt of a request for expedited processing of its decision whether to grant or deny expedited processing. If expedited processing is granted, the request must be given priority, placed in the processing track for expedited requests, and must be processed as soon as practicable. If a request for expedited processing is denied, the FMCS must act on any appeal of that decision expeditiously.

§ 1401.25 Responses to requests.

(a) *In general.* To the extent practicable, the FMCS will communicate electronically with requesters.

(b) *Acknowledgments of requests.* The FMCS will acknowledge a request in writing and assign it an individualized tracking number if it will take longer than 10 working days to process.

(c) *Estimated dates of completion and interim responses.* Upon request, the Agency will provide an estimated date by which it expects to provide a response to the requester. If a request involves a voluminous amount of material, or searches in multiple locations, the FMCS may provide interim responses, releasing the records on a rolling basis.

(d) *Grants of requests (fees).* Once the Agency determines it will grant a request in full or in part, it will notify the requester in writing. The Agency will also inform the requester of any fees charged under §1401.30 and will disclose the requested records to the requester promptly upon payment of any applicable fees. The Agency will inform the requester of the availability of its FOIA Public Liaison to offer assistance.

(e) *Adverse determinations of requests.* If the Agency makes an adverse determination denying a request in any respect, it must notify the requester of that determination in writing. Adverse determinations, or denials of requests, include decisions that: The requested record is exempt, in whole or in part; the request does not reasonably describe the records sought; the information requested is not a record subject to the FOIA; the requested record does not exist, cannot be located, or has been destroyed; or the requested record is not readily reproducible in the form or format sought by the requester. Adverse determinations also include denials involving fees or fee waiver matters or denials of requests for expedited processing.

(f) *Content of denial.* The denial must be signed by the head of the Agency or designee and must include:

(1) The name and title or position of the person responsible for the denial;

(2) A brief statement of the reasons for the denial, including any FOIA exemption applied by the Agency in denying the request;

(3) An estimate of the volume of any records or information withheld, such as the number of pages or some other reasonable form of estimation, although such an estimate is not required if the volume is otherwise indicated by deletions marked on records that are disclosed in part or if providing an estimate would harm an interest protected by an applicable exemption;

(4) A statement that the denial may be appealed under §1401.27, and a description of the appeal requirements; and

(5) A statement notifying the requester of the assistance available from the Agency's FOIA Public Liaison, and the dispute resolution services offered by Office of Government Information Services.

(g) *Markings on released documents.* Records disclosed in part must be marked clearly to show the amount of information redacted and the exemption under which the redaction was made unless doing so would harm an interest protected by an applicable exemption. The location of the information redacted must also be indicated on the record, if technically feasible.

(h) *Use of record exclusions.* (1) In the event the FMCS identifies records that may be subject to exclusion from the requirements of the FOIA pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(c), the Agency will confer with Department of Justice, Office of Information Policy (OIP), to obtain approval to apply the exclusion.

(2) In the event the FMCS applies an exclusion, it will maintain an administrative record of the process of invocation and approval of the exclusion by OIP.

§1401.26 Confidential commercial information ("CCI").

(a) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

Confidential commercial information means information obtained by the FMCS from a submitter that may be protected from disclosure under Exemption 4 of the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4).

Submitter means any person or entity, including a corporation, State, or foreign government, but not including another Federal Government entity, that provides confidential commercial information, either directly or indirectly to the Federal Government.

(b) *Designation of confidential commercial information.* A submitter of confidential commercial information must use good faith efforts to designate by appropriate markings, at the time of submission, any portion of its submission that it considers to be protected from disclosure under Exemption 4. These designations expire 10 years after the date of the submission unless the submitter requests and provides justification for a longer designation period.

(c) *When notice to submitters is required.* (1) The FMCS will promptly notify the submitter in writing whenever such confidential commercial information is requested under the FOIA and the Agency determines that it may be required to disclose the information, provided:

(i) The requested information has been designated in good faith by the submitter as information considered protected from disclosure under Exemption 4; or

(ii) The FMCS has a reason to believe that the requested information may be protected from disclosure under Exemption 4, but has not yet made that determination.

(2) The notice must either describe the commercial information requested or include a copy of the requested records or portions of records containing the information. In cases involving a voluminous number of submitters, the Agency may post or publish a notice in a place or manner reasonably likely to inform the submitters of the proposed disclosure, instead of sending individual notifications.

(d) *Exceptions to submitter notice requirements.* The notice requirements of this section do not apply if:

(1) The Agency determines that the information is exempt under the FOIA, or the information has been lawfully published or has been officially made available to the public;

(2) Disclosure of the information is required by a statute other than the FOIA or by a regulation issued in accordance with the requirements of Executive Order 12600 of June 23, 1987; or

(3) The designation made by the submitter appears obviously frivolous.

(e) *Opportunity to object to disclosure.* (1) The FMCS must specify a reasonable time period within which the submitter must respond to the notice referenced in paragraph (c) of this section.

(2) If a submitter has any objections to disclosure, it should provide the Agency a detailed written statement that specifies all grounds for withholding the particular information under any exemption of the FOIA. In order to rely on Exemption 4 as the basis for nondisclosure, the submitter must explain why the information constitutes a trade secret or commercial or financial information that is privileged or confidential.

(3) A submitter who fails to respond within the time period specified in the notice will be considered to have no objection to disclosure of the information. The FMCS is not required to consider any information received after the date of any disclosure decision. Any information provided by a submitter under this subpart may itself be subject to disclosure under the FOIA.

(f) *Analysis of objections.* The Agency must consider a submitter's objections and specific grounds for nondisclosure in deciding whether to disclose the requested information.

(g) *Notice of intent to disclose.* Whenever the FMCS decides to disclose information over the objection of a submitter, it must provide the submitter written notice, which must include:

(1) A statement of the reasons why each of the submitter's disclosure objections was not sustained;

(2) A description of the information to be disclosed or copies of the records as the Agency intends to release them; and

(3) A specified disclosure date, which must be within a reasonable time after the notice.

(h) *Notice of FOIA lawsuit.* Whenever a requester files a lawsuit seeking to compel the disclosure of confidential commercial information, the Agency must promptly notify the submitter.

(i) *Requester notification.* The Agency must notify the requester whenever it provides the submitter with notice and an opportunity to object to disclosure; whenever it notifies the submitter of its intent to disclose the requested information; and whenever a submitter files a lawsuit to prevent the disclosure of the information.

§ 1401.27 Appeals.

(a) *Requirements for making an appeal.* A requester may appeal any adverse determinations to the Agency's Deputy Director, FOIA Appeal, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, 250 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20427; *foia@fmcs.gov*. Requesters can submit appeals by mail, email, or via the online portal at *www.fmcs.gov/*foia. The requester must make the appeal in writing, clearly identifying the grounds therefore and providing any supporting documentation. To be considered timely it must be postmarked or, in the case of electronic submissions, transmitted within 90 calendar days after the date of the response. The appeal should clearly identify the determination that is being appealed and the assigned request number, if known. To facilitate handling, the requester should mark both the appeal letter and envelope, or subject line of the electronic transmission, ''Freedom of Information Act Appeal.''

(b) *Adjudication of appeals.* An appeal ordinarily will not be adjudicated if the request becomes a matter of FOIA litigation.

(c) *Decisions on appeals.* The Deputy Director of the FMCS or designee will provide a decision on an appeal. A decision that upholds the FMCS's determination in whole or in part must contain a statement that identifies the reasons for the affirmance, including any FOIA exemptions applied. The decision must provide the requester with notification of the statutory right to file a lawsuit and will inform the requester of the dispute resolution services offered by the OGIS as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. If the decision is remanded or modified on appeal, the Deputy Director will notify the requester of that determination in writing. The Office of General Counsel will then further process the request in accordance with that appeal determination and will respond directly to the requester. Alternatively, the Deputy Director may decide to modify the decision and decide the appeal on its merits in a single step.

(d) *Engaging in dispute resolution services provided by OGIS.* Dispute resolution is a voluntary process. If the Agency agrees to participate in the dispute resolution services provided by OGIS, the Deputy Director or designee will participate on behalf of the FMCS.

(e) *When appeal is required.* Before seeking review by a court of the Agency's adverse determination, a requester generally must first submit a timely administrative appeal.

§ 1401.28 Preservation of records.

The FMCS must preserve all correspondence pertaining to the requests that it receives under this subpart, as well as copies of all requested records, until final disposition of the ''request'' case: No sooner than 91 days after the final response is sent to the requester to allow for a timely appeal. The Agency must not dispose of or destroy records while they are the subject of a pending request, appeal, or lawsuit under the FOIA.

§ 1401.29 Fees.

(a) *In general.* (1) The FMCS will charge for processing requests under the FOIA in accordance with the provisions of this section and with the OMB Guidelines. For purposes of assessing fees, the FOIA establishes three categories of requesters:

(i) Commercial use requesters;

(ii) Non-commercial scientific or educational institutions or news media requesters; and

(iii) All other requesters.

(2) Different fees are assessed depending on the category. Requesters may seek a fee waiver. The Agency will consider requests for fee waivers in accordance with the requirements in subsection (k) of the FOIA. To resolve any fee issues that arise under this section, the FMCS may contact a requester for additional information. The Agency is to conduct searches, review, and duplication in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The FMCS ordinarily will collect all applicable fees before sending copies of records to a requester. Requesters must pay fees by check or money order made payable to the Treasury of the United States, or by another method as determined by the Agency.

(b) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

Commercial use request is a request that asks for information for a use or a

purpose that furthers a commercial, trade, or profit interest, which can include furthering those interests through litigation. The FMCS's decision to place a requester in the commercial use category will be made on a case-by-case basis based on the requester's intended use of the information. The Agency will notify requesters of their placement in this category.

Direct costs are those expenses that an agency incurs in searching for and duplicating (and, in the case of commercial use requests, reviewing) records in order to respond to a FOIA request. For example, direct costs include the salary of the employee performing the work (*i.e.*, the basic rate of pay for the employee, plus 16 percent of that rate to cover benefits) and the cost of operating electronic equipment, such as photocopiers and scanners. Direct costs do not include overhead expenses such as the costs of space, and of heating or lighting a facility.

Duplication is reproducing a copy of a record, or of the information contained in it, necessary to respond to a FOIA request. Copies can take the form of paper, audiovisual materials, or electronic records, among others.

Educational institution is any school that operates a program of scholarly research. A requester in this fee category must show that the request is made in connection with the requester's role at the educational institution. The FMCS may seek verification from the requester that the request is in furtherance of scholarly research and will advise requesters of their placement in this category.

Noncommercial scientific institution is an institution that is not operated on a ''commercial'' basis, as defined in this paragraph (b) and that is operated solely for the purpose of conducting scientific research the results of which are not intended to promote any particular product or industry. A requester in this category must show that the request is authorized by and is made under the auspices of a qualifying institution and that the records are sought to further scientific research and are not for a commercial use. The FMCS will advise requesters of their placement in this category.

Representative of the news media is any person or entity that gathers information of potential interest to a segment of the public, uses its editorial skills to turn the raw materials into a distinct work, and distributes that work to an audience. The term ''news'' means information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public. Examples of news media entities include television or radio stations that broadcast news to the public at large and publishers of periodicals that disseminate news and make their products available through a variety of means to the general public, including news organizations that disseminate solely on the internet. A request for records supporting the news-dissemination function of the requester will not be considered to be for a commercial use. Freelance journalists who demonstrate a solid basis for expecting publication through a news media entity will be considered as a representative of the news media. A publishing contract would provide the clearest evidence that publication is expected. However, the Agency can also consider a requester's past publication record in making this determination. The Agency will advise requesters of their placement in this category.

Review is the examination of a record located in response to a request in order to determine whether any portion of it is exempt from disclosure. Review time includes processing any record for disclosure, such as doing all that is necessary to prepare the record for disclosure, including the process of redacting the record and marking the appropriate exemptions. Review costs are properly charged even if a record ultimately is not disclosed. Review time also includes time spent both obtaining and considering any formal objection to disclosure made by a confidential commercial information submitter under §1401.26, but it does not include time spent resolving general legal or policy issues regarding the application of exemptions.

Search is the process of looking for and retrieving records or information responsive to a request. Search time includes page-by-page or line-by-line identification of information within

records and the reasonable efforts expended to locate and retrieve information from electronic records.

(c) *Charging fees.* In responding to FOIA requests, the Agency will charge the following fees unless a waiver or reduction of fees has been granted under paragraph (k) of this section. Because the fee amounts provided in paragraphs (c)(1) through (3) of this section already account for the direct costs associated with a given fee type, the FMCS will not add any additional costs to charges calculated under this section.

(1) *Search.* (i) Requests made by educational institutions, noncommercial scientific institutions, or representatives of the news media are not subject to search fees. The FMCS will charge search fees for all other requesters, subject to the restrictions of paragraph (d) of this section. The Agency may properly charge for time spent searching even if it does not locate any responsive records or if the Agency determines that the records are entirely exempt from disclosure.

(ii) For each quarter hour spent by personnel searching for requested records, including electronic searches that do not require new programming, the fees will be charged as follows:

(A) The Agency will charge the direct costs associated with conducting any search that requires the creation of a new computer program to locate the requested records. The Agency will notify the requester of the costs associated with creating such a program, and the requester must agree to pay the associated costs before the costs may be incurred.

(B) For requests that require the retrieval of records stored by the Agency at a Federal records center operated by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the Agency will charge additional costs in accordance with the Transactional Billing Rate Schedule established by NARA.

(2) *Duplication.* The FMCS will charge duplication fees to all requesters, subject to the restrictions of paragraph (d) of this section. The Agency must honor a requester's preference for receiving a record in a particular form or format where the Agency can readily reproduce it in the form or format requested. Where photocopies are supplied, the Agency will provide one copy per request at cost ($0.05 per page). For copies of records produced on tapes, disks, or other media, the FMCS will charge the direct costs of producing the copy, including operator time. Where paper documents must be scanned in order to comply with a requester's preference to receive the records in an electronic format, the requester must also pay the direct costs associated with scanning those materials. For other forms of duplication, the Agency will charge the direct costs.

(3) *Review.* The Agency will charge review fees to requesters who make commercial use requests. Review fees will be assessed in connection with the initial review of the record, *i.e.*, the review conducted to determine whether an exemption applies to a particular record or portion of a record. No charge will be made for review at the administrative appeal stage of exemptions applied at the initial review stage. However, if a particular exemption is deemed to no longer apply, any costs associated with the Agency's re-review of the records in order to consider the use of other exemptions may be assessed as review fees. Review fees will be charged at the same rates as those charged for a search under paragraph (c)(1)(ii) of this section.

(d) *Restrictions on charging fees.* (1) When the FMCS determines that a requester is an educational institution, non-commercial scientific institution, or representative of the news media, and the records are not sought for commercial use, it will not charge search fees.

(2) FMCS cannot charge fees:

(i) If the Agency fails to comply with the FOIA's time limits in which to respond to a request, it may not charge search fees or, in the instances of requests from requesters described in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, may not charge duplication fees, except as described in paragraphs (d)(2)(ii) through (iv) of this section.

(ii) If the Agency has determined that unusual circumstances as defined by the FOIA apply and the Agency provided timely written notice to the requester in accordance with the FOIA, a failure to comply with the time limit

shall be excused for an additional 10 days.

(iii) If the Agency has determined that unusual circumstances, as defined by the FOIA, apply and more than 5,000 pages are necessary to respond to the request, the Agency may charge search fees or, in the case of requesters described in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, may charge duplication fees, if the following steps are taken. The Agency must have provided timely written notice of unusual circumstances to the requester in accordance with the FOIA, and the Agency must have discussed with the requester via written mail, email, or telephone (or made not less than three good-faith attempts to do so) how the requester could effectively limit the scope of the request in accordance with 5. U.S.C. 552(a)(6), (B)(ii). If the exception in this paragraph (d)(2)(iii) is satisfied, the Agency may charge all applicable fees incurred in the processing of the request.

(iv) If a court has determined that exceptional circumstances exist as defined by the FOIA, a failure to comply with the time limits shall be excused for the length of time provided by the court order.

(3) No search or review fees will be charged for a quarter-hour period unless more than half of that period is required for search or review.

(4) Except for requesters seeking records for a commercial use, the FMCS will provide without charge:

(i) The first 100 pages of duplication (or the cost equivalent for other media); and

(ii) The first two hours of search.

(5) No fee will be charged when the total fee, after deducting the 100 free pages (or its cost equivalent) and the first two hours of search, is equal to or less than $25.00.

(e) *Notice of anticipated fees in excess of $25.00.* (1) When the FMCS determines or estimates that the fees to be assessed in accordance with this section will exceed $25.00, the Agency must notify the requester of the actual or estimated amount of the fees, including a breakdown of the fees for search, review, or duplication, unless the requester has indicated a willingness to pay fees as high as those anticipated. If only a portion of the fee can be estimated readily, the Agency will advise the requester accordingly. If the request is for noncommercial use, the notice will specify that the requester is entitled to the statutory entitlements of 100 pages of duplication at no charge and, if the requester is charged search fees, two hours of search time at no charge, and the notice will advise the requester whether those entitlements have been provided.

(2) If the Agency notifies the requester that the actual or estimated fees are in excess of $25.00, the request will not be considered received and further work will not be completed until the requester commits in writing to pay the actual or estimated total fee, or designates some amount of fees the requester is willing to pay, or in the case of a noncommercial use requester who has not yet been provided with the requester's statutory entitlements, designates that the requester seeks only that which can be provided by the statutory entitlements. The requester must provide the commitment or designation in writing and must, when applicable, designate an exact dollar amount the requester is willing to pay. The FMCS is not required to accept payments in installments.

(3) If the requester has indicated a willingness to pay some designated amount of fees, but the Agency estimates that the total fee will exceed that amount, the Agency will toll the processing of the request when it notifies the requester of the estimated fees in excess of the amount the requester has indicated a willingness to pay. The Agency will inquire whether the requester wishes to revise the amount of fees the requester is willing to pay or modify the request. Once the requester responds, the time to respond will resume from where it was at the date of the notification.

(4) The FMCS will make available its FOIA Public Liaison or other FOIA professional to assist any requester in reformulating a request to meet the requester's needs at a lower cost.

(f) *Charges for other services.* Although not required to provide special services, if the Agency chooses to do so as a matter of administrative discretion, the direct costs of providing the service

will be charged. Examples of such services include certifying that records are true copies, providing multiple copies of the same document, or sending records by means other than first class mail.

(g) *Charging interest.* The Agency may charge interest on any unpaid bill starting on the 31st day following the date of billing the requester. Interest charges will be assessed at the rate provided in 31 U.S.C. 3717 and will accrue from the billing date until payment is received by the Agency. The Agency will follow the provisions of the Debt Collection Act of 1982 (Pub. L. 97–365, 96 Stat. 1749), as amended, and its administrative procedures, including the use of consumer reporting agencies, collection agencies, and offset (see 29 CFR part 1450).

(h) *Aggregating requests.* When the FMCS reasonably believes that a requester or a group of requesters acting in concert is attempting to divide a single request into a series of requests for the purpose of avoiding fees, the Agency may aggregate those requests and charge accordingly. The Agency may presume that multiple requests of this type made within a 30-day period have been made in order to avoid fees. For requests separated by a longer period, the Agency will aggregate them only where there is a reasonable basis for determining that aggregation is warranted in view of all the circumstances involved. Multiple requests involving unrelated matters cannot be aggregated.

(i) *Advance payments.* (1) For requests other than those described in paragraph (i)(2) or (3) of this section, the Agency cannot require the requester to make an advance payment before work on a request starts or continues. Payment owed for work already completed (*i.e.*, payment before copies are sent to a requester) is not an advance payment.

(2) When the Agency determines or estimates that a total fee to be charged under this section will exceed $250.00, it may require that the requester make an advance payment up to the amount of the entire anticipated fee before beginning to process the request. The Agency may elect to process the request prior to collecting fees when it receives a satisfactory assurance of full payment from a requester with a history of prompt payment.

(3) Where a requester has previously failed to pay a properly charged FOIA fee to the Agency within 30 calendar days of the billing date, the Agency may require that the requester pay the full amount due, plus any applicable interest on that prior request, and the Agency may require that the requester make an advance payment of the full amount of any anticipated fee before the Agency begins to process a new request or continues to process a pending request or any pending appeal. Where the Agency has a reasonable basis to believe that a requester has misrepresented the requester's identity in order to avoid paying outstanding fees, it may require that the requester provide proof of identity.

(4) In cases in which the Agency requires advance payment, the request will not be considered received and further work will not be completed until the required payment is received. If the requester does not pay the advance payment within 30 calendar days after the date of the Agency's fee determination, the request will be closed.

(j) *Other statutes specifically providing for fees.* The fee schedule of this section does not apply to fees charged under any statute that specifically requires an agency to set and collect fees for particular types of records. In instances where records responsive to a request are subject to a statutorily-based fee schedule program, the Agency must inform the requester of the contact information for that program.

(k) *Requirements for waiver or reduction of fees.* (1) Requesters may seek a waiver of fees by submitting a written application demonstrating how disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.

(2) The Agency must furnish records responsive to a request without charge

or at a reduced rate when it determines, based on all available information, that the factors described in paragraphs (k)(2)(i) through (iii) of this section are satisfied:

(i) Disclosure of the requested information would shed light on the operations or activities of the government. The subject of the request must concern identifiable operations or activities of the Federal Government with a connection that is direct and clear, not remote or attenuated.

(ii) Disclosure of the requested information is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of those operations or activities. This factor is satisfied when the following criteria are met:

(A) Disclosure of the requested records must be meaningfully informative about government operations or activities. The disclosure of information that already is in the public domain, in either the same or a substantially identical form, would not be meaningfully informative if nothing new would be added to the public's understanding.

(B) The disclosure must contribute to the understanding of a reasonably broad audience of persons interested in the subject, as opposed to the individual understanding of the requester. A requester's expertise in the subject area as well as the requester's ability and intention to effectively convey information to the public must be considered. The FMCS will presume that a representative of the news media will satisfy this consideration.

(iii) The disclosure must not be primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. To determine whether disclosure of the requested information is primarily in the commercial interest of the requester, the Agency will consider the following criteria:

(A) The FMCS must identify whether the requester has any commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure. A commercial interest includes any commercial, trade, or profit interest. Requesters must be given an opportunity to provide explanatory information regarding this consideration.

(B) If there is an identified commercial interest, the Agency must determine whether that is the primary interest furthered by the request. A waiver or reduction of fees is justified when the requirements of paragraphs (k)(2)(i) and (ii) of this section are satisfied and any commercial interest is not the primary interest furthered by the request. The Agency ordinarily will presume that when a news media requester has satisfied paragraphs (k)(2)(i) and (ii), the request is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. Disclosure to data brokers or others who merely compile and market government information for direct economic return will not be presumed to primarily serve the public interest.

(3) Where only some of the records to be released satisfy the requirements for a waiver of fees, a waiver must be granted for those records.

(4) Requests for a waiver or reduction of fees should be made when the request is first submitted to the Agency and should address the criteria referenced in paragraphs (k)(1) and (2) of this section. A requester may submit a fee waiver request at a later time so long as the underlying record request is pending or on administrative appeal. When a requester who has committed to pay fees subsequently asks for a waiver of those fees and that waiver is denied, the requester must pay any costs incurred up to the date the fee waiver request was received.

§ 1401.30 Other rights and services.

Nothing in this subpart shall be construed to entitle any person, as of right, to any service or to the disclosure of any record to which such person is not entitled under the FOIA.

PART 1402—PROCEDURES OF THE SERVICE

AUTHORITY: Sec. 202, 61 Stat. 153, sec. 3, 80 Stat. 250, sec. 203, 61 Stat. 153; 5 U.S.C. 552, 29 U.S.C. 172, 173.

§ 1402.1 Notice of dispute.

The notice of dispute filed with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service pursuant to the provisions of section 8(d)(3), of the Labor-Management Relations Act, 1947, as amended,

shall be submitted electronically via a platform provided by FMCS. If electronic submission creates an undue hardship, the filer may contact the FMCS Notice Processing office to explain the circumstances and receive assistance. The Form F–7, for use by the parties in filing a notice of dispute, has been prepared by the Service.

[86 FR 50855, Sept. 13, 2021]

PART 1403—FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES

Sec.
1403.1 Definitions.
1403.2 Policies of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.
1403.3 Obtaining data on labor-management disputes.
1403.4 Assignment of mediators.
1403.5 Relations with State and local mediation agencies.

AUTHORITY: Sec. 202, 61 Stat. 153, sec. 3, 80 Stat. 250, sec. 203, 61 Stat. 153; 29 U.S.C. 172, 5 U.S.C. 552, 29 U.S.C. 173.

SOURCE: 32 FR 9813, July 6, 1967, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1403.1 Definitions.

As used in this part, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise;

(a) The term *commerce* means trade, traffic, commerce, transportation, or communication among the several States, or between the District of Columbia or any Territory of the United States and any State or other Territory, or between any foreign country and any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia, or within the District of Columbia, or any Territory, or between points in the same State but through any other State or any Territory or the District of Columbia or any foreign country.

(b) The term *affecting commerce* means in commerce, or burdening or obstructing commerce or the free flow of commerce, or having led or tending to lead to a labor-management dispute burdening or obstructing commerce or the free flow of commerce.

(c) The term *labor union* or *labor organization* means any organization of any kind, or any agency or employee representation committee or plan, in which employees participate and which exists for the purpose, in whole or in part, of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work.

(d) The term *State or other conciliation services* means the official and accredited mediation and conciliation establishments of State and local governments, which are wholly or partially supported by public funds.

(e) The term *proffer its services*, as applied to the functions and duties of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, means to make mediation services and facilities available either on its own motion or upon the request of one or more of the parties to a dispute.

§ 1403.2 Policies of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

It is the policy of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service:

(a) To facilitate and promote the settlement of labor-management disputes through collective bargaining by encouraging labor and management to resolve differences through their own resources.

(b) To encourage the States to provide facilities for fostering better labor-management relations and for resolving disputes.

(c) To proffer its services in labor-management disputes in any industry affecting commerce, except as to any matter which is subject to the provisions of the Railway Labor Act, as amended, either upon its own motion or upon the request of one or more of the parties to the dispute, whenever in its judgment such dispute threatens to cause a substantial interruption to commerce.

(d) To refrain from proffering its services:

(1) In labor-management disputes affecting intrastate commerce exclusively,

(2) In labor-management disputes having a minor effect on interstate commerce, if State or other conciliation services are available to the parties, or

(3) In a labor-management dispute when a substantial question of representation has been raised, or to continue to make its facilities available

when a substantial question of representation is raised during the negotiations.

(e) To proffer its services in any labor-management dispute directly involving Government procurement contracts necessary to the national defense, or in disputes which imperil or threaten to imperil the national health or safety.

(f) To proffer its services to the parties in grievance disputes arising over the application or interpretation of an existing collective-bargaining agreement only as a last resort and in exceptional cases.

§ 1403.3 Obtaining data on labor-management disputes.

When the existence of a labor-management dispute comes to the attention of the Federal Service upon a request for mediation service from one or more parties to the dispute, through notification under the provisions of section 8(d)(3), title I of the Labor-Management Relations Act, 1947, or otherwise, the Federal Service will examine the information to determine if the Service should proffer its services under its policies. If sufficient data on which to base a determination is not at hand, the Federal Service will inquire into the circumstances surrounding the case. Such inquiry will be conducted for fact-finding purposes only and is not to be interpreted as the Federal Service proffering its services.

§ 1403.4 Assignment of mediators.

The Federal Service will assign one or more mediators to each labor-management dispute in which it has been determined that its services should proffered.

§ 1403.5 Relations with State and local mediation agencies.

(a) If under State or local law a State or local mediation agency must offer its facilities in a labor-management dispute in which the Federal Service is proffering its services, the interests of such agencies will be recognized and their co-operation will be encouraged in order that all efforts may be made to prevent or to effectively minimize industrial strife.

(b) If, in a labor-management dispute there is reasonable doubt that the dispute threatens to cause a substantial interruption to commerce or that there is more than a minor effect upon interstate commerce, and State or other conciliation services are available to the parties, the regional director of the Federal Service will endeavor to work out suitable arrangements with the State or other conciliation or mediation agency for mediation of the dispute. Decisions in such cases will take into consideration the desires of the parties, the effectiveness and availability of the respective facilities, and the public welfare, health, and safety.

(c) If requested by a State or local mediation agency or the chief executive of a State or local government, the Federal Service may make its services available in a labor-management dispute which would have only a minor effect upon interstate commerce when, in the judgment of the Federal Service, the effect of the dispute upon commerce or the public welfare, health, or safety justifies making available its mediation facilities.

PART 1404—ARBITRATION SERVICES

Subpart A—Arbitration Policy; Administration of Roster

Sec.

1404.1 Scope and authority.
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1404.17 Policy.
1404.18 Procedures for requesting expedited panels.
1404.19 Arbitration process.

AUTHORITY: 29 U.S.C. 172 and 29 U.S.C. 173 *et seq.*

SOURCE: 84 FR 16206, Apr. 18, 2019, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Arbitration Policy; Administration of Roster

§ 1404.1 Scope and authority.

This chapter is issued by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) under Title II of the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947 (Pub. L. 80–101) as amended. It applies to all arbitrators listed on the FMCS Roster of Arbitrators (the Roster), to all applicants for listing on the Roster, and to all persons or parties seeking to obtain from FMCS either names or panels of names of arbitrators listed on the Roster in connection with disputes that are to be submitted to arbitration or fact-finding.

§ 1404.2 Policy.

The labor policy of the United States promotes and encourages the use of voluntary arbitration to resolve disputes over the interpretation or application of collective bargaining agreements. Voluntary arbitration and fact-finding are important features of constructive employment relations as alternatives to economic strife.

§ 1404.3 Administrative responsibilities.

(a) *Director.* The Director of FMCS has responsibility for all aspects of FMCS arbitration activities and is the final agency authority on all questions concerning the Roster and FMCS arbitration procedures.

(b) *Office of Arbitration.* The Office of Arbitration (OA) maintains the Roster; administers subpart C of this part (Procedures for Arbitration Services); assists, promotes, and cooperates in the establishment of programs for training and developing new arbitrators; and provides names or panels of names of listed arbitrators to parties requesting them.

(c) *Arbitrator Review Board.* The Arbitrator Review Board (Board) shall consist of a chair and members appointed by the Director who shall serve at the Director's pleasure. The Board shall be composed entirely of full-time officers or employees of the Federal Government and shall establish procedures for carrying out its duties.

(1) *Duties of the Board.* The Board shall:

(i) Review the qualifications of all applicants for listing on the Roster, interpreting and applying the criteria set forth in § 1404.5;

(ii) Review the status of all persons whose continued eligibility for listing on the Roster has been questioned under § 1404.5;

(iii) Recommend to the Director the acceptance or rejection of applicants for listing on the Roster, or the withdrawal of listing on the Roster for any of the reasons set forth in this part;

(iv) At the request of the Director, or upon its own volition, review arbitration policies and procedures, including all regulations and written guidance regarding the use of Roster arbitrators, and make recommendations regarding such policies and procedures to the Director.

(2) [Reserved]

Subpart B—Roster of Arbitrators; Admission and Retention

§ 1404.4 Roster and status of members.

(a) *The Roster.* FMCS shall maintain a Roster of labor arbitrators consisting of persons who meet the criteria for listing contained in § 1404.5 and who remain in good standing.

(b) *Adherence to standards and requirements.* Persons listed on the Roster shall comply with FMCS rules and regulations pertaining to arbitration and with such guidelines and procedures as may be issued by OA pursuant to subpart C of this part. Arbitrators shall conform to the ethical standards and procedures set forth in the Code of Professional Responsibility for Arbitrators

of Labor Management Disputes, as approved by the National Academy of Arbitrators, FMCS, and the American Arbitration Association (''the Code'').

(c) *Status of arbitrators.* Persons who are listed on the Roster and are selected or appointed to hear arbitration matters or to serve as factfinders do not become employees of the Federal Government by virtue of their selection or appointment. Following selection or appointment, the arbitrator's relationship is solely with the parties to the dispute, except that arbitrators are subject to certain reporting requirements and to standards of conduct as set forth in this part.

(d) *Rights of persons listed on the Roster.* No person shall have any right to be listed or to remain listed on the Roster. FMCS retains its authority and responsibility to assure that the needs of the parties using its services are served. To accomplish this purpose, FMCS may establish procedures for the preparation of panels or the appointment of arbitrators or factfinders that include consideration of such factors as background and experience, availability, acceptability, geographical location, and the expressed preferences of the parties.

§ 1404.5 Listing on the Roster, criteria for listing and removal, procedure for removal.

Persons seeking to be listed on the Roster must complete and submit an application available online at *https://www.fmcs.gov/services/arbitration/information-joining-arbitrator-roster/.* Upon receipt of an executed application, OA will review the application, ensure that it is complete, make such inquiries as are necessary, and submit the application to the Board. The Board will review the completed application under the criteria in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of this section, and will forward to the FMCS Director, or Director's designee, its recommendation as to whether or not the applicant meets the criteria for listing on the Roster. The Director shall make all final decisions as to whether an applicant may be listed on the Roster. Each applicant shall be notified in writing of the Director's decision and the reasons therefore.

(a) *General criteria.* (1) Applicants will be listed on the Roster upon a determination that he or she:

(i) Is experienced, competent, and acceptable in decision-making roles in the resolution of labor relations disputes; or

(ii) Has extensive and recent experience in relevant positions in collective bargaining; and

(iii) Is capable of conducting an orderly hearing, can analyze testimony and exhibits and can prepare clear and concise findings and awards within reasonable time limits.

(iv) For applicants who are governmental employees, the following criteria shall also apply:

(A) *Federal employees.* These applicants must provide OA with written permission from their employer to work as an arbitrator. Federal employees will not be assigned to panels involving the Federal Government.

(B) *Governmental employees other than Federal.* These applicants must provide OA with written permission from their employer to work as an arbitrator as well as a statement of the jurisdiction(s) in which the applicant is permitted to do this work.

(2) FMCS may identify certain positions relating to collective bargaining that will substitute for the General Criteria. FMCS may also identify periodic educational requirements for remaining on the Roster.

(b) *Proof of qualification.* Unless waived under exceptional circumstances wholly in the discretion of the Director, applicants must:

(1) Submit five recent labor arbitration awards that are final and binding, and prepared by the applicant while serving as an impartial arbitrator of record selected by mutual agreement of the parties to labor relations disputes arising under collective bargaining agreements, or by direct designation by an administrative agency, or

(2) Successfully complete the FMCS labor arbitrator training course and either submit one award as described above or complete an apprenticeship that meets specifications that FMCS may, in its discretion, provide. Applicants must also submit information

demonstrating extensive and recent experience in collective bargaining, including at least the position or title held, duties or responsibilities, the name and location of the company or organization, and the dates of employment.

(c) *Advocacy.* Any person who at the time of application is an advocate, as defined in paragraph (c)(1) of this section, must agree to cease such activity before being recommended for listing on the Roster by the Board. Except in the case of persons listed on the Roster as advocates before November 17, 1976, any person who did not divulge his or her advocacy at the time of listing or who becomes an advocate while listed on the Roster and who did not request to be placed on inactive status pursuant to §1404.6 prior to becoming an advocate, shall be recommended for removal by the Board after the fact of advocacy is revealed.

(1) *Definition of advocacy.* (i) An advocate is a person who represents employers, labor organizations, or individuals as an employee, attorney, or consultant, in matters of labor relations or employment relations, including but not limited to the subjects of union representation and recognition matters, collective bargaining, arbitration, unfair labor practices, equal employment opportunity, and other areas generally recognized as constituting labor or employment relations. The definition includes representatives of employers or employees in individual cases or controversies involving worker's compensation, occupational health or safety, minimum wage, or other labor standards matters.

(ii) This definition of advocate also includes a person who is directly or indirectly associated with an advocate in a business or professional relationship as, for example, partners or employees of a law firm. Individuals engaged only in joint education or training or other non-adversarial activities will not be deemed to be advocates.

(2) [Reserved]

(d) *Removal from the Roster.* Removal from the Roster shall be by decision of the Director of FMCS based upon the recommendations of the Board or upon the Director's own initiative. The Board may recommend for removal, and the Director may remove, any arbitrator listed on the Roster for violation of this part or of the Code. FMCS will provide to the affected arbitrator written notice of removal from the Roster. Complaints about arbitrators should be in writing and sent to the Director of OA. The complaint should cite any specific section(s) of the Code or the FMCS rule the arbitrator has allegedly violated. The following criteria shall be a basis for the Board to recommend and/or the Director to initiate an arbitrator's removal from the Roster:

(1) No longer meets the criteria for admission;

(2) Has become an advocate as defined in paragraph (c) of this section;

(3) Has been repeatedly or flagrantly in violation of one or more provisions of this part;

(4) Has refused to make reasonable and periodic reports in a timely manner to FMCS, as required in subpart C of this part, concerning activities pertaining to arbitration;

(5) Has been the subject of a complaint by a party who uses FMCS services, or engages in conduct inappropriate for an arbitrator which otherwise comes to the attention of FMCS, and the Board, after appropriate inquiry, concludes that cause for removal has been shown; or

(6) Has been in an inactive status pursuant to §1404.6 for longer than two years and has not paid the annual listing fee.

(e) *Procedure for removal.* Prior to any recommendation by the Board to remove an arbitrator from the Roster, the Board shall conduct an inquiry into the facts of any such recommended removal. When the Board recommends removal of an arbitrator, it shall send the arbitrator a written notice. This notice shall inform the arbitrator of the Board's recommendation and the basis for it, and that he or she has 60 days from the date of such notice to submit a written response or information showing why the arbitrator should not be removed. When the Director removes an arbitrator from the Roster, he or she shall inform the arbitrator of this in writing, stating the effective date of the removal and the length of

time of the removal if it is not indefinite. An arbitrator so removed may seek reinstatement to the Roster by making written application to the Director no earlier than two years after the effective date of his or her removal.

(f) *Suspension.* The Director of OA may suspend, for a period not to exceed 180 days, any arbitrator listed on the Roster based on any of the criteria in paragraph (d) of this section. Arbitrators shall be promptly notified of a suspension. The arbitrator may appeal a suspension to the Board, which shall make a recommendation to the Director of FMCS. The decision of the Director of FMCS shall constitute the final action of the agency.

§ 1404.6 Inactive status.

(a) An arbitrator on the Roster who continues to meet the criteria for listing on the Roster may request that he or she be put in an inactive status on a temporary basis.

(b) Arbitrators whose schedules do not permit cases to be heard within six months of assignment must make themselves inactive temporarily until their caseload permits the earlier scheduling of cases.

(c) An arbitrator can remain on inactive status without paying any annual listing fee for a period of two years. If an arbitrator is on inactive status for longer than two (2) years, the arbitrator will be removed from the Roster unless the arbitrator pays the annual listing fee.

§ 1404.7 Listing fee.

All arbitrators will be required to pay an annual fee for listing on the Roster, as set forth in the appendix to this part.

Subpart C—Procedures for Arbitration Services

§ 1404.8 Freedom of choice.

Nothing contained in this part should be construed to limit the rights of parties who use FMCS arbitration services to jointly select any arbitrator or arbitration procedure acceptable to them. Once a request is made to OA, all parties are subject to the procedures contained in this part.

§ 1404.9 Procedures for requesting arbitration lists and panels.

(a) The OA has been delegated the responsibility for administering all requests for labor arbitration services. Requests must be made online at *fmcs.gov/services/arbitration/requesting-a-panel/*, or via email attaching a completed Form R–43 addressed to *arbitration@fmcs.gov*.

(b) Upon request, OA will refer a randomly selected panel of seven arbitrators to parties to an agreement to arbitrate or engage in fact-finding, or where labor arbitration or fact-finding may be provided by statute. A biographical sketch will be provided for each member of the panel. This sketch states the background, qualifications, experience, and all fees as furnished to OA by the arbitrator. The parties are encouraged to make joint requests. However, a panel request, whether joint or unilateral, will be honored. Requests for a panel of other than seven (7) names, for a direct appointment of an arbitrator, and/or for special qualifications or other service will not be honored unless jointly submitted or authorized by both parties pursuant to mutual agreement. The issuance of a panel—in response to either joint or unilateral request—is nothing more than a response to a request. Neither issuance of a panel nor appointment of an arbitrator signifies the adoption of any position by FMCS regarding the status of an arbitration agreement, arbitrability of any dispute, or the terms of the parties' contract.

(c) FMCS has no power to:

(1) Compel parties to appear before an arbitrator;

(2) Enforce an agreement to arbitrate;

(3) Compel parties to arbitrate any issue;

(4) Influence, alter, or set aside decisions of arbitrators on the Roster; or

(5) Compel, deny, or modify payment of compensation to an arbitrator.

(d) OA may decline to submit a panel or to make an appointment of an arbitrator if the request submitted is overly burdensome or otherwise impracticable. OA, in such circumstances, may refer the parties to an FMCS mediator to help in the design of an alternative

solution. OA may also decline to service any request from a party based on the party's prior non-payment of arbitrator fees or other behavior that constrains the spirit or operation of the arbitration process.

(e) Panel requests that contain certain special requirements not found among the selections online, cannot be processed via the agency's internet system; instead, parties must submit the pdf version of the R–43 form via email to OA and specify the additional requirements agreed to by both parties.

(f) As an alternative to a panel of arbitrators, OA will, upon written request, submit a list of arbitrators and their biographical sketches from a designated geographical area; the parties may then select and deal directly with an arbitrator of their choice, with no further involvement of FMCS with the parties or the arbitrator, and no assigned case number. The parties may also request FMCS to make a direct appointment of their selection. In such a situation, a case number will be assigned.

(g) OA will charge a fee for all requests for lists, panels, and other major services. Payments for these services must be received with the request for services before the service is delivered and may be paid by either labor or management or both. A schedule of fees is listed in the appendix to this part.

§ 1404.10 Arbitrability.

OA will not decide the merits of a claim by either party that a dispute is not subject to arbitration.

§ 1404.11 Nominations of arbitrators.

(a) All panels submitted to the parties by OA, and all letters issued by OA making a direct appointment, will have an assigned FMCS case number. All future communications with OA should refer to this case number.

(b) OA will provide a randomly selected panel of arbitrators located in geographical areas in proximity of the hearing site, as specified in the request. The parties may jointly request special qualification of arbitrators experienced in certain issues or industries or that possess certain backgrounds, or a panel with no geographic restrictions within the U.S. OA has no obligation to put an individual on any given panel or on a minimum number of panels in any fixed period. If at any time both parties request that a name or names be included, or omitted, from a panel, such name or names will be included, or omitted, unless the number of names is excessive. These inclusions/exclusions may not discriminate against anyone because of age, race, color, gender, national origin, disability, genetic information, or religion.

(c) If the parties do not agree on an arbitrator from the first panel, OA will furnish up to five additional panels to the parties upon joint request, or upon a unilateral request if authorized by the applicable collective bargaining agreement, and payment of additional fees.

§ 1404.12 Selection by parties and appointment of arbitrators.

(a) After receiving a panel of names, the parties must notify OA of their selection of an arbitrator or of the decision not to proceed with arbitration. Upon notification of the selection of an arbitrator, OA will make a formal appointment of the arbitrator. The arbitrator, upon notification of appointment, shall communicate with the parties within 14 days to arrange for preliminary matters, such as the date and place of hearing. Should an arbitrator be notified directly by the parties that he or she has been selected, the arbitrator must promptly notify OA of the selection. The arbitrator must provide OA with the FMCS case number and other pertinent information for OA to make an appointment. A pattern of failure by an arbitrator to notify FMCS of a selection in an FMCS case may result in suspension or removal from the Roster. If the parties settle a case prior to the hearing, the parties must inform the arbitrator as well as OA. Consistent failure to follow these procedures may lead to a denial of future OA services.

(b) Where the parties' collective bargaining agreement permits each party to separately notify OA of its ranked order of preference, or is silent on the manner of selecting arbitrators, FMCS will ask each party to advise OA of its

order of preference by numbering each name on the panel and submitting the numbered list in writing to OA. Upon receiving the rank order from one party, OA will notify the other party that it has fourteen (14) days in which to submit its selections. Where both parties respond, the name that has the lowest combined number will be appointed. If the other party fails to respond, the first party's choice will be honored.

(c) OA will make a direct appointment of an arbitrator only upon joint request or as otherwise provided by this part.

§ 1404.13 Conduct of hearings.

All proceedings conducted by the arbitrators shall conform to the contractual obligations of the parties, and to the Code. The arbitrator shall comply with §1404.4(b). The conduct of the arbitration proceeding is under the arbitrator's jurisdiction and control, and the arbitrator's decision shall be based upon the evidence and testimony presented at the hearing or otherwise incorporated in the record of the proceeding. The arbitrator may, unless prohibited by law, proceed in the absence of any party who, after due notice, fails to be present or to obtain a postponement. An award rendered in an ex parte proceeding of this nature must be based upon evidence presented to the arbitrator.

§ 1404.14 Decision and award.

(a) Arbitrators shall make awards no later than 60 days from the date of the closing of the record, unless otherwise agreed upon by the parties or specified by the collective bargaining agreement or law. However, failure to meet the 60-day deadline will not invalidate the process or award. A failure to render timely awards reflects upon the performance of an arbitrator and may lead to removal from the FMCS Roster.

(b) The parties should inform OA whenever a decision is delayed. The arbitrator shall promptly notify OA if and when the arbitrator:

(1) Cannot schedule or hear a case, and/or render a decision promptly and in accordance with time limits established in this part, or

(2) Learns a dispute has been settled by the parties prior to the decision.

(c) Within 15 days after an award and/or final invoice has been submitted to the parties, the arbitrator shall submit an online Arbitrator's Report and Fee Statement (Form R–19) to OA showing a breakdown of the fee and expense charges.

(d) While FMCS encourages the publication of arbitration awards, arbitrators must not publicize awards without the express consent of the parties in conformance with the Code.

§ 1404.15 Fees and charges of arbitrators.

(a) *Fees to parties.* Prior to appointment, the parties should be aware of all significant aspects of the bases for an arbitrator's fees and expenses. Each arbitrator's biographical sketch shall include a statement of the bases for the arbitrator's fees and expenses, which shall conform to this part and the Code. The parties and the arbitrator shall be bound by the arbitrator's statement of the bases for fees and expenses in the biographical sketch for two years from the date of appointment unless they mutually agree otherwise in writing. Arbitrators listed on the Roster may change the bases for their fees and expenses for future appointments if they provide them in writing to OA at least 30 days in advance.

(b) *Two or more addresses.* Arbitrators with more than one business address must bill the parties for expenses from the least expensive business address to the hearing site.

(c) *Additional administrative fee.* In cases involving unusual amounts of time and expense relative to the prehearing and post-hearing administration of a particular case, the arbitrator may charge an administrative fee. This fee shall be disclosed to the parties as soon as it is foreseeable by the arbitrator.

(d) *Fee disputes.* When a party believes the arbitrator has not followed the requirements of this Part, it should promptly notify OA, which may bring any complaint concerning the fees charged by an arbitrator to the attention of the Board for consideration. Complaints by arbitrators concerning

non-payment of fees by a party may lead to the denial of services or other actions by OA.

§ 1404.16 Reports and biographical sketches.

(a) Arbitrators listed on the Roster shall execute and return all documents, forms and reports required by OA and be responsible for updating their account and bio information online, including changes of address, telephone number, and availability. They must also furnish to OA the contact information for a person they know well whom OA may contact if unable to reach the arbitrator, and who has agreed to contact OA if the arbitrator has become incapacitated or deceased. Arbitrators must contact OA directly when they engage, or are accused of engaging, in any business or other connection or relationship involving labor or employment relations and/or which creates or gives the appearance of advocacy as defined in §1404.5(c)(1).

(b) OA reserves the right to decide and approve the format and content of biographical sketches.

Subpart D—Expedited Arbitration

§ 1404.17 Policy.

In an effort to reduce the time and expense of some grievance arbitrations, FMCS offers expedited procedures where the parties agree on a streamlined process with short deadlines. Parties may also agree on their own procedures if it is practicable for FMCS.

§ 1404.18 Procedures for requesting expedited panels.

(a) With the exception of the specific changes noted in this Subpart, all FMCS rules and regulations governing its arbitration services shall apply to Expedited Arbitration.

(b) Upon receipt of a joint Request for Arbitration Panel (Form R–43) indicating that both parties desire expedited services, OA will refer a panel of arbitrators which shall be valid for up to 30 days. Only one panel will be submitted per case. If the parties are unable to mutually agree upon an arbitrator or if prioritized selections are not received from both parties within 30 days, OA will make a direct appointment of an arbitrator not on the original panel.

(c) If the parties mutually select an arbitrator, but the arbitrator is not available, the parties may select a second name from the same panel or OA will make a direct appointment of another arbitrator not listed on the original panel.

§ 1404.19 Arbitration process.

(a) Once notified of the expedited case appointment by OA, the arbitrator must contact the parties within seven (7) calendar days.

(b) The parties and the arbitrator must attempt to schedule a hearing within 30 days of the appointment date.

(c) Absent mutual agreement, all hearings will be concluded within one day. No transcripts of the proceedings will be made and the filing of post-hearing briefs will not be allowed.

(d) All awards must be completed within seven (7) working days from the hearing. These awards are expected to be brief and concise, and to not require extensive written opinion or research time.

PART 1405—PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Subpart A—General

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1405.1 Purpose.
1405.2 Policy.
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Subpart B—Part-time Employment Program

1405.6 Program coordination.
1405.7 Goals and timetables.
1405.8 Reporting.
1405.9 Part-time employment practices.
1405.10 Effect on employment ceilings.
1405.11 Effect on employee benefits.

AUTHORITY: Pub. L. 95–437, Federal Employees Part-time Career Employment Act of 1978.

SOURCE: 47 FR 15779, Apr. 13, 1982, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 1405.1 Purpose.

These regulations implement Public Law 95–437, the Federal Employees

Part-time Career Employment Act of 1978, by establishing a continuing program in the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) to provide career part-time employment opportunities.

§ 1405.2 Policy.

It is the policy of FMCS to provide career part-time employment opportunities in positions through GS–16 (or equivalent) subject to agency resources and mission requirements.

§ 1405.3 Definition.

Part-time career employment means regularly scheduled work of from 16 to 32 hours per week performed by employees in competitive or excepted appointments in tenure groups I or II.

§ 1405.4 Applicability.

The regulations cover permanent positions which are deemed by management to be appropriately structured on a part-time basis. The regulations do not apply to positions at GS–16 (or equivalent) and above.

Subpart B—Part-time Employment Program

§ 1405.6 Program coordination.

The Director of Personnel is designated the FMCS Part-time Employment Coordinator with responsibility for:

(a) Consulting in the part-time employment program with the Director of Equal Employment Opportunity, Federal Women's Program Coordinator, Handicapped Program Coordinator, representatives of employee unions, and other interested parties;

(b) Responding to requests for advice and assistance on part-time employment within the agency;

(c) Maintaining liaison with groups interested in promoting part-time employment opportunities;

(d) Monitoring the agency's part-time employment efforts; and preparing reports on part-time employment for transmittal to OPM and the Congress.

§ 1405.7 Goals and timetables.

On an annual basis, as part of the manpower and budget process, management will set goals for establishing part-time positions to part-time along with a timetable setting forth interim and final deadlines for achieving the goals. Decisions on part-time employment will be based on such factors as agency mission, occupational mix, workload fluctuations, affirmative actions, geographic dispersion, effect on providing services to the public, and employee interest in part-time employment.

§ 1405.8 Reporting.

FMCS will report as required by regulations to the Office of Personnel Management on the part-time employment program. The program will be reviewed through internal personnel management evaluations.

§ 1405.9 Part-time employment practices.

FMCS will review positions which become vacant for the feasibility of utilizing part-time career appointments. Part-time positions will be advertised in vacancy announcements. Agency employees may request and receive consideration to switch from full-time to part-time schedules. The request should be addressed through the supervisor to the Director of Personnel listing any and all reasons for the request. The Director of Personnel, with input from all affected management officials, will decide whether or not to grant the request. Any employee requesting a change from full-time to part-time employment will be advised of effects on pay and fringe benefits by the Director of Personnel.

§ 1405.10 Effect on employment ceilings.

Effective October 1, 1980, part-time employees will be counted on the basis of the fractional part of the 40-hour week actually worked. For example two employees each working twenty hours a week will count as one employee.

§ 1405.11 Effect on employee benefits.

Career part-time employees are entitled to coverage under the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance and Federal Employees Health Benefits Programs. The Government contribution for health insurance of eligible part-time employees will be prorated on the basis of the fraction of a full-time schedule worked.

PART 1406—FMCS TERMS OF SERVICE

Sec.

1406.1 General terms of service.
1406.2 Terms of service for mediation, facilitation, and other alternative dispute resolution services.
1406.3 Virtual services—additional terms of service.
1406.4 Grievance mediation and Federal sector inter-agency agreement mediation—additional terms of service.
1406.5 Training and outreach presentations.

AUTHORITY: 29 U.S.C. 172; 29 U.S.C. 173 *et seq.;* and 5 U.S.C. 574.

SOURCE: 88 FR 76659, Nov. 7, 2023, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1406.1 General terms of service.

When Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) services are used, the recipients of the services have agreed to abide by FMCS's general terms of service as well as any other terms of service provided by FMCS.

(a) The recipients of a service shall hold FMCS and any FMCS neutrals harmless of any claim arising from the delivery of that FMCS service.

(b) FMCS will determine the date, time, place, and manner (virtual, in-person, or hybrid) of services provided in accordance with any applicable statutes, regulations, and agreements.

(c) FMCS may convene the parties for a threatened or actual work stoppage whenever in its judgment such dispute threatens to cause a substantial interruption of commerce.

(d) Any person shadowing an FMCS neutral agrees to be bound by the same confidentiality standards as the FMCS neutral and such confidentiality standards will be honored by the parties.

(e) FMCS recognizes the importance of mediator confidentiality to further its mission. Therefore, FMCS will not produce any materials related to a mediation other than the date, parties, location, and mediator, unless required by law. FMCS will not produce materials related to a mediation, materials exchanged in a mediation or facilitation, information related to non-plenary sessions of a facilitation, mediator or facilitator notes, and any internal communications with the mediator of facilitator, unless required by law.

(f) Nothing in this section shall be construed so as to negate or modify the FMCS's Confidential Commercial Information (CCI) regulation (29 CFR 1401.26).

(g) FMCS will make a copy of these terms available to all parties upon request.

§ 1406.2 Terms of service for mediation, facilitation, and other alternative dispute resolution services.

The following Terms of Service additionally apply when the FMCS service is a mediation, facilitation, training, and other alternative dispute resolution service.

(a) These services are voluntary processes that may be terminated at any time unless otherwise provided by statute or by agreement.

(b) The neutral has no authority to compel resolution.

(c) These services are confidential to the extent allowed by law. The obligations imposed by these terms and conditions are in addition to and do not supersede any obligations imposed by applicable state or Federal laws regarding mediation confidentiality.

(d) The parties agree that they will not record, transcribe, save, or otherwise capture any audio, video, files, documents, chat texts, or any other data that they would not have access to but for the service being provided, unless agreed to by all parties and with prior written approval of FMCS, or as otherwise required by law. They further agree to notify the neutral immediately if recordings, saves or other captures of data occur, to ensure that no further distribution or transfer occurs, and to immediately and permanently delete them.

(e) Non-parties may attend only with the agreement of the parties and the

neutral unless otherwise required by law and are bound by these terms of service.

(f) If a party inadvertently gains access to any confidential discussions involving another party, the party with inadvertent access shall immediately disclose their presence and exit from the confidential discussions. Any confidential information inadvertently disclosed may not be used by the party with inadvertent access, even within the confines of the alternative dispute resolution session.

(g) The parties agree not to subpoena or compel the neutral to testify or produce any documents provided by a party in any administrative or judicial proceeding. The neutral will not voluntarily testify or produce documents on behalf of a party in any administrative or judicial proceeding unless otherwise required by law.

§ 1406.3 Virtual services—additional terms of service.

The following Terms of Service additionally apply when the FMCS service is provided virtually.

(a) Parties may not provide meeting access information to non-parties without permission from the neutral unless the session is open to the public.

(b) The neutral and all parties must be provided notice of all attendees before or at the time of attendance unless the session is open to the public.

(c) Parties must ensure the integrity of technology used in virtual meetings. If an attendee is aware of any security breach, that attendee will inform the neutral immediately.

§ 1406.4 Grievance mediation and Federal sector inter-agency agreement mediation —additional terms of service.

The following Terms of Service additionally apply when the FMCS service is a grievance mediation or Federal sector inter-agency agreement mediation.

(a) The grievant or complainant is entitled to be present at the mediation.

(b) The parties agree not to disclose to any non-party oral or written communications made during the mediation process, including settlement terms, proposals, offers, or other statements, whether made privately to the neutral or when all parties are present.

(c) Evidence that is otherwise admissible or discoverable will not be rendered inadmissible or non-discoverable as a result of its use in the mediation proceedings.

(d) The neutral has no authority to compel agreement or other resolution of the dispute and will issue no written recommendations or conclusions. At the request of the parties, or on the initiative of the neutral, the neutral may provide an oral recommendation or opinion to resolve the dispute. In that circumstance, the parties may jointly decide to implement that recommendation or opinion but neither party is obligated to do so.

(e) (For Federal sector inter-agency agreement mediation, if applicable) Any communications between the Agency or Organizational Program/or Alternative Dispute Resolution Coordinator and the neutral(s) and/or the parties are considered dispute resolution communications with a neutral and will be kept confidential.

§ 1406.5 Training and outreach presentations.

The following Terms of Service additionally apply when the FMCS service is a training or outreach presentation.

(a) The parties agree that they will not record any FMCS training or outreach presentation (whether delivered in-person or virtually) without the knowledge and consent of the parties and prior written approval of FMCS.

(b) [Reserved]

PART 1410—PRIVACY

Sec.

1410.1 Purpose and scope.
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1410.11 Standards of review.
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AUTHORITY: Privacy Act 1974, Pub. L. 93–579, 88 Stat. 1896 (5 U.S.C. 552a).

SOURCE: 40 FR 47418, Oct. 8, 1975, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1410.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) The purpose of this part is to set forth rules to inform the public about information maintained by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service about individuals, to inform those individuals how they may gain access to and correct or amend information about themselves, and to exempt disclosure of identity of confidential sources of certain records.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 1410.2 Definitions.

For the purposes of this part, unless otherwise required by the context—

(a) *Individual* means a citizen of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

(b) *Maintain* means maintain, collect, use or disseminate.

(c) *Record* means any item, collection or grouping of information about an individual that is maintained by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service including, but not limited to, his education, financial transactions, medical history, and criminal or employment history, that contains his name, or the identifying number, symbol, or other identifying particular assigned to the individual, such as a finger or voice print, or a photograph.

(d) *System of records* means a group of any records under the control of Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service from which information is retrieved by the name of the individual or by some identifying particular assigned to the individual.

§ 1410.3 Individual access requests.

(a) Individuals who desire to know whether the agency maintains a system of records containing records pertaining to him may submit a written request to the Director of Administration, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, Washington, DC 20427. The request must include the name and address of the requestor. The Director of Administration, or his designated representative, will advise the requestor in writing within 10 working days whether the records are so maintained and the general category of records maintained within the system.

(b) Any individual who desires to inspect or receive copies of any record maintained within the system concerning him shall submit a written request to the Director of Administration, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, Washington, DC 20427, reasonably identifying the records sought to be inspected or copied.

(c) The individual seeking access to his record may also have another person accompanying him during his review of the records. If the requestor desires another person to accompany him during the inspection, the requestor must sign a statement, to be furnished to the Service representative at the time of the inspection authorizing such other person to accompany him. Except as required under the Freedom of Information Act, permitted as a routine use as published in the agency's annual notice, or for internal agency use, disclosure of records will only be made to the individual to whom the record pertains, unless written consent is obtained from that individual. The Director of Administration will verify the signature of the individual requesting or consenting to the disclosure of a record prior to the disclosure thereof to any other person by a comparison of signatures, if the request or consent is not executed within the presence of a designated Service representative.

(d) The Director of Administration or his designated representative will advise the requestor in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the request whether, to what extent, and approximately when and where access shall be granted. Within 30 days of receipt of the request, the records will be made available for review at the FMCS National Office in Washington, DC, or one of the Regional Offices. The following is a list of the Regional Office locations:

1. *Eastern Region:*

Address: Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, 26 Federal Plaza, Room 2937, New York, NY 10278.

Consists of: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, Garrett and Alleghany Counties of

Maryland; and Brooke and Hancock Counties of West Virginia.

2. *Central Region:*

Address: Insurance Exchange Building, Room 1641, 175 W. Jackson Street, Chicago, IL 60604.

Consist of: Illinois (except counties listed under the Southern Region); Indiana (except counties listed under Southern Region); Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Michigan, and Ohio (except counties listed under the Southern Region).

3. *Southern Region:*

Address: Suite 400, 1422 W. Peachtree St., NW., Atlanta, GA 30309.

Consists of: Virginia, Maryland (except counties listed under the Eastern Region); Tennessee; North Carolina; South Carolina; Georgia; Alabama; Florida; Mississippi; Louisiana; Arkansas; Kentucky; Texas (except for Hudspeth and El Paso counties); Oklahoma; Missouri (except for those counties listed for the Western Region); Illinois (in counties of Calhoun, Greene, Jersey, McCoupin, Montgomery, Fayette, Bond, Madison, St. Clair, Monroe, Clinton, Washington, Marion, White, Hamilton, Wayne, Edwards, Wabash, Lawrence, Richland, Clay, Effingham, Jasper, and Crawford); Indiana (the counties of Knox, Daviess, Martin, Orange, Washington, Clark, Floyd, Harrison, Crawford, Perry, Spencer, DuBois, Pike, Gibson, Posey, Vanderburgh, and Warrick); Ohio (the counties of Butler, Hamilton, Warren, Clermont, Brown, Highland, Clinton, Ross, Pike, Adams, Scioto, Lawrence, Ballia, Jackson, Vinton, Hocking, Athens, and Meigs); Kansas (the counties of Bourbon, Crawford, Cherokee, and Ottawa); West Virginia (except counties listed under the Central Region); and the Canal Zone.

4. *Western Region:*

Address: Francisco Bay Building, Suite 235, 50 Francisco Street, San Francisco, CA 94133.

Consists of: California; Nevada; Arizona; New Mexico; El Paso and Hudspeth Counties (only) in Texas; Hawaii; Guam; Alaska; Washington; Oregon; Colorado; Utah; Wyoming; Montana; Idaho; Nebraska; Kansas; Iowa; Missouri (the counties of Atchinson, Nodaway, Worth, Harrison, Mercer, Putnam, Schuyler, Scotland, Knox, Adair, Sullivan, Grundy, Daviess, Gentry, DeKalb, Andrew, Holt, Buchanan, Clinton, Caldwell, Livingston, Linn, Macon, Shelby, Randolph, Chariton, Carrol, Ray, Clay, Platte, Jackson, Lafayette, Saline, Howard, Boon, Cooper, Pettis, Johnson, Cass, Bates, Henry, St. Clair, Benton, and Morgan); American Somoa; and Wake Island.

[40 FR 47418, Oct. 8, 1975, as amended at 47 FR 10530, Mar. 11, 1982]

§ 1410.4 Requirements for identification of individuals making requests.

Satisfactory identification (i.e., employ identification number, current address, and verification of signature) must be provided to FMCS prior to review of the record. The requestor will be provided the opportunity to review the records during normal business hours.

§ 1410.5 Special procedures: Medical records.

(a) If medical records are requested for inspection which, in the opinion of the Director of Administration, may be harmful to the requestor if personally inspected by him, such records will be furnished only to a licensed physician, designated to receive such records by the requestor. Prior to such disclosure, the requestor must furnish a signed written authorization to the Service to make such disclosure and the physician must furnish a written request to the Director of Administration for the physician's receipt of such records.

(b) Verification of the requestor's signature will be accomplished by a comparison of signatures if such authorization is not executed within the presence of a Service representative.

§ 1410.6 Requests for correction or amendment of records.

(a) If the individual disagrees with the information in the record, he may request that the record be amended by addition or deletion. Such a request must be in writing and directed to the Director of Administration, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, Washington, DC, 20427. The request must also specifically outline the amendment sought. The Director of Administration or his designated representative will acknowledge receipt of the request within 10 working days from the date of receipt of such request. Under normal circumstances, not later than 30 days after receipt of the request for amendments, the Director of Administration will either:

(1) Amend the record and notify the requestor in a written letter of determination to what extent the record is amended; or

(2) If the amendment or correction is denied in whole or in part, notify the

requestor in a written letter of determination the reason for denial and the requestor's right to request review by the Deputy National Director.

(b) Routine requests of arbitrators maintained on the Service's roster of arbitrators to amend records for such matters as address, experience, fees charged, may be made in writing to the Director of Arbitration Services, Washington, DC, 20427. If such routine requests are not granted or involve other types of amendments, then the procedure to be followed is that which includes a request in writing to the Director of Administration.

§ 1410.7 Agency review of refusal to amend a record.

(a) The requestor may appeal any determination of the Director of Administration not to amend a record by submitting a written request for review of refusal to amend a record to the Deputy National Director, Washington, DC 20427. Such a request shall indicate the specific corrections or amendments sought. Not later than 30 days from receipt of a request for review (unless such period is extended by the National Director for good cause shown), the Deputy National Director will complete such a review and make a final determination on the request, and shall advise the requestor in a written letter of determination whether, and to what extent the correction or amendment will be made. If the correction or amendment is denied, in whole or in part, the letter of determination will specify the reasons for such denial.

(b) If the Deputy National Director makes a final determination not to amend the record, the individual may provide to the Service a concise written statement explaining the reasons for disagreement with the refusal.

(c) In addition, the individual may file a civil action in the U.S. District Court to seek an order compelling the Service to amend the record as requested.

§ 1410.8 Notation of dispute.

After an individual has filed a statement of disagreement as described in §1410.7(b), any disclosure of the contested records must contain a notation of the dispute. In addition, a copy of the individual's statement will be provided to the person or agency to whom the disputed record is disclosed. The Service may also, but it is not required to, provide a statement reflecting the agency's reasons for not making the requested amendments.

§ 1410.9 Fees.

Upon request, the Service will provide a photostatic copy of the records to the individual to whom they pertain. There will be a charge of $.10 per page.

§ 1410.10 Penalties.

Any person who knowingly and willfully requests or obtains any record concerning an individual from the Service under false pretenses shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and fined not more than $5,000.

§ 1410.11 Standards of review.

Upon a request for inspection of records or a determination on a request for amendment, the Director of Administration, his designated representative, or the Deputy National Director will review the pertinent records and discard any material in them that is not:

(a) Relevant and necessary to accomplish a statutory purpose or a purpose not authorized by executive order.

(b) Accurate, relevant, timely, and complete, to assure fairness to the individual.

§ 1410.12 Specific exemptions.

With regard to Agency Internal Personnel Records and Arbitrator Personal Data Files, separately described in the system notices, such records will be exempted from section (d) of the Act as follows:

Investigatory material maintained solely for the purposes of determining an individual's qualification, eligibility, or suitability for employment in the Federal civilian service, Federal contracts, or access to classified information, but only to the extent that disclosure of such material would reveal the identity of the source who furnished information to the Government under an express promise that the identity of the source would be held in confidence, or prior to September 27, 1975, under an implied promise that the identity of the source would be held in confidence.

In order to obtain accurate information pertaining to employee or arbitrator eligibility, the nondisclosure of the identity of such a confidential source is essential.

PART 1420—FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE—ASSISTANCE IN THE HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY

Sec.

1420.1 Functions of the Service in health care industry bargaining under the Labor-Management Relations Act, as amended (hereinafter ''the Act'').
1420.2–1420.4 [Reserved]
1420.5 Optional input of parties to Board of Inquiry selection.
1420.6–1420.7 [Reserved]
1420.8 FMCS deferral to parties' own private factfinding procedures.
1420.9 FMCS deferral to parties' own private interest arbitration procedures.

AUTHORITY: Secs. 8(d), 201, 203, 204, and 213 of the Labor Management Relations Act, as amended in 1974 (29 U.S.C. 158(d), 171, 173, 174 and 183).

SOURCE: 44 FR 42683, July 20, 1979, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1420.1 Functions of the Service in health care industry bargaining under the Labor-Management Relations Act, as amended (hereinafter "the Act").

(a) *Dispute mediation.* Whenever a collective bargaining dispute involves employees of a health care institution, either party to such collective bargaining must give certain statutory notices to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (hereinafter ''the Service'') before resorting to strike or lockout and before terminating or modifying any existing collective bargaining agreement. Thereafter, the Service will promptly communicate with the parties and use its best efforts, by mediation and conciliation, to bring them to agreement. The parties shall participate fully and promptly in such meetings as may be called by the Service for the purpose of aiding in a settlement of the dispute. (29 U.S.C. 158(d) and 158(g).).

(b) *Boards of inquiry.* If, in the opinion of the Director of the Service a threatened or actual strike or lockout affecting a health care institution will substantially interrupt the delivery of health care in the locality concerned, the Director may establish within certain statutory time periods an impartial Board of Inquiry. The Board of Inquiry will investigate the issues involved in the dispute and make a written report, containing the findings of fact and the Board's non-binding recommendations for settling the dispute, to the parties within 15 days after the establishment of such a Board. (29 U.S.C. 183.)

§§ 1420.2–1420.4 [Reserved]

§ 1420.5 Optional input of parties to Board of Inquiry selection.

The Act gives the Director of the Service the authority to select the individual(s) who will serve as the Board of Inquiry if the Director decides to establish a Board of Inquiry in a particular health care industry bargaining dispute (29 U.S.C. 183). If the parties to collective bargaining involving a health care institution(s) desire to have some input to the Service's selection of an individual(s) to serve as a Board of Inquiry (hereinafter ''BoI''), they may jointly exercise the following optional procedure:

(a) At any time at least 90 days prior to the expiration date of a collective bargaining agreement in a contract renewal dispute, or at any time prior to the notice required under clause (B) of section 8(d) of the Act (29 U.S.C. 158(d)) in an initial contract dispute, the employer(s) and the union(s) in the dispute may jointly submit to the Service a list of arbitrators or other impartial individuals who would be acceptable BoI members both to the employer(s) and to the union(s). Such list submission must identify the dispute(s) involved and must include addresses and telephone numbers of the individuals listed and any information available to the parties as to current and past employment of the individuals listed. The parties may jointly rank the individuals in order of preference if they desire to do so.

(b) The Service will make every effort to select any BoI that might be appointed from that jointly submitted list. However, the Service cannot promise that it will select a BoI from

such list. The chances of the Service finding one or more individuals on such list available to serve as the BoI will be increased if the list contains a sufficiently large number of names and if it is submitted at as early a date as possible. Nevertheless, the parties can even preselect and submit jointly to the Service one specific individual if that individual agrees to be available for the particular BoI time period. Again the Service will not be bound to appoint that individual, but will be receptive to such a submission by the parties.

(c) The jointly submitted list may be worked out and agreed to by (1) A particular set of parties in contemplation of a particular upcoming negotiation dispute between them, or (2) a particular set of parties for use in all future disputes between that set of parties, or (3) a group of various health care institutions and unions in a certain community or geographic area for use in all disputes between any two or more of those parties.

(d) Submission or receipt of any such list will not in any way constitute an admission of the appropriateness of appointment of a BoI nor an expression of the desirability of a BoI by any party or by the Service.

(e) This joint submission procedure is a purely optional one to provide the parties with an opportunity to have input into the selection of a BoI if they so desire.

(f) Such jointly submitted lists should be sent jointly by the employer(s) and the union(s) to the appropriate regional office of the Service. The regional offices of the Service are as follows:

1. *Eastern Region:*

Address: Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, 26 Federal Plaza, Room 2937, New York, NY 10278.

Consists of: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, Garrett and Alleghany Counties of Maryland; and Brooke and Hancock Counties of West Virginia.

2. *Central Region:*

Address: Insurance Exchange Building, Room 1641, 175 W. Jackson Street, Chicago, IL 60604.

Consist of: Illinois (except counties listed under the Southern Region); Indiana (except counties listed under Southern Region); Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Michigan, and Ohio (except counties listed under the Southern Region).

3. *Southern Region:*

Address: Suite 400, 1422 W. Peachtree St., NW., Atlanta, GA 30309.

Consists of: Virginia, Maryland (except counties listed under the Eastern Region); Tennessee; North Carolina; South Carolina; Georgia; Alabama; Florida; Mississippi; Louisiana; Arkansas; Kentucky; Texas (except for Hudspeth and El Paso counties); Oklahoma; Missouri (except for those counties listed for the Western Region); Illinois (in counties of Calhoun, Greene, Jersey, McCoupin, Montgomery, Fayette, Bond, Madison, St. Clair, Monroe, Clinton, Washington, Marion, White, Hamilton, Wayne, Edwards, Wabash, Lawrence, Richland, Clay, Effingham, Jasper, and Crawford); Indiana (the counties of Knox, Daviess, Martin, Orange, Washington, Clark, Floyd, Harrison, Crawford, Perry, Spencer, DuBois, Pike, Gibson, Posey, Vanderburgh, and Warrick); Ohio (the counties of Butler, Hamilton, Warren, Clermont, Brown, Highland, Clinton, Ross, Pike, Adams, Scioto, Lawrence, Ballia, Jackson, Vinton, Hocking, Athens, and Meigs); Kansas (the counties of Bourbon, Crawford, Cherokee, and Ottawa); West Virginia (except counties listed under the Central Region); and the Canal Zone.

4. *Western Region:*

Address: Francisco Bay Building, Suite 235, 50 Francisco Street, San Francisco, CA 94133.

Consists of: California; Nevada; Arizona; New Mexico; El Paso and Hudspeth Counties (only) in Texas; Hawaii; Guam; Alaska; Washington; Oregon; Colorado; Utah; Wyoming; Montana; Idaho; Nebraska; Kansas; Iowa; Missouri (the counties of Atchinson, Nodaway, Worth, Harrison, Mercer, Putnam, Schuyler, Scotland, Knox, Adair, Sullivan, Grundy, Daviess, Gentry, DeKalb, Andrew, Holt, Buchanan, Clinton, Caldwell, Livingston, Linn, Macon, Shelby, Randolph, Chariton, Carrol, Ray, Clay, Platte, Jackson, Lafayette, Saline, Howard, Boon, Cooper, Pettis, Johnson, Cass, Bates, Henry, St. Clair, Benton, and Morgan); American Somoa; and Wake Island.

[44 FR 42683, July 20, 1979, as amended at 47 FR 10530, Mar. 11, 1982]

§§ 1420.6–1420.7 [Reserved]

§ 1420.8 FMCS deferral to parties' own private factfinding procedures.

(a) The Service will defer to the parties' own privately agreed to factfinding procedure and decline to appoint a Board of Inquiry (BoI) as long as the parties' own procedure meets certain conditions so as to satisfy the

Service's responsibilities under the Act. The Service will decline to appoint a BoI and leave the selection and appointment of a factfinder to the parties to a dispute if both the parties have agreed in writing to their own factfinding procedure which meets the following conditions:

(1) The factfinding procedure must be invoked automatically at a specified time (for example, at contract expiration if no agreement is reached).

(2) It must provide a fixed and determinate method for selecting the impartial factfinder(s).

(3) It must provide that there can be no strike or lockout and no changes in conditions of employment (except by mutual agreement) prior to or during the factfinding procedure and for a period of at least seven days after the factfinding is completed.

(4) It must provide that the factfinder(s) will make a written report to the parties, containing the findings of fact and the recommendations of the factfinder(s) for settling the dispute, a copy of which is sent to the Service. The parties to a dispute who have agreed to such a factfinding procedure should jointly submit a copy of such agreed upon procedure to the appropriate regional office of the Service at as early a date as possible, but in any event prior to the appointment of a BoI by the Service. See §1420.5(f) for the addresses of the regional offices.

(b) Since the Service does not appoint the factfinder under paragraph (a) of this section, the Service cannot pay for such factfinder. In this respect, such deferral by the Service to the parties' own factfinding procedure is different from the use of stipulation agreements between the parties which give to the Service the authority to select and appoint a factfinder at a later date than the date by which a BoI would have to be appointed under the Act. Under such stipulation agreements by which the parties give the Service authority to appoint a factfinder at a later date, the Service can pay for the factfinder. However, in the deferral to the parties' own factfinding procedure, the parties choose their own factfinder and they pay for the factfinder.

§1420.9 FMCS deferral to parties' own private interest arbitration procedures.

(a) The Service will defer to the parties' own privately agreed to interest arbitration procedure and decline to appoint a Board of Inquiry (BoI) as long as the parties' own procedure meets certain conditions so as to satisfy the Service's responsibilities under the Act. The Service will decline to appoint BoI if the parties to a dispute have agreed in writing to their own interest arbitration procedure which meets the following conditions:

(1) The interest arbitration procedure must provide that there can be no strike or lockout and no changes in conditions of employment (except by mutual agreement) during the contract negotiation covered by the interest arbitration procedure and the period of any subsequent interest arbitration proceedings.

(2) It must provide that the award of the arbitrator(s) under the interest arbitration procedure is final and binding on both parties.

(3) It must provide a fixed and determinate method for selecting the impartial interest arbitrator(s).

(4) The interest arbitration procedure must provide for a written award by the interest arbitrator(s).

(b) The parties to a dispute who have agreed to such an interest arbitration procedure should jointly submit a copy of their agreed upon procedure to the appropriate regional office of the Service at as early a date as possible, but in any event prior to the appointment of BoI by the Service. See §1420.5(f) for the addresses of regional offices.

These new regulations are a part of the Service's overall approach to implementing the health care amendments of 1974 in a manner consistent with the Congressional intent of promoting peaceful settlements of labor disputes at our vital health care facilities. The Service will work with the parties in every way possible to be flexible and to tailor its approach so as to accommodate the needs of the parties in the interest of settling the dispute. This was the motivating principle behind these new regulations which permit input by the parties to the Board of Inquiry selection and allow the parties to set up

their own factfinding or arbitration procedures in lieu of the Board of Inquiry procedure. We encourage the parties, both unions and management, to take advantage of these and other options and to work with the Service to tailor their approach and procedures to fit the needs of their bargaining situations.

PART 1425—MEDIATION ASSISTANCE IN THE FEDERAL SERVICE

Sec.
1425.1 Definitions.
1425.2 Notice to the Service of agreement negotiations.
1425.3 Functions of the Service under title VII of the Civil Service Reform Act.
1425.4 Duty of parties.
1425.5 Referral to FSIP.
1425.6 Use of third-party mediation assistance.

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 581(8), 7119, 7134.

SOURCE: 45 FR 62798, Sept. 22, 1980, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1425.1 Definitions.

As used in this part:

(a) *The Service* means Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

(b) *Party* or *Parties* means (1) any appropriate activity, facility, geographical subdivision, or combination thereof, of an agency as that term is defined in 5 U.S.C. 7103(3), or (2) a labor organization as that term is defined in 5 U.S.C. 7103(4).

(c) *Third-party mediation assistance* means mediation by persons other than FMCS commissioners.

(d) *Provide its services* means to make the services and facilities of the Service available either on its own motion or upon the special request of one or both of the parties.

§ 1425.2 Notice to the Service of agreement negotiations.

(a) In order that the Service may provide assistance to the parties, the party initiating negotiations shall file a notice with the FMCS Notice Processing Unit, 2100 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20427, at least 30 days prior to the expiration or modification date of an existing agreement, or 30 days prior to the reopener date of an existing agreement. In the case of an initial agreement the notice shall be filed within 30 days after commencing negotiations.

(b) Parties engaging in mid-term or impact and/or implementation bargaining are encouraged to send a notice to FMCS if assistance is desired. Such notice may be sent by either party or may be submitted jointly. In regard to such notices a brief listing should be general in nature e.g., smoking policies, or Alternative Work Schedules (AWS).

(c) Parties requesting grievance mediation must send a request signed by both the union and the agency involved. Receipt of such request does not commit FMCS to provide its services. FMCS has the discretion to determine whether or not to perform grievance mediation, as such service may not be appropriate in all cases.

(d) The guidelines for FMCS grievance mediation are:

(1) The parties shall submit a joint request, signed by both parties requesting FMCS assistance. The parties agree that grievance mediation is a supplement to, and not a substitute for, the steps of the contractual grievance procedure.

(2) The grievant is entitled to be present at the grievance mediation conference.

(3) Any times limits in the parties labor agreement must be waived to permit the grievance to proceed to arbitration should mediation be unsuccessful.

(4) Proceedings before the mediator will be informal and rules of evidence do not apply. No record, stenographic or tape recordings of the meetings will be made. The mediators notes are confidential and content shall not be revealed.

(5) The mediator shall conduct the mediation conference utilizing all of the customary techniques associated with mediation including the use of separate caucuses.

(6) The mediator had no authority to compel resolution of the grievance.

(7) In the event that no settlement is reached during the mediation conference, the mediator may provide the parties either in separate or joint session with an oral advisory opinion.

(8) If either party does not accept an advisory opinion, the matter may then proceed to arbitration in the manner form provided in their collective bargaining agreement. Such arbitration hearings will be held as if the grievance mediation effort had not taken place. Nothing said or done by the parties or the mediator during the grievance mediation session can be used during arbitration proceedings.

(9) When the parties choose the FMCS grievance mediation procedure, they have agreed to abide by these guidelines established by FMCS, and it is understood that the parties and the grievant shall hold FMCS and the mediator appointed by the Service to conduct the mediation conference harmless of any claim of damages arising from the mediation process.

FMCS FORM F-53
REVISED 5-92

Form Approved
OMB No. 3076-0005
Exp. NOV. 1997

FEDERAL SECTOR LABOR RELATIONS
NOTICE TO FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE

MAIL TO: NOTICE PROCESSING UNIT
FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE
2100 K STREET N.W.
WASHINGTON D.C. 20427

THIS NOTICE IS IN REGARD TO: (MARK "X")

(1) ☐ AN INITIAL CONTRACT (INCLUDE FLRA CERTIFICATION NUMBER) #_____
☐ A CONTRACT REOPENER REOPENER DATE ____/____/____
☐ THE EXPIRATION OF AN EXISTING AGREEMENT EXPIRATION DATE: ____/____/____

(2) ☐ *OTHER REQUESTS FOR THE ASSISTANCE OF FMCS IN BARGAINING* *(MARK "X")*
SPECIFY TYPE OF ISSUE(S):

(3) ☐ *REQUEST FOR GRIEVANCE MEDIATION (SEE ITEM # 10)* *(MARK "X")*
ISSUE(S):

(4) NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY | NAME OF SUBDIVISION OR COMPONENT, IF ANY
STREET ADDRESS OF AGENCY | CITY | STATE | ZIP
AGENCY OFFICIAL TO BE CONTACTED | AREA CODE & PHONE NUMBER

(5) NAME OF NATIONAL UNION OR PARENT BODY | NAME AND / OR LOCAL NUMBER
STREET ADDRESS | CITY | STATE | ZIP
UNION OFFICIAL TO BE CONTACTED | AREA CODE & PHONE NUMBER

LOCATION OF NEGOTIATIONS OR WHERE MEDIATION WILL BE HELD
(6) STREET ADDRESS | CITY | STATE | ZIP

(7) APPROX. # OF EMPLOYEES IN BARGAINING UNIT(S) >> | IN ESTABLISHMENT >>

(8) THIS NOTICE OR REQUEST IS FILED ON BEHALF OF (MARK "X") ☐ UNION ☐ AGENCY

(9) NAME AND TITLE OF OFFICIAL(S) SUBMITTING THIS NOTICE OR REQUEST | AREA CODE & PHONE NUMBER
STREET ADDRESS | CITY | STATE | ZIP

*FOR GRIEVANCE MEDIATION, THE SIGNATURES OF BOTH PARTIES ARE REQUIRED:**

(10) SIGNATURE (AGENCY) | DATE | SIGNATURE (UNION) | DATE

*Receipt of this form does not commit FMCS to offer its services. Receipt of this form will not be acknowledged in writing by FMCS. While use of this form is voluntary, its use will facilitate FMCS service to respondents. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including time for reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to FMCS Division of Administrative Services, Washington, D.C. 20427, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project. Washington, D.C. 20603

For Instructions, see back.

INSTRUCTIONS

Complete this form, please follow these instructions.

In *item #1.* Check the block and give the date if this is for an existing agreement or reopener. The FLRA Certification number should be provided if available. If not known, please leave this item blank. Absence of this number will not impede processing of the Form.

In *item #2.* If other *assistance* in bargaining is requested please specify: e.g.; impact and

implementation bargaining (I&I) and/or mid-term bargaining and provide a brief listing of issues, e.g. Smoking, Alternative Work Schedules (AWS), ground rules, office moves, or if desired, add attached list. This is only if such issues are known at time of filing.

In *item #3*. Please specify the issues to be considered for grievance mediation. Please refer to FMCS guidelines for processing these requests. Please make certain that both parties sign this request!

In *item #4*. List the name of the agency, as follows: The Department, and the subdivision or component. For example: U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS, or U.S. Dept. of Army, Aberdeen Proving Ground, or Illinois National Guard, Springfield Chapter. If an independent agency is involved, list the agency, e.g. Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC) and any subdivision or component, if appropriate.

In *item #5*. List the name of the union and its subdivision or component as follows: e.g. Federal Employees Union, Local 23 or Government Workers Union, Western Joint Council.

In *item #6*. Provide the area where the negotiation or mediation will most likely take place, with zip code, e.g., Washington, D.C. 20427. The zip code is important because our cases are routed by computer through zip code, and mediators are assigned on that basis.

In *item #7*. Only the *approximate* number of employees in the bargaining unit and establishment are requested. The establishment is the entity referred to in item 4 as name of subdivision or component, if any.

In *item #8*. The filing need only be sent by one party unless it is a request for grievance mediation. (See item 9.)

In *item #9*. Please give the title of the official, phone number, address, and zip code.

In *item #10*. Both labor and management signatures are required for grievance mediation requests.

NOTICE

Send original to F.M.C.S.
Send one copy to opposite party.
Retain one copy for party filing notice.

[60 FR 2509, Jan. 10, 1995]

§ 1425.3 Functions of the Service under title VII of the Civil Service Reform Act.

(a) The service may provide its assistance in any negotiation dispute when earnest efforts by the parties to reach agreement through direct negotiation have failed to resolve the dispute. When the existence of a negotiation dispute comes to the attention of the Service through a specific request for mediation from one or both of the parties, through notification under the provisions of § 1425.2, or otherwise, the Service will examine the information concerning the dispute and if, in its opinion, the need for mediation exists, the Service will use its best efforts to assist the parties to reach agreement.

(b) The Service may, at the outset of negotiations or at any time in the dispute, set time limits on its participation. If no settlement of the dispute is reached by the expiration of the time limits, the Service may make suggestions for settlement to the parties. If suggestions for settlement made by the Service are not accepted by the parties within time limits set by the Service, the matter may be referred to the Federal Services Impasses Panel (FSIP).

§ 1425.4 Duty of parties.

It shall be the duty of the parties to participate fully and promptly in any meetings arranged by the Service for the purpose of assisting in the settlement of a negotiation dispute.

§ 1425.5 Referral to FSIP.

If the mediation process has been completed and the parties are at a negotiation impasse, the Service or the parties may request consideration of the matter by the Federal Services Impasses Panel. The Service shall not refer a case to FSIP until the mediation process has been exhausted and the parties are at a negotiation impasse.

§ 1425.6 Use of third-party mediation assistance.

If the parties should mutually agree to third-party mediation assistance other than that of the Service, both parties shall immediately inform the Service in writing of this agreement. Such written communication shall be filed with the regional director of the region in which the negotiation is scheduled, and shall state what alternate assistance the parties have agreed to use.

PART 1430—FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Sec.
1430.1 Scope and purpose.

1430.2 Definitions.
1430.3 Establishment of advisory committees.
1430.4 Filing of advisory committee charter.
1430.5 Termination of advisory committees.
1430.6 Renewal of advisory committees.
1430.7 Application of the Freedom of Information Act to advisory committee functions.
1430.8 Advisory committee meetings.
1430.9 Agency management of advisory committees.

AUTHORITY: Pub. L. 92–463, 86 Stat. 770 (5 U.S.C. App.).

SOURCE: 39 FR 9433, Mar. 11, 1974, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1430.1 Scope and purpose.

(a) This part contains the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service's regulations implementing section 8(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92–463, 86 Stat. 770, (5 U.S.C. App.)), which requires each agency head to establish uniform guidelines and management controls for the advisory committees. These regulations supplement the Government-wide guidelines issued jointly by the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Justice, and should be read in conjunction with them.

(b) The regulations provided under this part do not apply to statutorily created or established advisory committees of the Service, to the extent that such statutes have specific provisions different from those promulgated herein.

§ 1430.2 Definitions.

For the purposes of this part:

(a) The term *Act* means the Federal Advisory Committee Act;

(b) The term *advisory committee* means any committee, board, commission, counsel, conference, panel, task force, or other similar group, or any subgroup or subcommittee thereof which is:

(1) Established by statute or reorganization, plan, or

(2) Established or utilized by the President, or

(3) Established or utilized by one or more agencies or officers of the Federal Government in the interest of obtaining advice or recommendations for the President or one or more agencies of the Federal Government, except that such term excludes:

(i) The Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations;

(ii) The Commission on Government Procurement; and

(iii) Any committee which is composed wholly of full-time officers or employees of the Federal Government.

(c) The term *agency* has the same meaning as in 5 U.S.C. 552(1);

(d) The term *committee management officer* means the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service employee or his delegee, officially designated to perform the advisory committee management functions delineated in this part;

(e) The term *Service* means the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service;

(f) The term *OMB* means the Office of Management and Budget;

(g) The term *Director* means the Director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service;

(h) The term *secretariat* means the OMB Committee Management Secretariat.

§ 1430.3 Establishment of advisory committees.

(a) *Guidelines for establishing advisory committees.* The guidelines in establishing advisory committees are as follows:

(1) No advisory committee shall be established if its functions are being or could be performed by an agency or an existing committee;

(2) The purpose of the advisory committee shall be clearly defined;

(3) The membership of the advisory committee shall be fairly balanced in terms of the points of view represented and the committee's functions;

(4) There shall be appropriate safeguards to assure that an advisory committee's advice and recommendations will not be inappropriately influenced by any special interests; and

(5) At least once a year, a report shall be prepared for each advisory committee, describing the committee's membership, functions, and actions.

(b) *Advisory committees established by the Service not pursuant to specific statutory authority.* (1) Advisory committees

established by the Service not pursuant to specific statutory authority may be created by the Director after consultation with the secretariat.

(2) When the Director determines that such an advisory committee needs to be established, he shall notify the secretariat of his determination and shall inform the secretariat of the nature and purpose of the committee, the reasons why the committee is needed, and the inability of any existing agency or committee to perform the committee's functions.

(3) After the secretariat has determined that establishment of such a committee is in conformance with the Act and has so informed the Director, the Director shall prepare a certification of the committee, stating the committee's nature and purpose, and that it is established in the public interest. That certification shall be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(c) *Advisory committees created pursuant to Presidential directive.* Advisory committees established by Presidential directive are those created pursuant to Executive Order, executive memorandum, or reorganization plan. The Director shall create such committees in accordance with the provisions of the Presidential directive and shall follow the provisions of this part, to the extent they are not inconsistent with the directive.

(d) *Advisory committees created pursuant to specific statutory authority.* The Director shall create advisory committees established pursuant to specific statutory authority in accordance with the provisions of the statute and shall follow the provisions of this part, to the extent they are not inconsistent with the statute: *Provided, however,* That the Director need not utilize the procedures described in paragraph (b) of this section.

(e) *Advisory committees established by persons outside the Federal Government, but utilized by the Service to obtain advice or opinion.* In utilizing such committees, the Director shall follow the provisions of this part and the requirements of the Act. Such committees, to the extent they are utilized by the Service, shall be considered, for the purposes of this part, to be advisory committees established by the Service.

§ 1430.4 Filing of advisory committee charter.

(a) *Filing charter with Director.* Before an advisory committee takes any action or conducts any business, a charter shall be filed with the Director, the standing committees of Congress with legislative jurisdiction over the Service, and the Library of Congress. Except for a committee in existence on the effective date of the Act, or when authorized by statute, Presidential directive, or by the secretariat, such charter shall be filed no earlier than 30 days after publication of the committee's certification in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(b) *Charter information.* A charter shall contain the following information:

(1) The committee's official designation;

(2) The committee's objectives and scope of activity;

(3) The period of time necessary for the committee to carry out its purposes;

(4) The agency or official to whom the advisory committee reports;

(5) The agency responsible for providing necessary support;

(6) A description of the committee's duties;

(7) The estimated number and frequency of committee meetings;

(8) The estimated annual operating costs in dollars and man-years;

(9) The committee's termination date, if less than two years; and

(10) The date the charter is filed.

(c) *Preparation and filing of initial charter.* Responsibility for preparation of the initial committee charter shall be with the head of the appropriate program within the Service, in cooperation with the committee management officer. The Director of Administration shall have responsibility for assuring the appropriate filings of such charters.

§ 1430.5 Termination of advisory committees.

(a) All nonstatutory advisory committees including those authorized, but not specifically created by statute, shall terminate no later than 2 years after their charters have been filed, unless renewed as provided in § 1430.6.

(b) The charter of any committee in existence on the date the Act became effective (January 5, 1973) shall terminate no later than January 5, 1975, unless renewed, as provided in §1430.6.

(c) Advisory committees specifically created by statute shall terminate as provided in the establishing statute.

§ 1430.6 Renewal of advisory committees.

(a) Renewal of advisory committees not created pursuant to specific statutory authority.

(1) The Director may renew an advisory committee not created pursuant to specific statutory authority after consultation with the secretariat.

(2) When the Director determines that such an advisory committee should be renewed, he shall so advise the secretariat within 60 days prior to the committee's termination date and shall state the reasons for his determination.

(3) Upon concurrence of the secretariat, the Director shall publish notice of the renewal in the FEDERAL REGISTER and cause a new charter to be prepared and filed in accordance with the provisions of §1430.3.

(b) Renewal of advisory committees established pursuant to specific statutory authority. The Director may renew advisory committees established pursuant to specific statutory authority through the filing of a new charter at appropriate 2-year intervals.

(c) No advisory committee shall take any action or conduct any business during the period of time between its termination date and the filing of its renewal charter.

§ 1430.7 Application of the Freedom of Information Act to advisory committee functions.

(a) Subject to 5 U.S.C. 552, the records, reports, transcripts, minutes, appendices, working papers, drafts, studies, agenda, and other documents which are made available to or are prepared for or by an advisory committee shall be available to the public.

(b) Advisory committee meeting conducted in accordance with §1430.7 may be closed to the public when discussing a matter that is of a 5 U.S.C. 552(b) nature, whether or not the discussion centers on a written document.

(c) No record, report, or other document prepared for or by an advisory committee may be withheld from the public unless the Office of the General Counsel determines that the document is properly within the exemptions of 5 U.S.C. 552(b). No committee meeting, or portion thereof, may be closed to the public unless the Office of the General Counsel determines in writing, prior to publication of the meeting in the FEDERAL REGISTER that such a closing is within the exemptions of 5 U.S.C. 552(b).

§ 1430.8 Advisory committee meetings.

(a) *Initiation of meetings.* (1) Committee meetings may be called by:

(i) The Director or the head of the office most directly concerned with the committee's activities;

(ii) The agency officer referred to in paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section, and the committee chairman, jointly; or

(iii) The committee chairman, with the advance approval of the officer referred to in paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section.

(2) The Service's committee management officer shall be promptly informed that a meeting has been called.

(b) *Agenda.* Committee meetings shall be based on agenda approved by the officer referred to in paragraph (a)(1) of this section. Such agenda shall note those items which may involve matters which have been determined by the Office of the General Counsel as coming within the exemptions to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552(b).

(c) *Notice of meetings.* (1) Notice of advisory committee meetings shall be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER at least 7 days before the date of the meeting, irrespective of whether a particular meeting will be open to the public. Notice to interested persons shall also be provided in such other reasonable ways as are appropriate under the circumstances, such as press release or letter. Responsibility for preparation of FEDERAL REGISTER and other appropriate notice shall be with the officer referred to in paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

(2) Notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER shall state all pertinent information related to a meeting and shall be published at least 7 days prior to a meeting.

(d) *Presence of agency officer or employee at meetings.* No committee shall meet without the presence of the officer referred to in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, or his delegate. At his option the officer or employee may elect to chair the meeting.

(e) *Minutes.* Detailed minutes shall be kept of all committee meetings and shall be certified by the chairman of the advisory committee as being accurate.

(f) *Adjournment.* The officer or employee referred to in paragraph (a)(1) of this section may adjourn a meeting at any time he determines it in the public interest to do so.

(g) *Public access to committee meetings.* All advisory committee meetings shall be open to the public, except when the Office of the General Counsel determines, in writing, and states his reasons therefor prior to FEDERAL REGISTER notice, that a meeting or any part thereof, is concerned with matters related to the exemptions provided in the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552(b). In such instances, those portions of a committee meeting which come within the section 552(b) exemptions may be closed to the public.

(h) *Public participation in committee procedures.* Interested persons shall be permitted to file statements with advisory committees. Subject to reasonable committee procedures, interested persons may also be permitted to make oral statements on matters germane to the subjects under consideration at the committee meeting.

§ 1430.9 Agency management of advisory committees.

Consistent with the other provisions of this part, the Service's advisory committee management officer shall:

(a) Exercise control and supervision over the establishment, procedures, and accomplishments of advisory committees established by the Service;

(b) Assemble and maintain the reports, records, and other papers of advisory committees, during their existence;

(c) Carry out, with the concurrence of the Office of the General Counsel, the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, as those provisions apply to advisory committees;

(d) Have available for public inspection and copying all pertinent documents of advisory committees which are within the purview of the Freedom of Information Act; and

(e) When transcripts have been made of advisory committee meetings, provide for such transcripts to be made available to the public at actual cost of duplication, except where prohibited by contractual agreements entered into prior to January 5, 1973, the effective date of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

PART 1440—ARBITRATION OF PESTICIDE DATA DISPUTES

Sec.

1440.1 Arbitration of pesticide data disputes.

APPENDIX TO PART 1440—FIFRA ARBITRATION RULES

AUTHORITY: Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136 *et seq.*), as amended, Pub. L. 95–396, 92 Stat. 819.

SOURCE: 45 FR 55395, Aug. 19, 1980, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1440.1 Arbitration of pesticide data disputes.

(a) Persons requesting the appointment of an arbitrator under section 3(c)(1)(D)(ii) and section 3(c)(2)(B)(iii) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136, as amended), shall send such requests in writing to the appropriate American Arbitration Association Regional Office. Such requests must include the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the parties to the dispute; issue(s) in dispute, the amount in dollars or any other remedy sought; sufficient facts to show that the statutory waiting period has passed, and the appropriate fee provided in the Fee Schedule.

(b) For the purpose of compliance with the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (hereinafter ''the Act''), the roster of arbitrators maintained by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service shall be

the roster of commercial arbitrators maintained by the American Arbitration Association. Under this Act, arbitrators will be appointed from that roster. The fees of the American Arbitration Association shall apply, and the procedure and rules of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, applicable to arbitration proceedings under the Act, shall be the FIFRA arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association, which are hereby made a part of this regulation.

APPENDIX TO PART 1440—FIFRA ARBITRATION RULES

Section 1

These rules shall apply as published in the FEDERAL REGISTER unless modified by FMCS.

Sec. 2. Definitions

For the purpose of these Rules of Procedure the terms are defined as follows:

(1) *AAA* means the American Arbitration Association.

(2) *Act* or *FIFRA* means the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, 7 U.S.C. 136 *et seq.*

(3) *EPA* means the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

(4) *Arbitrator(s)* means the person or persons appointed to the tribunal constituted by the parties for the settlement of their dispute under these Rules.

(5) *Claimant* means a person asserting a claim for compensation under these Rules or filing a claim concerning joint development of data.

(6) *Compulsory arbitration* means arbitration invoked under the mandatory provisions of section 3(c)(1)(d) or 3(c)(2)(B)(iii) of the Act.

(7) *Voluntary arbitration* means arbitration voluntarily agreed to by the parties to settle a dispute under section 3(c)(1)(d) or 3(c)(2)(B)(iii) of the Act.

(8) *Director* means Director, Registration Division, Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, or any officer or employee of the EPA to whom authority has been or may hereafter be lawfully delegated to act in his stead.

(9) *Administator* means the AAA, its Tribunal Administrators or such officers or committees as the AAA may direct.

(10) *Roster* means the Commercial Arbitration Roster of AAA.

(11) *FMCS* or *Service* means the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

(12) *Party* means claimant or respondent.

(13) *Person* means any individual, partnership, association, corporation, or any organized group of persons, whether incorporated or not.

(14) *Respondent* means the person against whom a claim is made under section 3(c)(1)(D) or 3(c)(2)(B)(iii) of the Act.

Terms defined in the Act and not explicitly defined herein are used herein with the meanings given in the Act.

Sec. 3. Initiation of Arbitration

(a) *Under compulsory procedures of FIFRA.* Upon the request of a party qualified under FIFRA section 3(c)(1)(D) or 3(c)(2)(B)(iii) for the appointment of an arbitrator, the Service will appoint an arbitrator in accordance with 29 CFR 1440.1 (a) and these rules. Requests shall be submitted in writing to the appropriate AAA Regional Office and must include the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the parties to the dispute; issues in dispute; the amount in dollars or any other remedy sought; sufficient facts to show that the statutory waiting period has passed; and the appropriate fee as provided in the Fee Schedule.

AAA shall give notice of filing of a request for arbitration to the other party. If he so desires, the party upon whom the demand for arbitration is made may file an answering statement in duplicate with AAA within seven days after notice, in which event he shall simultaneously send a copy of his answer to the other party. If a monetary claim is made in the answer the appropriate fee provided in the Fee Schedule shall be forwarded with the answer. If no answer is filed within the stated time, it will be assumed that the claim is denied. Failure to file an answer shall not operate to delay the arbitration.

(b) *Under a Voluntary Submission.* Parties to any existing dispute may commence an arbitration under these Rules by filing at any AAA Regional Office two (2) copies of a written agreement to arbitrate under these Rules (Submission), signed by the parties. It shall contain a statement of the matter in dispute, the amount of money involved, if any, and the remedy sought, together with the appropriate administrative fee as provided in the Fee Schedule.

Sec. 4. Fixing of Locale

The parties may mutually agree on the locale where the arbitration is to be held. If the locale is not designated within seven days from the date of filing the Demand or Submission the AAA shall have power to determine the locale. Its decision shall be final and binding. If any party requests that the hearing be held in a specific locale and the other party files no objection thereto within seven days after notice of the requests, the locale shall be the one requested.

Sec. 5. Qualification of Arbitrator

Any Arbitrator appointed pursuant to these rules shall be neutral, subject to disqualification for the reasons specified in section 11. If the agreement of the parties names an Arbitrator or specifies any other method of appointing an Arbitrator, or if the parties specifically agree in writing, such Arbitrator shall not be subject to disqualification for said reasons.

Sec. 6. Appointment From Panel

If the parties have not appointed an Arbitrator and have not provided any other method of appointment, the Arbitrator shall be appointed in the following manner. Immediately after the filing of the Request or Submission, the AAA shall submit simultaneously to each party to the dispute an identical list of names of persons chosen from the Panel. Each party to the dispute shall have seven days from the mailing date in which to cross off any names to which he objects, number the remaining names indicating the order of his preference, and return the list to the AAA. If a party does not return the list within the time specified, all persons named therein shall be deemed acceptable. From among the persons who have been approved on both lists, and in accordance with the designated order of mutual preference, the AAA shall invite the acceptance of an Arbitrator to serve, and the Service shall appoint the Arbitrator. If the parties fail to agree upon any of the persons named, or if acceptable Arbitrators are unable to act, or if for any other reason the appointment cannot be made from the submitted lists, the FMCS shall have the power to make the appointment from other members of the Panel without the submission of any additional lists.

Sec. 7. Direct Appointment by Parties

If the agreement of the parties to a Submission names an Arbitrator or specifies a method of appointment of an Arbitrator, that designation or method shall be followed. The notice of appointment, with name and address of such Arbitrator, shall be filed with the AAA by the appointing party. Upon the request of any such appointing party, the AAA shall submit a list of members from the Panel from which the party may, if he so desires, make the appointment.

If the agreement specifies a period of time within which an Arbitrator shall be appointed, and any party fails to make such appointment within that period, the AAA shall make the appointment.

Sec. 8. Appointment of Neutral Arbitrator by Party Appointed Arbitrators

If the parties have appointed their Arbitrators or if either or both of them have been appointed as provided in section 7, and have authorized such Arbitrators to appoint a neutral Arbitrator within a specified time and no appointment is made within such time or any agreed extension thereof, the FMCS shall appoint a neutral Arbitrator who shall act as Chairman.

If no period of time is specified for appointment of the neutral Arbitrator and the parties do not make the appointment within seven days from the date of the appointment of the last party-appointed Arbitrator, the FMCS shall appoint such neutral Arbitrator, who shall act as Chairman.

If the parties have agreed that their Arbitrators shall appoint the neutral Arbitrator from the Panel, the AAA shall furnish to the party-appointed Arbitrators, in the manner prescribed in section 6, a list selected from the Panel, and the appointment of the neutral Arbitrator shall be made as prescribed in such section.

Sec. 9. Number of Arbitrators

If the arbitration agreement does not specify the number of Arbitrators, the dispute shall be heard and determined by one Arbitrator, unless the AAA in its discretion, directs that a greater number of Arbitrators be appointed.

Sec. 10. Notice to Arbitrator of His or Her Appointment

Notice of the appointment of the neutral Arbitrator, whether appointed by the parties, by the AAA or FMCS shall be mailed to the Arbitrator, together with a copy of these Rules, and the signed acceptance of the Arbitrator shall be filed with AAA prior to the opening of the first hearing.

Sec. 11. Disclosure and Challenge Procedure

A person appointed as neutral Arbitrator shall disclose to the AAA any circumstances likely to affect his or her impartiality, including any bias or any financial or personal interest in the result of the arbitration or any past or present relationship with the parties or their counsel. Upon receipt of such information from such Arbitrator or other source, the AAA shall communicate such information to the parties, and, if it deems it appropriate to do so, to the Arbitrator. Thereafter, the AAA shall make a determination whether the Arbitrator should be disqualified. The determination, however, may be appealed to FMCS. The decision of FMCS shall be conclusive.

Sec. 12. Vacancies

If any Arbitrator should resign, die, withdraw, refuse, be disqualified, or be unable to perform the duties of his office, AAA may, on proof satisfactory to it, declare the office vacant. Either party to a compulsory arbitration may request the FMCS to review a declaration of disqualification. Vacancies

shall be filled in accordance with the applicable provision of these Rules and the matter shall be reheard unless the parties shall agree otherwise.

Sec. 13. Commencement of Proceeding

(a) Within 60 days from receipt by the parties of notice of the appointment of an arbitrator, the claimant shall file with AAA:

(1) If appropriate, a detailed statement as to the amount of compensation claimed, the method of computing said amount, and terms of payment, and a list of the test data deemed to be compensable, together with a detailed justification therefore.

(2) A certification as to: (i) Whether any court or tribunal has made determinations for payment by any other persons to claimant for use of the same test data and, if so, identification of the persons against whom the 3(c)(2)(B) determinations were issued and the application for registration for which the test data was used; and (ii) whether any other claims against any persons are pending in arbitration or in any court for use of the same test data and, if so, an identification of the persons against whom the claims are pending and the applications for registration on which the claims are being made.

(3) A detailed statement of the matter in dispute under 3(c)(2)(B).

(b) Within 60 days of service of the documents referred to in subsection (a) the respondent shall file a detailed statement of its position as to the amount of compensation due, method of computation, terms of payment, and list of data deemed to be compensable together with a detailed justification therefore or a detailed statement of the dispute under 3(c)(2)(5). To the extent any portion of the claimant's statement of its claim is not denied or challenged by respondent, it shall be deemed admitted.

(c) After respondent's statement is filed, the arbitrator may, upon request by a party, request the Director to supplement the file with additional information, including copies of relevant test data, information contained in a relevant registration file, a statement as to data requirements for registration, or any other information which the arbitrator deems to be relevant. Upon request by a party or other interested person, the arbitrator shall order protective measures to safeguard and restrict access to confidential business information.

Sec. 14. Filing and Service

(a) All documents or papers required or authorized to be filed, shall be filed with the AAA for transmittal to the arbitrator, except as otherwise herein provided, and shall bear the caption of the case and the docket number. At the same time that a party files documents or papers with the AAA, the party shall serve upon all other parties copies thereof, with a certificate of service on or attached to each document or paper, including those filed with the arbitrator. If a party is represented by counsel or other representative, service shall be made on such representative. Service may be made personally or by regular mail, and if made by mail shall be deemed complete on mailing. If filing is accomplished by mail addressed to the AAA, filing shall be deemed timely if the papers are postmarked on the due date.

(b) All orders, decisions, or other documents made or signed by the arbitrator shall be served immediately upon all parties.

Sec. 15. Time

(a) In computing any period of time prescribed or allowed by these rules, except as otherwise provided, the day of the act, event, or default from which the designated period of time begins to run shall not be included. Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays shall be included in computing the time allowed for the filing of any document or paper, except that when such time expires on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, such period shall be extended to include the next following business day.

(b) When by these rules or by order of the arbitrators, an act is required or allowed to be done at or within a specified time, the arbitrator or AAA for cause shown may at any time in their discretion (1) with or without motion or notice, order the period enlarged if request therefore, which may be made *ex parte,* is made before the expiration of the period originally prescribed or as extended by a previous order, or (2) on motion made after the expiration of the specified period, permit the act to be done where the failure to act was the result of excusable neglect or other good cause.

Sec. 16. Communication with Arbitrator and Serving of Notices

(a) There shall be no communication between the parties and a neutral arbitrator other than at oral hearings. Any other oral or written communications from the parties to the arbitrator shall be directed to the AAA for transmittal to the arbitrator.

(b) Each party to an agreement which provides for arbitration under these Rules shall be deemed to have consented that any papers, notices or process necessary or proper for the initiation or continuation of an arbitration under these Rules and for any court action in connection therewith or for the entry of judgment on any award made thereunder may be served upon such party by mail addressed to such party or his attorney at his last known address or by personal service, within or without the State wherein the arbitration is to be held (whether such party be within or without the United States

of America): *Provided*, That reasonable opportunity to be heard with regard thereto has been granted such party.

Sec. 17. Time of Award

The award shall be made promptly by the arbitrator and, unless otherwise agreed by the parties, or specified by law, no later than thirty days from the date of closing the hearings, or if oral hearings have been waived, from the date of transmitting the final statements and proofs to the arbitrator.

Sec. 18. Appearances

(a) Parties may appear in person or by counsel or other representative. Persons who appear as counsel or in a representative capacity must conform to the standards of ethical conduct required of practitioners before the courts of the United States.

(b) Any party to the proceeding who, after being duly notified and without good cause being shown fails to appear at a prehearing conference or fails to respond to correspondence, shall be deemed to have waived his rights with respect thereto and shall be subject to such orders or determinations with respect thereto as the arbitrator shall make. The failure of a party to appear at a hearing shall constitute a waiver of the right to present evidence at such hearing. Where either party fails to appear at a hearing, the arbitrator shall require the presentation by the present party of such evidence as he deems necessary to prepare a decision in conformity with the requirements of the act.

(c) Any person having a direct interest in the arbitration is entitled to attend hearings. The arbitrator shall otherwise have the power to require the exclusion of any witness, other than a party or other essential person, during the testimony of any other witness. It shall be discretionary with the arbitrator to determine the propriety of the attendance of any other person.

Sec. 19. Consolidation and Severance

(a) The AAA may with agreement of all parties consolidate any matters at issue in two or more proceedings docketed under these Rules of Procedure where there exist common parties, common questions of fact and law, and where such consolidation would expedite or simplify consideration of the issues. Consolidation may also be effected where separate claims for use of the same test data are made against different respondents. The arbitrator who presides over the consolidated proceeding shall be chosen in accordance with section 3, *supra*.

(b) The arbitrator may, by motion or *sua sponte*, for good cause shown order any proceeding severed with respect to some or all parties or issues.

Sec. 20. Protection of Confidential Information

(a) The arbitrator shall make such orders as required to protect the secrecy of confidential information or documents such as review *in camera*.

(b) The arbitrator shall impose a sanction against any party who violates an order issued under this section. Such sanction may include an award against the offending party.

Sec. 21. Scheduling of Hearing

(a) After consideration of the convenience of the parties, the AAA shall serve upon the parties a notice of hearing setting a time and place for such hearing.

(b) Except for good cause shown, no request for postponement of a hearing will be granted. Such request must be received in writing at least a day in advance of the time set for the hearing. In case of postponement, the hearing shall be rescheduled for a date as early as circumstances will permit.

Sec. 22. Optional Accelerated Procedure

(a) In claims involving $25,000 or less, the parties may elect, prior to commencement of hearing, to have the claim processed under an expedited procedure. If no specific amount of claim is stated, a case will be considered to fall within this rule if the amount which the claimant represents in writing that it could recover as a result of any arbitrator's decision favorable to it does not exceed $25,000. Upon such election, a case shall then be processed under this rule unless the respondent objects and shows good cause why the substantive nature of the dispute requires processing under the regular procedures. In cases proceeding under this rule, the parties have waived discovery and briefs.

(b) The arbitrator shall schedule the dispute for hearing within thirty (30) days of service of notice to the parties that the dispute will be governed by this accelerated procedure, unless either party requests that the case be submitted without hearing under section 19.

(c) Written decision by the arbitrators in cases proceeding under this rule normally will be short and contain summary findings of fact and conclusions only. The arbitrator shall render such decisions promptly, but in no event later than thirty days after the dispute is ready for decision.

Sec. 23. Discovery

(a) Either party may move for permission to serve written interrogatories and requests for production of documents upon the opposing party. The arbitrator shall grant such motion to the extent that such interrogatories and requests are designed to produce relevant evidence and only upon such terms as the arbitrator in his or her discretion considers to be consistent with the objective of

securing a just and inexpensive determination of the dispute without unnecessary delay.

(b) Upon motion by either party, the arbitrator may order a deposition upon a showing of good cause and a finding that the deposition is designed to secure relevant and probative evidence which (1) cannot be obtained by alternative means, or (2) may otherwise not be preserved for presentation at hearing.

(c) If a party fails to comply with an order issued under this section, the arbitrator shall draw inferences adverse to that party in connection with the facts sought to be discovered.

(d) At least thirty days prior to the hearing, each party shall make available to each other party the names of the expert and other witnesses it intends to call, together with a detailed summary of their expected testimony, and copies of all documents and exhibits which the party intends to introduce into evidence. Thereafter, witnesses, documents, or exhibits may be added and narrative summaries of expected testimony amended only upon motion by a party for good cause shown.

Sec. 24. Prehearing Conference

(a) When it appears that such procedure will expedite the proceeding, the arbitrator at any time prior to the commencement of the hearing may request the parties and their counsel or other representative to appear at a conference before him or her to consider:

(i) The possibility of settlement of the case;

(ii) The simplification of issues and stipulation of facts not indispute;

(iii) The necessity or desirability of amending or supplementing documents in the record;

(iv) The possibility of obtaining admissions or stipulations of fact and of documents which will avoid unnecessary proof;

(v) The limitation of the number of expert or other witnesses;

(vi) The setting of a time and place for the hearing, giving consideration to the convenience of all parties and to the public interest; and

(vii) Any other matters as may expedite the disposition of the proceeding.

(b) No transcript of any prehearing conference shall be made unless ordered upon motion of a party or *sua sponte* by the arbitrator. In the absence of a transcript, the arbitrator shall prepare and file a report of the action taken at such conference. Such report shall incorporate any written stipulations or agreements made by the parties, all rulings upon matters considered at such conference, and appropriate orders containing directions to the parties. Such report shall, as appropriate, direct the subsequent course of the proceeding, unless modified by the arbitrators on motion or *sua sponte*.

Sec. 25. Evidence

(a) The arbitrator shall admit all evidence which is relevant, competent, material, not privileged, and not unduly repetitious. The weight to be given evidence shall be determined by its reliability and probative value.

(b) Except as otherwise provided in these Rules of Procedure or by the arbitrator, witnesses shall be examined orally, under oath or affirmation. Parties shall have the right to cross-examine a witness who appears at the hearing provided that such cross-examination is not unduly repetitious.

(c) Except where the arbitrator finds it impracticable, an original and two copies of each exhibit shall be filed at the time the exhibit is offered into evidence and a copy shall be furnished to each party. A true copy of an exhibit may be substituted for the original.

(d) Official notice may be taken of any matter judicially noticed in the Federal courts. The parties shall be given adequate opportunity to show that such facts are erroneously noticed.

Sec. 26. Order of Proceedings

(a) Hearing shall be opened by the filing of the oath of the arbitrator, and by the recording of the place, time and date of the hearing, the presence of the arbitrator, parties, and counsel.

(b) The arbitrator may, at the beginning of the hearing, ask for statements clarifying the issues involved. The claimant shall then present his claim and proofs and his witnesses. The respondent shall then present his response and proofs and his witnesses. The arbitrator may in his descretion vary this procedure but he or she shall afford full and equal opportunity to all parties for the presentation of any material or relevant proofs.

Sec. 28. Burden of Presentation; Burden of Persuasion

The claimant shall have the burden of going forward to establish his entitlement to an amount of compensation that respondent should pay for use of the test data relied upon. Each matter of controversy shall be decided by the arbitrator upon a preponderance of the evidence.

Sec. 29. Stenographic Record

Any party may request a stenographic record by making arrangements for same through the AAA. If such transcript is agreed by the parties to be, or in appropriate cases determined by the arbitrator to be, the official record of the proceeding, it must be made available to the arbitrator, and to the other party for inspection, at a time and place determined by the arbitrator. The

total cost of such a record shall be shared equally by those parties that order copies.

Sec. 30. Filing of Briefs, Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, and Proposed Order

Unless otherwise ordered by the arbitrator, each party may within thirty days after delivery of the transcript of a hearing to the arbitrator as provided in section 29, file with AAA and serve upon all other parties a brief together with references to relevant exhibits and the record. Within Fifteen days thereafter each party may file a reply brief concerning matters contained in the opposing brief. Oral argument may be had at the discretion of the arbitrator.

Sec. 31. Closing of Hearings

The Arbitrator shall inquire of all parties whether they have any further proofs to offer or witnesses to be heard. Upon receiving negative replies, the arbitrator shall declare the hearings closed and the time and date shall be recorded. If briefs or other documents are to be filed, the hearings shall be declared closed as of the final date set by the arbitrator for filing with the AAA. The time limit within which the Arbitrator is required to make the award shall commence to run, in the absence of other agreement by the parties, upon the closing of the hearings.

Sec. 32. Arbitrators' Decision

(a) The arbitrator shall as soon as practicable after the filing of briefs evaluate the record and prepare and file a decision. The decision shall contain findings of fact and conclusions regarding all issues in dispute as well as reasons therefore.

(b) The decision shall contain a determination as to the compensation, if any respondent must pay to claimant, or other remedy as appropriate, the method of payment, and may fix such other terms and conditions as may be reasonable under the circumstances, including the furnishing of a bond or other guarantee of payment by the respondent to the claimant.

Sec. 33. Reopening of Hearings

(a) The hearings may be reopened by the arbitrator on his or her own motion, or upon application of a party at any time before the award is made. If the reopening of the hearings would prevent the making of the award within the specific time agreed upon by the parties in the contract out of which the controversy has arisen, the matter may not be reopened, unless the parties agree upon the extension of such time limit. When no specific date is fixed, the arbitrator may reopen the hearings, and the arbitrator shall have thirty days from the closing of the reopened hearings within which to make an award.

(b) A motion to reopen a hearing to take further evidence, to rehear or reargue any matter related to such proceeding, or to reconsider the arbitrator's decision, must be made by motion in writing to the arbitrator in accordance with these Rules of Procedure. Every such motion must state the specific grounds upon which relief is sought.

(c) A motion to reopen a hearing for the purpose of taking further evidence may be filed at any time prior to the issuance of the arbitrator's decision. Such motion shall state briefly the nature and purpose of the evidence to be adduced, shall show that such evidence is not cumulative, and shall set forth a good reason why such evidence was not adduced at a hearing.

(d) Motions to modify the arbitrator's decision shall be filed within 30 days after the date of service of the decision. Such motion must state specifically one of the following grounds for modification:

1. There was a miscalculation of figures or a mistake in the description of any person, thing or property referred to in the award; or

2. The arbitrators have awarded upon a matter not submitted to them and the award may be corrected without affecting the merits of the decision upon the issues submitted; or

3. The award is imperfect in a matter of form, not affecting the merits of the controversy.

Sec. 34. Award Upon Settlement

If the parties settle their dispute during the course of the arbitration, the arbitrator, upon their request, may set forth the terms of the agreed settlement in an award.

Sec. 35. Delivery of Award to Parties

Parties shall accept as legal delivery of the award the placing of the award or a true copy thereof in the mail by the AAA, addressed to such party at his last known address or to his attorney, or personal service of the award, or the filing of the award in any manner which may be prescribed by law.

Sec. 36. Release of Documents for Judicial Proceedings

The AAA shall, upon the written request of a party, furnish to such party, at his or her expense, certified facsimiles of any papers in the AAA's possession that may be required in judicial proceedings relating to the arbitration.

Sec. 37. Application to Court

(a) No judicial proceedings by a party relating to the subject matter of the arbitration shall be deemed a waiver of the party's right to arbitrate.

(b) Neither the AAA nor FMCS is a necessary party in judicial proceedings relating to the arbitration.

(c) Parties to these Rules shall be deemed to have consented that judgment upon the arbitration award may be entered in any Federal or State Court having jurisdiction thereof.

Sec. 38. Administrative Fees

As a nonprofit organization, the AAA shall prescribe an administrative fee schedule and a refund schedule to compensate it for the cost of providing administrative services. The schedule in effect at the time of filing or the time of refund shall be applicable.

The administrative fees shall be advanced by the initiating party or parties, subject to final appointment by the arbitrator in his award.

When a matter is withdrawn or settled, the refund shall be made in accordance with the refund schedule.

The AAA, in the event of extreme hardship on the part of any party, may defer or reduce the administrative fee.

Sec. 39. Fee When Oral Hearings Are Waived

Where all oral hearings are waived the Administrative Fee Schedule shall apply.

Sec. 40. Expenses

The expenses of witnesses for either side shall be paid by the party producing such witnesses.

The cost of the stenographic record, if any is made, and all transcripts thereof, shall be prorated equally among all parties ordering copies unless they shall otherwise agree and shall be paid for by the responsible parties directly to the reporting agency.

All other expenses of the arbitration, including required traveling and other expenses of the arbitrator and of AAA representatives, and the expenses of any witness or the cost of any proofs produced at the direct request of the arbitrator, shall be borne equally by the parties.

Sec. 41. Arbitrator's Fee

Any arrangement for the compensation of a neutral arbitrator shall be made through the AAA and not directly by him or her with the parties. Where parties cannot agree, AAA shall fix reasonable compensation.

Sec. 42. Deposits

The AAA may require the parties to deposit in advance such sums of money as it deems necessary to defray the expense of the arbitration, including the arbitrator's fee if any, and shall render an accounting to the parties and return any unexpened balance.

Sec. 43. Interpretation and Application of Rules

The arbitrator shall interpret and apply these Rules insofar as they relate to his or her powers and duties. When there is more than one arbitrator and a difference arises among them concerning the meaning or application of any such Rules, it shall be decided by a majority vote. If that is unobtainable, either an arbitrator or a party may refer the question to the AAA for decision. All other Rules shall be interpreted and applied by the AAA. Either party may request that FMCS review any decision of AAA on interpretation or application of these rules.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEE SCHEDULE

The administrative fee of the AAA is based upon the amount of each claim and counterclaim as disclosed when the claim and counterclaim are filed, and is due and payable at the time of filing.

Amount of claim	Fee
Up to $25,000	$500.
$25,000 to $100,000	$600, plus 1% of excess over $25,000.
$100,000 to $200,000	$1350, plus ½% of excess over $100,000.
$200,000 to $5,000,000	$1850, plus ¼% of excess over $200,000.

Where the claim or counter claim exceeds $5 million, an appropriate fee will be determined by the AAA.

When no amount can be stated at the time of filing, the administrative fee is $500, subject to adjustment in accordance with the above schedule as soon as an amount can be disclosed.

If there are more than two parties represented in the arbitration, an additional 10% of the initiating fee will be due for each additional represented party.

Other Service Charges—$50.00 payable by a party causing an adjournment of any scheduled hearing;

$100 payable by a party causing a second or additional adjournment of any scheduled hearing.

$25.00 payable by each party for each hearing after the first hearing which is either clerked by the AAA or held in a hearing room provided by the AAA.

Refund Schedule—If the AAA is notified that a case has been settled or withdrawn before a list of Arbitrators has been sent out, all the fees in excess of $500 will be refunded.

If the AAA is notified that a case has been settled or withdrawn thereafter but before the due date for the return of the first list, two-thirds of the fee in excess of $500.00 will be refunded.

If the AAA is notified that a case is settled or withdrawn thereafter but at least 48 hours before the date and time set for the first hearing, one-half of the fee in excess of $500 will be refunded.

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PART 1450—COLLECTIONS OF CLAIMS OWED THE UNITED STATES

Subpart A—General Provisions

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AUTHORITY: 31 U.S.C. 3701–3719; 5 U.S.C. 5514; 4 CFR parts 101–105; 5 CFR part 550.

SOURCE: 51 FR 24817, July 9, 1986, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General Provisions

§ 1450.1 Definitions.

(a) The term *agency* means the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) or any other agency of the U.S. Government as stated at §1450.20.

(b) The term *agency head* means the Director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

(c) The terms *appropriate agency official* or *designee* mean the Director of the Financial Management Staff of FMCS, or such other official as may be named in the future by the Director of FMCS.

(d) The terms *claim* and *debt* are deemed synonymous and interchangeable. They refer to an amount of money or property which has been determined by an appropriate agency official to be owed to the United States from any person, organization or entity, except another Federal agency.

(e) A debt is considered *delinquent* if it has not been paid by the date specified in the agency's written notification or applicable contractual agreement, unless other satisfactory payment arrangements have been made by that date, or if at any time thereafter the debtor fails to satisfy obligations under a payment agreement with the agency.

(f) The term *referral for litigation* means referral to the Department of justice for appropriate legal proceedings.

§ 1450.2 Exceptions.

(a) Claims arising from the audit of transportation accounts pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3726 shall be determined, collected, compromised, terminated or settled in accordance with regulations published under the authority of 31 U.S.C. 3726 (see 41 CFR part 101–41).

(b) Claims arising out of acquisition contracts subject to the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) shall be determined, collected, compromised, terminated, or settled in accordance with those regulations. (See 48 CFR part 32). If not otherwise provided for in the FAR system, contract claims that have been the subject of a contracting officer's final decision in accordance with section 6(a) of the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 605)(a)), may be determined, collected, compromised, terminated or settled under the provisions of this regulation, except that no additional review of the debt shall be granted beyond that provided by the contracting officer in accordance with the provisions of section 6 of the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 (41 U.S.C. 605), and the amount of any interest, administrative charge, or penalty charge shall be subject to the limitations, if any, contained in the contract out of which the claim arose.

(c) Claims based in whole or in part on conduct in violation of the antitrust laws, or in regard to which there is an indication of fraud, presentation of a false claim, or misrepresentation on the part of the debtor or any other party having an interest in the claim, shall be referred to the Department of Justice (DOJ) as only the DOJ has authority to compromise, suspend, or terminate collection action on such claims.

(d) Tax claims are also excluded from the coverage of this regulation.

§ 1450.3 Use of procedures.

Procedures authorized by this regulation (including, but not limited to, disclosure to a consumer reporting agency, contracting for collection services, administrative offset and salary offset) may be used singly or in combination, so long as the requirements of applicable law and regulation are satisfied.

§ 1450.4 Conformance to law and regulations.

The requirements of applicable law (31 U.S.C 3701–3719 and 5 U.S.C. 5514 as amended by Pub. L. 97–365, 96 Stat. 1749) have been implemented in Governmentwide standards:

(a) The Regulations of the Office of Personnel Management (5 CFR part 550),

(b) The Federal Claims Collection Standards issued jointly by the General Accounting Office and the Department of Justice (4 CFR parts 101–105), and

(c) The procedures prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget in Circular A–129 of May 9, 1985.

Not every item in the above described standards has been incorporated or referenced in this regulation. To the extent, however, that circumstances arise which are not covered by the terms stated in this regulation, FMCS will proceed in any actions taken in accordance with applicable requirements found in the sources referred to in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section.

§ 1450.5 Other procedures.

Nothing contained in this regulation is intended to require FMCS to duplicate administrative proceedings required by contract or other laws or regulations.

§ 1450.6 Informal action.

Nothing contained in this regulation is intended to preclude utilization of informal administrative actions or remedies which may be available.

§ 1450.7 Return of property.

Nothing contained in this regulation is intended to deter FMCS from demanding the return of specific property or from demanding, the return of the property or the payment of its value.

§ 1450.8 Omissions not a defense.

The failure of FMCS to comply with any provision in this regulation shall not serve as a defense to the debt.

Subpart B—Administrative Offset—Consumer Reporting Agencies—Contracting for Collection

§ 1450.9 Demand for payment.

Prior to making an administrative offset, demand for payment will be made as stated below:

(a) Written demands shall be made promptly upon a debtor in terms which inform the debtor of the consequences of failure to cooperate. A total of three progressively stronger written demands at not more than 30-day intervals will normally be made unless a response to the first or second demand indicates that a further demand would be futile and the debtor's response does not require rebuttal. In determining the timing of demand letters, FMCS will give due regard to the need to act promptly so that, as a general rule, if necessary to refer the debt to the Department of Justice for litigation, such referral can be made within one year of the agency's final determination of the fact and the amount of the debt. When necessary to protect the Government's interest (for example, to prevent the statute of limitations, 28 U.S.C. 2415, from expiring), written demand may be preceded by other appropriate actions under this subpart including immediate referral for litigation.

(b) The initial demand letter will inform the debtor of:

(1) The basis for the indebtedness and the right of the debtor to request review within the agency;

(2) The applicable standards for assessing interest, penalties, and administrative costs (subpart D of this regulation) and

(3) The date by which payment is to be made, which normally should be not more than 30 days from the date that the initial demand letter was mailed or hand-delivered. FMCS will exercise care to insure that demand letters are mailed or hand-delivered on the same day that they are actually dated. Apart from this, there is no prescribed format for the demand letters.

(c) As appropriate to the circumstances, FMCS may include either in the initial demand letter or in subsequent letters, matters relating to alternative methods of payment, policies with respect to use of consumer reporting agencies and collection services, the agency's intentions with respect to referral of the debt to the Department of Justice for litigation, and, depending on applicable statutory authority, the debtor's entitlement to consideration of waiver.

(d) FMCS will respond promptly to communications from the debtor, within 30 days whenever feasible, and will advise debtor who dispute the debt that they must furnish available evidence to support their contentions.

(e) If, either prior to the initiations of, at any time during, or after completion of the demand cycle, FMCS determines to pursue administrative offset, then the requirements specified in §§ 1450.10 and 1450.11, as applicable, will be met. The availability of funds for offset and the agency determination to purse it release the agency from the necessity of further compliance with paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section. If the agency has not already sent the first demand letter, the agency's written notification of its intent to offset must give the debtor the opportunity to make voluntary payment, a requirement which will be satisfied by compliance with the notice requirements of §§ 1450.10 and 1450.11 as applicable.

§ 1450.10 Collection by administrative offset.

(a) Collection by administrative offset will be undertaken in accordance with these regulations on all claims

which are liquidated or certain in amount, in every instance in which such collection is determined to be feasible and not otherwise prohibited.

(1) For purposes of this section, the term ''administrative offset'' is the same as stated in 31 U.S.C. 3716(a)(1).

(2) Whether collection by administrative offset is feasible is a determination to be made by the agency on a case-by-case basis, in the exercise of sound discretion. FMCS will consider not only whether administrative offset can be accomplished practically, but also whether offset is best suited to further and protect all of the Government's interests. In appropriate circumstances, FMCS may give due consideration to the debtor's financial condition and is not required to use offset in every instance in which there is an available source of funds. FMCS may also consider whether offset would tend to substantially interfere with or defeat the purposes of the program authorizing the payments against which offset is contemplated. For example, under a grant program in which payments are made in advance of the grantee's performance, offset will normally be inappropriate. This concept generally does not apply, however, where payment is in the form of reimbursement.

(b) Before the offset is made, a debtor shall be provided with the following: Written notice of the nature and amount of the debt, and the agency's intention to collect by offset; opportunity to inspect and copy agency records pertaining to the debt; opportunity to obtain review within the agency of the determination of indebtedness; and opportunity to enter into a written agreement with the agency to repay the debt. FMCS may also make requests for offset to other agencies holding funds payable to the debtor, and process requests for offset that are received from other agencies.

(1) FMCS will exercise sound judgment in determining whether to accept a repayment agreement in lieu of offset. The determination will weigh the Government's interest in collecting the debt against fairness to the debtor. If the debt is delinquent and the debtor has not disputed its existence or amount, FMCS will normally accept a repayment agreement in lieu of offset only if the debtor is able to establish that offset would result in undue financial hardship or would be against equity and good conscience.

(2) In cases where the procedural requirements specified in paragraph (b) of this section have previously been provided to the debtor in connection with the same debt under §1450.9, or some other regulatory or statutory authority, such as pursuant to a notice of audit allowance, the agency is not required to duplicate those requirements before taking administrative offset.

(3) FMCS may not initiate administrative offset to collect a debt under 31 U.S.C. 3716 more than 10 years after the Government's right to collect the debt first accrued, unless facts material to the Government's right to collect the debt were not known and could not reasonably have been known by the official or officials of the Government who were charged with the responsibility to discover and collect such debts. When the debt first accrued is to be determined according to existing law, regarding the accrual of debts, such as 28 U.S.C. 2415.

(4) FMCS is not authorized by 31 U.S.C. 3716 to use administrative offset with respect to:

(i) Debts owed by any State or local Governments;

(ii) Debts arising under or payments made under the Social Security Act, the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or the tariff laws of the United States; or

(iii) Any case in which collection of the type of debt involved by administrative offset is explicitly provided for or prohibited by another statute. However, unless otherwise provided by contract or law, debts or payments which are not subject to administrative offset under 31 U.S.C. 3716 may be collected by administrative offset under the common law or other applicable statutory authority.

(5) FMCS may effect administrative offset against a payment to be made to a debtor prior to completion of the procedures required by paragraph (b) of this section if:

(i) Failure to take the offset would substantially prejudice the Government's ability to collect the debt, and

(ii) The time before the payment is to be made does not reasonably permit the completion of those procedures.

Such prior offset must be promptly followed by the completion of those procedures. Amounts recovered by offset but later found not to be owed to the Government shall be promptly refunded.

(6) FMCS will obtain credit reports on delinquent accounts to identify opportunities for administrative offset of amounts due to a delinquent debtor when other collection techniques have been unsuccessful.

(c) Type of hearing or review: (1) For purposes of this section, whenever FMCS is required to provide a hearing or review within the agency, the agency shall provide the debtor with a reasonable opportunity for an oral hearing when:

(i) An applicable statute authorizes or requires the agency to consider waiver of the indebtedness involved, the debtor requests waiver of the indebtedness, and the waiver determination turns on an issue of credibility or veracity; or

(ii) The debtor requests reconsideration of the debt and the agency determines that the question of the indebtedness cannot be resolved by review of the documentary evidence, for example, when the validity of the debt turns on an issue of credibility or veracity.

Unless otherwise required by law, an oral hearing under this section is not required to be a formal evidentiary-type hearing, although the FMCS will carefully document all significant matters discussed at the hearing.

(2) This section does not require an oral hearing with respect to debt collection systems in which determinations of indebtedness or waiver rarely involve issues of credibility or veracity and the agency has determined that review of the written record is ordinarily an adequate means to correct prior mistakes. In administering such a system, the agency is not required to sift through all of the requests received in order to accord oral hearings in those few cases which may involve issues of credibility or veracity.

(3) In those cases where an oral hearing is not required by this section, the agency will make its determination on the request for waiver or reconsideration based upon a ''paper hearing'' that is, a review of the written record.

(d) Appropriate use will be made of the cooperative efforts of other agencies in effecting collection by administrative offset. Generally, FMCS will not refuse to comply with requests from other agencies to initiate administrative offset to collect debts owed to the United States, unless the requesting agency has not complied with the applicable provisions of these standards or the offset would be otherwise contrary to law.

(e) Collection by offset against a judgment obtained by a debtor against the United States shall be accomplished in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3728.

(f) Whenever the creditor agency is not the agency which is responsible for making the payment against which administrative offset is sought, the latter agency shall not initiate the requested offset until it has been provided by the creditor agency with an appropriate written certification that the debtor owes a debt (including the amount) and that full compliance with the provisions of this section has taken place.

(g) When collecting multiple debts by administrative offset, FMCS will apply the recovered amounts to those debts in accordance with the best interests of the United States, as determined by the facts and circumstances of the particular case, paying special attention to applicable statutes of limitations.

§ 1450.11 Administrative offset against amounts payable from Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund.

(a) Unless otherwise prohibited by law, FMCS may request that moneys which are due and payable to a debtor from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund be administratively offset in reasonable amounts in order to collect in one full payment, or a minimal number of payments, debts owed to the United States by the debtor. Such requests shall be made to the appropriate officials of the Office of Personnel Management in accordance with such regulations as may be prescribed by the Director of that Office.

(b) When making a request for administrative offset under paragraph (a)

of this section, FMCS shall include a written certification that:

(1) The debtor owes the United States a debt, including the amount of the debt;

(2) The FMCS has complied with the applicable statutes, regulations, and procedures of the Office of Personnel Management; and

(3) The FMCS has complied with the requirements of §1450.10 of this subpart, including any required hearing or review.

(c) Once FMCS decides to request adminstrative offset under paragraph (a) of this section, it will make the request as soon as practical after completion of the applicable procedures in order that the Office of Personnel Management may identify and ''flag'' the debtor's account in anticipation of the time when the debtor requests or become eligible to receive payments from the Fund. This will satisfy any requirement that offset be initiated prior to expiration of the applicable statute of limitations. At such time as the debtor makes a claim for payments from the Fund, if at least a year has elapsed since the offset request was originally made, the debtor should be permitted to offer a satisfactory payment plan in lieu of offset upon establishing that changed financial circumstances would render the offset unjust.

(d) If FMCS collects part or all of the debt by other means before deductions are made or completed pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section, FMCS shall act promptly to modify or terminate its request for offset under paragraph (a) of this section.

(e) This section does not require or authorize the Office of Personnel Management to review the merits of the FMCS determination with respect to the amount and validity of the debt, its determination as to waiver under an applicable statute, or its determination to provide or not provide a hearing.

§ 1450.12 Collection in installments.

(a) Whenever feasible, and except as otherwise provided by law, debts owed to the United States, together with interest, penalties, and administrative costs as required by this regulation should be collected in full in one lump sum. This is true whether the debt is being collected by administrative offset or by another method, including voluntary payment. However, if the debtor is financially unable to pay the indebtedness in one lump sum, payment may be accepted in regular installments. FMCS will obtain financial statements from debtors who represent that they are unable to pay the debt in one lump sum. If FMCS agrees to accept payment in regular installments it will obtain a legally enforceable written agreement from the debtor which specifies all of the terms of the arrangement and which contains a provision accelerating the debt in the event the debtor defaults. The size and frequency of installment payments should bear a reasonable relation to the size of the debt and the debtor's ability to pay. If possible, the installment payments should be sufficient in size and frequency to liquidate the Government's claim in not more than 3 years. Installment payments of less than $50 per month will be accepted only if justifiable on the grounds of financial hardship or some other reasonable cause.

(b) If the debtor owes more than one debt and designates how a voluntary installment payment is to be applied as among those debts, that designation must be followed. If the debtor does not designate the application of the payment, FMCS will apply payments to various debts in accordance with the best interests of the United States, as determined by the facts and circumstances of the particular case, paying special attention to applicable statutes of limitations.

§ 1450.13 Exploration of compromise.

FMCS may attempt to effect compromise, preferably during the course of personal interviews, in accordance with the standards set forth in part 103 of the Federal Claims Collection Standards (4 CFR part 103).

§ 1450.14 Suspending or termination collection action.

The suspension or termination of collection action shall be made in accordance with the standards set forth in part 104 of the Federal Claims Collection Standards (4 CFR part 104).

§ 1450.15 Referrals to the Department of Justice or the General Accounting Office.

Referrals to the Department of Justice or the General Accounting Office shall be made in accordance with the standards set forth in part 105 of the Federal Claims Collection Standards (4 CFR part 105).

§ 1450.16 Use of consumer reporting agencies.

(a) The term *individual* means a natural person, and the term ''consumer reporting agency'' has the meaning provided in the Federal Claims Collection Act, as amended, at 31 U.S.C. 3701(a)(3) or the Fair Credit Reporting Act, at 15 U.S.C. 1681a(f).

(b) FMCS may disclose to a consumer reporting agency, from a system of records, information that an individual is responsible for a claim if—

(1) Notice required by section 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(e)(4) indicates that information in the system may be disclosed to a consumer reporting agency;

(2) The claim has been reviewed and it is decided that the claim is valid and overdue;

(3) FMCS has notified the individual in writing—

(i) That payment of the claim is overdue;

(ii) That, within not less than 60 days after sending the notice, FMCS intends to disclose to a consumer reporting agency that the individual is responsible for that claim;

(iii) Of the specific information to be disclosed to the consumer reporting agency; and

(iv) Of the rights the individual has to a complete explanation of the claim, to dispute information in the records of the agency about the claim, and to administrative appeal or review of the claim; and

(4) The individual has not—

(i) Repaid or agreed to repay the claim under a written repayment plan that the individual has signed and the agency has agreed to; or

(ii) Filed for review of the claim under paragraph (g) of this section;

(c) FMCS will also—(1) Disclose promptly, to each consumer reporting agency to which the original disclosure was made, a substantial change in the condition or amount of the claim;

(2) Verify or correct promptly information about the claim, on request of a consumer reporting agency for verification of information disclosed; and

(3) Get satisfactory assurances from each consumer reporting agency that they are complying with all laws of the United States related to providing consumer credit information; and assure that

(d) The information disclosed to the consumer reporting agency is limited to (1) Information necessary to establish the identity of the individual, including name, address, and taxpayer identification number;

(2) The amount, status, and history of the claim; and

(3) The agency or program under which the claim arose.

(e) All accounts in excess of $100 that have been delinquent more than 31 days will normally be referred to a consumer reporting agency.

(f) Before disclosing information to a consumer reporting agency FMCS shall take reasonable action to locate an individual for whom the head of the agency does not have a current address to send the notice.

(g) Before disclosing information to a consumer reporting agency FMCS shall provide, on request of an individual alleged by the agency to be responsible for the claim, a review of the obligation of the individual including an opportunity for reconsideration of the initial decision on the claim.

(h) Under the same provisions as described above in this section, FMCS may disclose to a credit reporting agency, information relating to a debtor other than a natural person. Such commercial debt accounts are not covered, however, by the Privacy Act.

§ 1450.17 Contracting for collection services.

(a) FMCS has authority to contract for collection services to recover delinquent debts, provided that the following conditions are satisfied;

(1) The authority to resolve disputes, compromise claims, suspend or terminate collection action, and refer the

matter for litigation is retained by the agency;

(2) The contractor shall be subject to the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended to the extent specified in 5 U.S.C. 552a(m), and to applicable Federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to debt collection practices, such as the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. 1692;

(3) The contractor must be required to account strictly for all amounts collected;

(4) The contractor must agree that uncollectible accounts shall be returned with appropriate documentation to enable FMCS to determine whether to pursue collection through litigation or to terminate collection efforts, and

(5) The contractor must agree to provide any data contained in its files relating to paragraphs (a) (1), (2), and (3) of §105.2 of the Federal Claims Collection Standards (4 CFR part 105) upon returning an account to FMCS for subsequent referral to the Department of Justice for litigation.

(b) Funding of collection service contracts: (1) FMCS may fund a collection service contract on a fixed-fee basis, that is, payment of a fixed fee determined without regard to the amount actually collected under the contract. Payment of the fee under this type of contract must be charged to available agency appropriations.

(2) FMCS may also fund a collection service contract on a contingent-fee basis, that is, by including a provision in the contract permitting the contractor to deduct its fee from amounts collected under the contract. The fee should be based on a percentage of the amount collected, consistent with prevailing commercial practice.

(3) FMCS may enter into a contract under paragraph (b)(1) of this section only if and to the extent provided in advance in its appropriation acts or other legislation, except that this requirement does not apply to the use of a revolving fund authorized by statute.

(4) Except as authorized under paragraph (b)(2) of this section, or unless the receipt qualifies as a refund to the appropriation, or unless otherwise specifically provided by law, FMCS must deposit all amounts recovered under collection service contracts (or by agency employees on behalf of the agency) in the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3302.

(c) FMCS will consider the use of collection agencies at any time after the account is 61 days past due. In all cases accounts that are six months or more past due shall be turned over to a collection agency unless referred for litigation or unless arrangements have been made for a workout procedure, or the agency has exercised its authority to write off the debt pursuant to §1450.14.

(d) FMCS will generally not use a collection agency to collect a delinquent debt owed by a currently employed or retired Federal employee, if collection by salary or annuity offset is available.

Subpart C—Salary Offset

§1450.18 Purpose.

This subpart provides the standards to be followed by FMCS in implementing 5 U.S.C. 5514 to recover a debt from the pay account of an FMCS employee, and establishes procedural guidelines to recover debts when the employee's creditor and paying agencies are not the same.

§1450.19 Scope.

(a) *Coverage*. This subpart applies to agencies and employees as defined by §1450.20.

(b) *Applicability*. This subpart and 5 U.S.C. 5514 apply in recovering certain debts by offset, except where the employee consents to the recovery, from the current pay account of that employee. Because it is an administrative offset, debt collection procedures for salary offset which are not specified in U.S.C. 5514 and these regulations should be consistent with the provisions of the Federal Claims Collection Standards (4 CFR parts 101–105).

(1) *Excluded debts or claims*. The procedures contained in this subpart do not apply to debts or claims arising under the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 as amended (26 U.S.C. 1 *et seq.*), the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 301 *et seq.*) or the tariff laws of the United States, or to any case where collection of a debt

by salary offset is explicitly provided for or prohibited by another statute (e.g., travel advances in 5 U.S.C. 5705 and employee training expenses in 5 U.S.C. 4108).

(2) *Waiver requests and claims to the General Accounting Office.* This subpart does not preclude an employee from requesting waiver of a salary overpayment under 5 U.S.C. 5584, 10 U.S.C. 2774, or 32 U.S.C. 716, or in any way questioning the amount or validity of a debt by submitting a subsequent claim to the General Accounting Office in accordance with procedures prescribed by the General Accounting Office. Similarly, in the case of other types of debts, it does not preclude an employee from requesting waiver, if waiver is available under any statutory provision pertaining to the particular debt being collected.

(c) *Time limit.* Under 4 CFR 102.3(b)(3), offset may not be initiated more than 10 years after the Government's right to collect the debt first accrued, unless an exception applies as stated in §102.3(b)(3).

§ 1450.20 Definitions.

For purposes of this subpart—

Agency means the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) or means any other agency of the U.S. Government as defined by section 105 of title 5 U.S.C., including the U.S. Postal Service, and the U.S. Postal Rate Commission, a military department as defined by section 102 of title 5 U.S.C., an agency or court of the judicial branch, and an agency of the legislative branch, including the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives.

Creditor agency means the agency to which the debt is owed.

Debt means an amount owed to the United States from sources which include loans insured or guaranteed by the United States and all other amounts due the United States from fees, leases, rents, royalties, services, sales of real or personal property, overpayments, penalties, damages, interests, fines and forfeitures (except those arising under the Uniform Code Military Justice), and all other similar sources.

Disposable pay means that part of current basic pay, special pay, incentive pay, retired pay, retainer pay, or in the case of an employee not entitled to basic pay, other authorized pay remaining after the deduction of any amount required by law to be withheld. FMCS will exclude deductions described in 5 CFR 581.105 (b) through (f) to determine disposable pay subject to salary offset.

Employee means a current employee of FMCS or of another agency, including a current member of the Armed Forces or a Reserve of the Armed Forces

FCCS means the Federal Claims Collection Standards jointly published by the Justice Department and the General Accounting Office at 4 CFR parts 101–105.

Paying agency means the agency employing the individual and authorizing the payment of his or her current pay.

Salary offset means an administrative offset to collect a debt under 5 U.S.C. 5514 by deduction(s) at one or more officially established pay intervals from the current pay account of an employee without his or her consent.

Waiver means the cancellation, remission, forgiveness, or non-recovery of a debt allegedly owed by an employee to an agency as permitted or required by 5 U.S.C. 5584, 10 U.S.C. 2774, or 32 U.S.C. 710, 5 U.S.C. 8346(b), or any other law.

§ 1450.21 Notification.

(a) Salary offset deductions shall not be made unless the Director of the Financial Management Staff of FMCS, or such other official as may be named in the future by the Director of FMCS, provides to the employee—at least 30 days before any deduction—a written notice stating at a minimum:

(1) The agency's determination that a debt is owed, including the origin, nature, and amount of the debt;

(2) The agency's intention to collect the debt by means of deduction from the employee's current disposable pay account;

(3) The amount, frequency, proposed beginning date, and duration of the intended deductions;

(4) An explanation of the agency's policy concerning interest, penalties,

and administrative costs (subpart D of this regulation), a statement that such assessment must be made unless excused in accordance with the FCCS;

(5) The employee's right to inspect and copy Government records relating to the debt or, if the employee or his or her representative cannot personnally inspect the records, to request and receive a copy of such records;

(6) If not previously provided, the opportunity (under terms agreeable to the agency) to establish a schedule for the voluntary repayment of the debt or to enter into a written agreement to establish a schedule for repayment of the debt in lieu of offset. The agreement must be writing, signed by both the employee and the Director of the Financial Management Staff of FMCS, and documented in agency files (4 CFR 102.11).

(7) The employee's right to a hearing conducted by an official arranged by the agency (an administrative law judge or alternatively, a hearing official not under the control of the head of the agency) if a petition is filed as prescribed by §1450.22.

(8) The method and time period for petitioning for a hearing;

(9) That the timely filing of a petition for hearing will stay the commencement of collection proceedings;

(10) That a final decision on the hearing (if one is requested) will be issued at the earliest practical date, but not later than 60 days after the filing of the petition requesting the hearing unless the employee requests and the hearing official grants a delay in the proceedings;

(11) That any knowingly false, misleading, or frivolous statements, representations, or evidence may subject the employee to:

(i) Disciplinary procedures appropriate under chapter 75 of title 5, U.S.C., part 752 of title 5, CFR, or any other applicable status or regulations;

(ii) Penalties under the False Claims Act sections 3729–3731 of title 31, U.S.C., or any other applicable statutory authority; or

(iii) Criminal penalties under sections 286, 287, 1001, and 1002 of title 18, U.S.C., or any other applicable statutory authority.

(12) Any other right and remedies available to the employee under statutes or regulations governing the program for which the collection is being made; and

(13) Unless there are applicable contractual or statutory provisions to the contrary, that amounts paid on or deducted for the debt which are later waived or found not owned to the United States will be promptly refunded to the employee.

(b) Notifications under this section shall be hand delivered with a record made of the date and time of delivery, or shall be mailed by certified mail return receipt requested.

(c) No notification, hearing, written responses or final decisions under this regulation are required of FMCS for any adjustment to pay arising out of an employee's election of coverage under a Federal benefit program requiring periodic deductions from pay, if the amount to be recovered was accumulated over four pay periods or less.

§1450.22 Hearing.

(a) *Petition for hearing.* (1) A hearing may be requested by filing a written petition with the Director, Financial Management Staff of FMCS, or such other official as may be named in the future by the Director of FMCS, stating why the employee believes the determination of the agency concerning the existence or the amount of the debt is in error.

(2) The employee's petition must be signed by the employee and fully identify and explain with reasonable specificity all the facts, evidence and witnesses, if any, which the employee believes support his or her position.

(3) The petition must be filed no later than fifteen (15) calendar days from the date that the notification was hand delivered or the date of delivery by certified mail, return receipt requested.

(4) If a petition is received after the fifteen (15) calendar day deadline referred to above, FMCS will nevertheless accept the petition if the employee can show that the delay was because of circumstances beyond his or her control, or because of failure to receive notice of the time limit (unless otherwise aware of it).

(5) If a petition is not filed within the time limit specified in paragraph (a)(3) of this section, and is not accepted pursuant to paragraph (a)(4) of this section, the employee's right to hearing will be considered waived, and salary offset will be implemented by FMCS.

(b) *Type of hearing.* (1) The form and content of the hearing will be determined by the hearing official who shall be a person outside the control or authority of FMCS. In determining the type of hearing, the hearing officer will consider the nature and complexity of the transaction giving rise to the debt. The hearing may be conducted as an informal conference or interview, in which the agency and employee will be given a full opportunity to present their respective positions, or as a more formal proceeding involving the presentation of evidence, arguments and written submissions.

(2) The employee may represent himself or herself, or may be represented by an attorney.

(3) The hearing official shall maintain a summary record of the hearing.

(4) The decision of the hearing officer will be in writing, and will state:

(i) The facts purported to evidence the nature and origin of the alleged debt;

(ii) The hearing official's analysis, findings, and conclusions, in the light of the hearing, as to—

(A) The employee's and/or agency's grounds,

(B) The amount and validity of the alleged debt and,

(C) The repayment schedule, if applicable.

(5) The decision of the hearing official shall constitute the final administrative decision of the agency.

§ 1450.23 Deduction from pay.

(a) Deduction by salary offset, from an employee's current disposable pay, shall be subject to the following conditions:

(1) Ordinarily, debts to the United States should be collected in full, in one lump-sum. This will be done when funds are available. However, if funds are unavailable for payment in one lump sum, or if the amount of the debt exceeds 15 percent of disposable pay for an officially established pay interval, collection will normally be made in installments.

(2) The installments shall not exceed 15 percent of the disposable pay from which the deduction is made, unless the employee has agreed in writing to the deduction of a greater amount.

(3) Deduction will generally commence with the next full pay interval (ordinarily the next biweekly pay period) following written consent by the employee to salary offset, waiver of hearing, or the decision issued by the hearing officer.

(4) Installment deductions must be made over a period not greater than the anticipated period of employment except as provided in § 1450.24.

§ 1450.24 Liquidation from final check or recovery from other payment.

(a) If the employee retires or resigns or if his or her employment or period of active duty ends before collection of the debt is completed, offset of the entire remaining balance on the debt may be made from a final payment of any nature, including but not limited to, final salary payment or lump-sum leave due to the employee as of the date of separation.

(b) If the debt cannot be liquidated by offset from a final payment, offset may be made from later payments of any kind due from the United States, including, but not limited to, the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund, pursuant to § 1450.11 of this regulation.

§ 1450.25 Non-waiver of rights by payments.

An employee's involuntary payment of all or any portion of a debt being collected under 5 U.S.C. 5514 shall not be construed as a waiver of any rights which the employee may have under 5 U.S.C. 5514 or any other provision of contract or law, unless statutory or contractual provisions provide to the contrary.

§ 1450.26 Refunds.

(a) Refunds shall promptly be made when—

(1) A debt is waived or otherwise found not owing to the United States (unless expressly prohibited by statute or regulation); or

(2) The employee's paying agency is directed by an administrative or judicial order to refund amounts deducted from his or her current pay.

(b) Refunds do not bear interest unless required or permitted by law or contract.

§ 1450.27 Interest, penalties, and administrative costs.

The assessment of interest, penalties and administrative costs shall be in accordance with subpart D of this regulation.

§ 1450.28 Recovery when paying agency is not creditor agency.

(a) *Responsibilities of creditor agency.* Upon completion of the procedures established under 5 U.S.C. 5514, the creditor agency must do the following:

(1) The creditor agency must certify, in writing, that the employee owes the debt, the amont and basis of the debt, the date on which payment(s) is due, the date the Government's right to collect the debt first accrued, and that the creditor agency's regulations implementing 5 U.S.C. 5514 have been approved by OPM.

(2) If the collection must be made in installments, the creditor agency also must advise the paying agency of the number of installments to be collected, the amount of each installment, and the commencing date of the first installment (if a date other than the next officially established pay period is required).

(3) Unless the employee has consented to the salary offset in writing or signed a statement acknowledging receipt of the required procedures, and the written consent or statement is forwarded to the paying agency, the creditor agency also must advise the paying agency of the action(s) taken under 5 U.S.C. 5514(b) and give the date(s) the action(s) was taken.

(4) Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, the creditor agency must submit a debt claim containing the information specified in paragraphs (a) (1) through (3) of this section and an installment agreement (or other instruction on the payment schedule), if applicable to the employee's paying agency.

(5) If the employee is in the process of separating, the creditor agency must submit its claim to the employee's paying agency for collection pursuant to §1450.24. The paying agency must certify the total amount of its collection and provide copies to the creditor agency and the employee as stated in paragraph (c)(1) of this section. If the paying agency is aware that the employee is entitled to payments from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund, or other similar payments, it must provide written notification to the agency responsible for making such payments that the debtor owes a debt (including the amount) and that the provisions of this section have been fully compiled with. However, the creditor agency must submit a properly certified claim to the agency responsible for making such payments before collection can be made.

(6) If the employee is already separated and all payments from his or her former paying agency have been paid, the creditor agency may request, unless otherwise prohibited, that money due and payable to the employee from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund (5 CFR 831.1801 *et seq.*), or other similar funds, be administratively offset to collect the debt. (31 U.S.C. 3716 and 102.4 FCCS.)

(b) *Responsibilities of paying agency*—(1) *Complete claim.* When the paying agency receives a properly certified debt claim from a creditor agency, deductions should be scheduled to begin prospectively at the next officially established pay interval. The employee must receive written notice that the paying agency has received a certified debt claim from the creditor agency (including the amount) and written notice of the date deductions from salary will commence and of the amount of such deductions.

(2) *Incomplete claim.* When the paying agency receives an incomplete debt claim from a creditor agency, the paying agency must return the debt claim with a notice that procedures under 5 U.S.C. 5514 and this subpart must be provided, and a properly certified debt claim received, before action will be taken to collect from the employee's current pay account.

(3) *Review.* The paying agency is not required or authorized to review the merits of the creditor agency's determination with respect to the amount or validity of the debt certified by the creditor agency.

(c) *Employees who transfer from one paying agency to another.* (1) If, after the creditor agency has submitted the debt claim to the employee's paying agency, the employee transfers to a position served by a different paying agency before the debt is collected in full, the paying agency from which the employee separates must certify the total amount of the collection made on the debt. One copy of the certification must be furnished to the employee, another to the creditor agency along with notice of employee's transfer. However, the creditor agency must submit a properly certified claim to the new paying agency before collection can be resumed.

(2) When an employee transfers to another paying agency, the creditor agency need not repeat the due process procedures described by 5 U.S.C. 5514 and this subpart to resume the collection. However, the creditor agency is responsible for reviewing the debt upon receiving the former paying agency's notice of the employee's transfer to make sure the collection is resumed by the new paying agency.

Subpart D—Interest, Penalties, and Administrative Costs

§ 1450.29 Assessment.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (h) of this section, or §1450.30, FMCS shall assess interest, penalties and administrative costs on debts owed to the United States pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3717. Before assessing these charges, FMCS will mail or hand-deliver a written notice to the debtor. This notice shall include a statement of the agency's requirements concerning these charges. (Sections 1450.9 and 1450.21).

(b) Interest shall accrue from the date on which notice of the debt and the interest requirements is first mailed or hand-delivered to the debtor, using the most current address that is available to the agency. If FMCS should use an ''advance billing'' procedure—that is, if it mails a bill before the debt is actually owed—it can include the required interest notification in the advance billing, but interest may not start to accrue before the debt is actually owed. FMCS will exercise care to insure that the notices required by this section are dated and mailed or hand-delivered on the same day.

(c) The rate of interest assessed shall be the rate of the current value of funds to the United States Treasury (i.e., the Treasury tax and loan account rate), as prescribed and published by the Secretary of the Treasury in the FEDERAL REGISTER and the Treasury Fiscal Requirements Manual Bulletins annually or quarterly, in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3717. FMCS may assess a higher rate of interest if it reasonably determines that a higher rate is necessary to protect the interests of the United States. The rate of interest, as initially assessed, shall remain fixed for the duration of the indebtedness except that where a debtor has defaulted on a repayment agreement and seeks to enter into a new agreement, FMCS may set a new interest rate which reflects the current value of funds to the Treasury at the time the new agreement is executed. Interest will not be assessed on interest, penalties, or administrative costs required by this section. However, if the debtor defaults on a previous repayment agreement, charges which accrued but were not collected under the defaulted agreement shall be added to the principal to be paid under a new repayment agreement.

(d) FMCS shall assess against a debtor charges to cover administrative costs incurred as a result of a delinquent debt—that is, the additional costs incurred in processing and handling the debt because it became delinquent. Calculation of administrative costs shall be based upon actual costs incurred or upon cost analyses establishing an average of actual additional costs incurred by the agency in processing and handling claims against other debtors in similar stages of delinquency. Administrative costs may include costs incurred in obtaining a credit report or in using a private debt collector, to the extent they are attributable to delinquency.

(e) FMCS shall assess a penalty charge, not to exceed 6 percent a year, on any portion of a debt that is delinquent for more than 90 days. This charge need not be calculated until the 91st day of delinquency, but shall accure from the date that the debt became delinquent.

(f) When a debt is paid in partial or installment payments, amounts received by the agency shall be applied first to outstanding penalty and administrative cost charges, second to accrued interest, and third to outstanding principal.

(g) FMCS will waive the collection of interest on the debt or any portion of the debt which is paid within 30 days after the date on which interest began to accrue. FMCS may extend this 30-day period, on a case-by-case basis, if it reasonably determines that such action is appropriate. Also, FMCS may waive, in whole or in part, the collection of interest, penalties, and/or administrative costs assessed under this section under the criteria specified in part 103 of the Federal Claims Collection Standards (4 CFR part 103) relating to the compromise of claims (without regard to the amount of the debt), or if the agency determines that collection of these charges would be against equity and good conscience, or not in the best interests of the United States. Waiver under the first sentence of this paragraph (g) is mandatory. Under the second and third sentences, it may be exercised under the following circumstances:

(1) Waiver of interest pending consideration of a request for reconsideration, administrative review, or waiver of the underlying debt under a permissive statute, and

(2) Waiver of interest where FMCS has accepted an installment plan, there is no indication of fault or lack of good faith on the part of the debtor, and the amount of interest is large enough in relation to the size of the installments that the debtor can reasonably afford to pay, that the debt will never be repaid.

(h) Where a mandatory waiver or review statute applies, interest and related charges may not be assessed for those periods during which collection action must be suspended under §104.2(c)(1) of the Federal Claims Collection Standards (4 CFR part 104).

§ 1450.30 Exemptions.

(a) The provisions of 31 U.S.C. 3717 to not apply:

(1) To debts owed by any State or local government;

(2) To debts arising under contracts which were executed prior to, and were in effect on (i.e., were not completed as of), October 25, 1982;

(3) To debts where an applicable statute, regulation required by statute, loan agreement, or contract either prohibits such charges or explicitly fixes the charges that apply to the debts arising under the Social Security Act, the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or the tariff laws of the United States.

(b) However, FMCS is authorized to assess interest and related charges on debts which are not subject to 31 U.S.C. 3717 to the extent authorized under the common law or other applicable statutory authority.

§ 1450.31 Other sanctions.

The sanctions stated in this subpart are not intended to be exclusive. Other sanctions which may be imposed by the Director of FMCS include placement of the debtor's name on a list of debarred, suspended or ineligible contractors or grantees; conversion of method of payment under a grant from an advance payment method to a reimbursement method; or revocation of a letter of credit. Notice will be given by FMCS to the debtor regarding the imposition of such other sanctions.

PART 1470—UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS TO STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Subpart A—General

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Subpart E—Entitlements [Reserved]

AUTHORITY: 29 U.S.C. 175a.

SOURCE: 53 FR 8087, Mar. 11, 1988, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 1470.1 Purpose and scope of this part.

This part establishes uniform administrative rules for Federal grants and cooperative agreements and subawards to State, local and Indian tribal governments.

§ 1470.2 Scope of subpart.

This subpart contains general rules pertaining to this part and procedures for control of exceptions from this part.

§ 1470.3 Definitions.

As used in this part:

Accrued expenditures mean the charges incurred by the grantee during a given period requiring the provision of funds for: (1) Goods and other tangible property received; (2) services performed by employees, contractors, subgrantees, subcontractors, and other payees; and (3) other amounts becoming owed under programs for which no current services or performance is required, such as annuities, insurance claims, and other benefit payments.

Accrued income means the sum of: (1) Earnings during a given period from services performed by the grantee and goods and other tangible property delivered to purchasers, and (2) amounts becoming owed to the grantee for which no current services or performance is required by the grantee.

Acquisition cost of an item of purchased equipment means the net invoice unit price of the property including the cost of modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make the property usable for the purpose for which it was acquired. Other charges such as the cost of installation, transportation, taxes, duty or protective in-transit insurance, shall be included or excluded from the unit acquisition cost in accordance with the grantee's regular accounting practices.

Administrative requirements mean those matters common to grants in general, such as financial management, kinds and frequency of reports, and retention of records. These are distinguished from *programmatic* requirements, which concern matters that can be treated only on a program-by-program or grant-by-grant basis, such as kinds of activities that can be supported by grants under a particular program.

Awarding agency means (1) with respect to a grant, the Federal agency, and (2) with respect to a subgrant, the party that awarded the subgrant.

Cash contributions means the grantee's cash outlay, including the outlay of money contributed to the grantee or subgrantee by other public agencies and institutions, and private organizations and individuals. When authorized by Federal legislation, Federal funds received from other assistance agreements may be considered as grantee or subgrantee cash contributions.

Contract means (except as used in the definitions for *grant* and *subgrant* in this section and except where qualified by *Federal*) a procurement contract under a grant or subgrant, and means a procurement subcontract under a contract.

Cost sharing or matching means the value of the third party in-kind contributions and the portion of the costs of a federally assisted project or program not borne by the Federal Government.

Cost-type contract means a contract or subcontract under a grant in which the contractor or subcontractor is paid on the basis of the costs it incurs, with or without a fee.

Equipment means tangible, nonexpendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit. A grantee may use its own definition of equipment provided that such definition would at least include all equipment defined above.

Expenditure report means: (1) For nonconstruction grants, the SF–269 ''Financial Status Report'' (or other equivalent report); (2) for construction grants, the SF–271 ''Outlay Report and Request for Reimbursement'' (or other equivalent report).

Federally recognized Indian tribal government means the governing body or a governmental agency of any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community (including any Native village as defined in section 3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, 85 Stat 688) certified by the Secretary of the Interior as eligible for the special programs and services provided by him through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Government means a State or local government or a federally recognized Indian tribal government.

Grant means an award of financial assistance, including cooperative agreements, in the form of money, or property in lieu of money, by the Federal Government to an eligible grantee. The term does not include technical assistance which provides services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations. Also, the term does not include assistance, such as a fellowship or other lump sum award, which the grantee is not required to account for.

Grantee means the government to which a grant is awarded and which is accountable for the use of the funds provided. The grantee is the entire legal entity even if only a particular component of the entity is designated in the grant award document.

Local government means a county, municipality, city, town, township, local public authority (including any public and Indian housing agency under the United States Housing Act of 1937) school district, special district, intrastate district, council of governments (whether or not incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under State law), any other regional or interstate government entity, or any agency or instrumentality of a local government.

Obligations means the amounts of orders placed, contracts and subgrants awarded, goods and services received, and similar transactions during a given period that will require payment by the grantee during the same or a future period.

OMB means the United States Office of Management and Budget.

Outlays (expenditures) mean charges made to the project or program. They may be reported on a cash or accrual basis. For reports prepared on a cash basis, outlays are the sum of actual cash disbursement for direct charges for goods and services, the amount of indirect expense incurred, the value of in-kind contributions applied, and the amount of cash advances and payments made to contractors and subgrantees. For reports prepared on an accrued expenditure basis, outlays are the sum of actual cash disbursements, the amount of indirect expense incurred, the value of inkind contributions applied, and

the new increase (or decrease) in the amounts owed by the grantee for goods and other property received, for services performed by employees, contractors, subgrantees, subcontractors, and other payees, and other amounts becoming owed under programs for which no current services or performance are required, such as annuities, insurance claims, and other benefit payments.

Percentage of completion method refers to a system under which payments are made for construction work according to the percentage of completion of the work, rather than to the grantee's cost incurred.

Prior approval means documentation evidencing consent prior to incurring specific cost.

Real property means land, including land improvements, structures and appurtenances thereto, excluding movable machinery and equipment.

Share, when referring to the awarding agency's portion of real property, equipment or supplies, means the same percentage as the awarding agency's portion of the acquiring party's total costs under the grant to which the acquisition costs under the grant to which the acquisition cost of the property was charged. Only costs are to be counted—not the value of third-party in-kind contributions.

State means any of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, any territory or possession of the United States, or any agency or instrumentality of a State exclusive of local governments. The term does not include any public and Indian housing agency under United States Housing Act of 1937.

Subgrant means an award of financial assistance in the form of money, or property in lieu of money, made under a grant by a grantee to an eligible subgrantee. The term includes financial assistance when provided by contractual legal agreement, but does not include procurement purchases, nor does it include any form of assistance which is excluded from the definition of *grant* in this part.

Subgrantee means the government or other legal entity to which a subgrant is awarded and which is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided.

Supplies means all tangible personal property other than *equipment* as defined in this part.

Suspension means depending on the context, either (1) temporary withdrawal of the authority to obligate grant funds pending corrective action by the grantee or subgrantee or a decision to terminate the grant, or (2) an action taken by a suspending official in accordance with agency regulations implementing E.O. 12549 to immediately exclude a person from participating in grant transactions for a period, pending completion of an investigation and such legal or debarment proceedings as may ensue.

Termination means permanent withdrawal of the authority to obligate previously-awarded grant funds before that authority would otherwise expire. It also means the voluntary relinquishment of that authority by the grantee or subgrantee. *Termination* does not include:

(1) Withdrawal of funds awarded on the basis of the grantee's underestimate of the unobligated balance in a prior period;

(2) Withdrawal of the unobligated balance as of the expiration of a grant;

(3) Refusal to extend a grant or award additional funds, to make a competing or noncompeting continuation, renewal, extension, or supplemental award; or

(4) Voiding of a grant upon determination that the award was obtained fraudulently, or was otherwise illegal or invalid from inception.

Terms of a grant or subgrant mean all requirements of the grant or subgrant, whether in statute, regulations, or the award document.

Third party in-kind contributions mean property or services which benefit a federally assisted project or program and which are contributed by non-Federal third parties without charge to the grantee, or a cost-type contractor under the grant agreement.

Unliquidated obligations for reports prepared on a cash basis mean the amount of obligations incurred by the grantee that has not been paid. For reports prepared on an accrued expenditure basis, they represent the amount

of obligations incurred by the grantee for which an outlay has not been recorded.

Unobligated balance means the portion of the funds authorized by the Federal agency that has not been obligated by the grantee and is determined by deducting the cumulative obligations from the cumulative funds authorized.

§ 1470.4 Applicability.

(a) *General.* Subparts A through D of this part apply to all grants and subgrants to governments, except where inconsistent with Federal statutes or with regulations authorized in accordance with the exception provision of § 1470.6, or:

(1) Grants and subgrants to State and local institutions of higher education or State and local hospitals.

(2) The block grants authorized by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (Community Services; Preventive Health and Health Services; Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Services; Maternal and Child Health Services; Social Services; Low-Income Home Energy Assistance; States' Program of Community Development Block Grants for Small Cities; and Elementary and Secondary Education other than programs administered by the Secretary of Education under title V, subtitle D, chapter 2, section 583—the Secretary's discretionary grant program) and titles I-III of the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 and under the Public Health Services Act (section 1921), Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Block Grant and part C of title V, Mental Health Service for the Homeless Block Grant).

(3) Entitlement grants to carry out the following programs of the Social Security Act:

(i) Aid to Needy Families with Dependent Children (title IV-A of the Act, not including the Work Incentive Program (WIN) authorized by section 402(a)19(G); HHS grants for WIN are subject to this part);

(ii) Child Support Enforcement and Establishment of Paternity (title IV-D of the Act);

(iii) Foster Care and Adoption Assistance (title IV-E of the Act);

(iv) Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled (titles I, X, XIV, and XVI-AABD of the Act); and

(v) Medical Assistance (Medicaid) (title XIX of the Act) not including the State Medicaid Fraud Control program authorized by section 1903(a)(6)(B).

(4) Entitlement grants under the following programs of The National School Lunch Act:

(i) School Lunch (section 4 of the Act),

(ii) Commodity Assistance (section 6 of the Act),

(iii) Special Meal Assistance (section 11 of the Act),

(iv) Summer Food Service for Children (section 13 of the Act), and

(v) Child Care Food Program (section 17 of the Act).

(5) Entitlement grants under the following programs of The Child Nutrition Act of 1966:

(i) Special Milk (section 3 of the Act), and

(ii) School Breakfast (section 4 of the Act).

(6) Entitlement grants for State Administrative expenses under The Food Stamp Act of 1977 (section 16 of the Act).

(7) A grant for an experimental, pilot, or demonstration project that is also supported by a grant listed in paragraph (a)(3) of this section;

(8) Grant funds awarded under subsection 412(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1522(e)) and subsection 501(a) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980 (Pub. L. 96–422, 94 Stat. 1809), for cash assistance, medical assistance, and supplemental security income benefits to refugees and entrants and the administrative costs of providing the assistance and benefits;

(9) Grants to local education agencies under 20 U.S.C. 236 through 241–1(a), and 242 through 244 (portions of the Impact Aid program), except for 20 U.S.C. 238(d)(2)(c) and 240(f) (Entitlement Increase for Handicapped Children); and

(10) Payments under the Veterans Administration's State Home Per Diem Program (38 U.S.C. 641(a)).

(b) *Entitlement programs.* Entitlement programs enumerated above in § 1470.4(a) (3) through (8) are subject to subpart E.

§ 1470.5 Effect on other issuances.

All other grants administration provisions of codified program regulations, program manuals, handbooks and other nonregulatory materials which are inconsistent with this part are superseded, except to the extent they are required by statute, or authorized in accordance with the exception provision in § 1470.6.

§ 1470.6 Additions and exceptions.

(a) For classes of grants and grantees subject to this part, Federal agencies may not impose additional administrative requirements except in codified regulations published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(b) Exceptions for classes of grants or grantees may be authorized only by OMB.

(c) Exceptions on a case-by-case basis and for subgrantees may be authorized by the affected Federal agencies.

Subpart B—Pre-Award Requirements

§ 1470.10 Forms for applying for grants.

(a) *Scope.* (1) This section prescribes forms and instructions to be used by governmental organizations (except hospitals and institutions of higher education operated by a government) in applying for grants. This section is not applicable, however, to formula grant programs which do not require applicants to apply for funds on a project basis.

(2) This section applies only to applications to Federal agencies for grants, and is not required to be applied by grantees in dealing with applicants for subgrants. However, grantees are encouraged to avoid more detailed or burdensome application requirements for subgrants.

(b) *Authorized forms and instructions for governmental organizations.* (1) In applying for grants, applicants shall only use standard application forms or those prescribed by the granting agency with the approval of OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980.

(2) Applicants are not required to submit more than the original and two copies of preapplications or applications.

(3) Applicants must follow all applicable instructions that bear OMB clearance numbers. Federal agencies may specify and describe the programs, functions, or activities that will be used to plan, budget, and evaluate the work under a grant. Other supplementary instructions may be issued only with the approval of OMB to the extent required under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980. For any standard form, except the SF–424 facesheet, Federal agencies may shade out or instruct the applicant to disregard any line item that is not needed.

(4) When a grantee applies for additional funding (such as a continuation or supplemental award) or amends a previously submitted application, only the affected pages need be submitted. Previously submitted pages with information that is still current need not be resubmitted.

§ 1470.11 State plans.

(a) *Scope.* The statutes for some programs require States to submit plans before receiving grants. Under regulations implementing Executive Order 12372, ''Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs,'' States are allowed to simplify, consolidate and substitute plans. This section contains additional provisions for plans that are subject to regulations implementing the Executive order.

(b) *Requirements.* A State need meet only Federal administrative or programmatic requirements for a plan that are in statutes or codified regulations.

(c) *Assurances.* In each plan the State will include an assurance that the State shall comply with all applicable Federal statutes and regulations in effect with respect to the periods for which it receives grant funding. For this assurance and other assurances required in the plan, the State may:

(1) Cite by number the statutory or regulatory provisions requiring the assurances and affirm that it gives the assurances required by those provisions,

(2) Repeat the assurance language in the statutes or regulations, or

(3) Develop its own language to the extent permitted by law.

(d) *Amendments.* A State will amend a plan whenever necessary to reflect: (1) New or revised Federal statutes or regulations or (2) a material change in any State law, organization, policy, or State agency operation. The State will obtain approval for the amendment and its effective date but need submit for approval only the amended portions of the plan.

§ 1470.12 Special grant or subgrant conditions for "high-risk" grantees.

(a) A grantee or subgrantee may be considered ''high risk'' if an awarding agency determines that a grantee or subgrantee:

(1) Has a history of unsatisfactory performance, or

(2) Is not financially stable, or

(3) Has a management system which does not meet the management standards set forth in this part, or

(4) Has not conformed to terms and conditions of previous awards, or

(5) Is otherwise not responsible; and if the awarding agency determines that an award will be made, special conditions and/or restrictions shall correspond to the high risk condition and shall be included in the award.

(b) Special conditions or restrictions may include:

(1) Payment on a reimbursement basis;

(2) Withholding authority to proceed to the next phase until receipt of evidence of acceptable performance within a given funding period;

(3) Requiring additional, more detailed financial reports;

(4) Additional project monitoring;

(5) Requiring the grante or subgrantee to obtain technical or management assistance; or

(6) Establishing additional prior approvals.

(c) If an awarding agency decides to impose such conditions, the awarding official will notify the grantee or subgrantee as early as possible, in writing, of:

(1) The nature of the special conditions/restrictions;

(2) The reason(s) for imposing them;

(3) The corrective actions which must be taken before they will be removed and the time allowed for completing the corrective actions and

(4) The method of requesting reconsideration of the conditions/restrictions imposed.

Subpart C—Post-Award Requirements

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

§ 1470.20 Standards for financial management systems.

(a) A State must expand and account for grant funds in accordance with State laws and procedures for expending and accounting for its own funds. Fiscal control and accounting procedures of the State, as well as its subgrantees and cost-type contractors, must be sufficient to—

(1) Permit preparation of reports required by this part and the statutes authorizing the grant, and

(2) Permit the tracing of funds to a level of expenditures adequate to establish that such funds have not been used in violation of the restrictions and prohibitions of applicable statutes.

(b) The financial management systems of other grantees and subgrantees must meet the following standards:

(1) *Financial reporting.* Accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of financially assisted activities must be made in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the grant or subgrant.

(2) *Accounting records.* Grantees and subgrantees must maintain records which adequately identify the source and application of funds provided for financially-assisted activities. These records must contain information pertaining to grant or subgrant awards and authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, liabilities, outlays or expenditures, and income.

(3) *Internal control.* Effective control and accountability must be maintained for all grant and subgrant cash, real and personal property, and other assets. Grantees and subgrantees must adequately safeguard all such property and must assure that it is used solely for authorized purposes.

(4) *Budget control.* Actual expenditures or outlays must be compared with budgeted amounts for each grant

or subgrant. Financial information must be related to performance or productivity data, including the development of unit cost information whenever appropriate or specifically required in the grant or subgrant agreement. If unit cost data are required, estimates based on available documentation will be accepted whenever possible.

(5) *Allowable cost.* Applicable OMB cost principles, agency program regulations, and the terms of grant and subgrant agreements will be followed in determining the reasonableness, allowability, and allocability of costs.

(6) *Source documentation.* Accounting records must be supported by such source documentation as cancelled checks, paid bills, payrolls, time and attendance records, contract and subgrant award documents, etc.

(7) *Cash management.* Procedures for minimizing the time elapsing between the transfer of funds from the U.S. Treasury and disbursement by grantees and subgrantees must be followed whenever advance payment procedures are used. Grantees must establish reasonable procedures to ensure the receipt of reports on subgrantees' cash balances and cash disbursements in sufficient time to enable them to prepare complete and accurate cash transactions reports to the awarding agency. When advances are made by letter-of-credit or electronic transfer of funds methods, the grantee must make drawdowns as close as possible to the time of making disbursements. Grantees must monitor cash drawdowns by their subgrantees to assure that they conform substantially to the same standards of timing and amount as apply to advances to the grantees.

(c) An awarding agency may review the adequacy of the financial management system of any applicant for financial assistance as part of a preaward review or at any time subsequent to award.

§ 1470.21 Payment.

(a) *Scope.* This section prescribes the basic standard and the methods under which a Federal agency will make payments to grantees, and grantees will make payments to subgrantees and contractors.

(b) *Basic standard.* Methods and procedures for payment shall minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of funds and disbursement by the grantee or subgrantee, in accordance with Treasury regulations at 31 CFR part 205.

(c) *Advances.* Grantees and subgrantees shall be paid in advance, provided they maintain or demonstrate the willingness and ability to maintain procedures to minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of the funds and their disbursement by the grantee or subgrantee.

(d) *Reimbursement.* Reimbursement shall be the preferred method when the requirements in paragraph (c) of this section are not met. Grantees and subgrantees may also be paid by reimbursement for any construction grant. Except as otherwise specified in regulation, Federal agencies shall not use the percentage of completion method to pay construction grants. The grantee or subgrantee may use that method to pay its construction contractor, and if it does, the awarding agency's payments to the grantee or subgrantee will be based on the grantee's or subgrantee's actual rate of disbursement.

(e) *Working capital advances.* If a grantee cannot meet the criteria for advance payments described in paragraph (c) of this section, and the Federal agency has determined that reimbursement is not feasible because the grantee lacks sufficient working capital, the awarding agency may provide cash or a working capital advance basis. Under this procedure the awarding agency shall advance cash to the grantee to cover its estimated disbursement needs for an initial period generally geared to the grantee's disbursing cycle. Thereafter, the awarding agency shall reimburse the grantee for its actual cash disbursements. The working capital advance method of payment shall not be used by grantees or subgrantees if the reason for using such method is the unwillingness or inability of the grantee to provide timely advances to the subgrantee to meet the subgrantee's actual cash disbursements.

(f) *Effect of program income, refunds, and audit recoveries on payment.* (1)

Grantees and subgrantees shall disburse repayments to and interest earned on a revolving fund before requesting additional cash payments for the same activity.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (f)(1) of this section, grantees and subgrantees shall disburse program income, rebates, refunds, contract settlements, audit recoveries and interest earned on such funds before requesting additional cash payments.

(g) *Withholding payments.* (1) Unless otherwise required by Federal statute, awarding agencies shall not withhold payments for proper charges incurred by grantees or subgrantees unless—

(i) The grantee or subgrantee has failed to comply with grant award conditions or

(ii) The grantee or subgrantee is indebted to the United States.

(2) Cash withheld for failure to comply with grant award condition, but without suspension of the grant, shall be released to the grantee upon subsequent compliance. When a grant is suspended, payment adjustments will be made in accordance with §1470.43(c).

(3) A Federal agency shall not make payment to grantees for amounts that are withheld by grantees or subgrantees from payment to contractors to assure satisfactory completion of work. Payments shall be made by the Federal agency when the grantees or subgrantees actually disburse the withheld funds to the contractors or to escrow accounts established to assure satisfactory completion of work.

(h) *Cash depositories.* (1) Consistent with the national goal of expanding the opportunities for minority business enterprises, grantees and subgrantees are encouraged to use minority banks (a bank which is owned at least 50 percent by minority group members). A list of minority owned banks can be obtained from the Minority Business Development Agency, Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230.

(2) A grantee or subgrantee shall maintain a separate bank account only when required by Federal-State agreement.

(i) *Interest earned on advances.* Except for interest earned on advances of funds exempt under the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act (31 U.S.C. 6501 *et seq.*) and the Indian Self-Determination Act (23 U.S.C. 450), grantees and subgrantees shall promptly, but at least quarterly, remit interest earned on advances to the Federal agency. The grantee or subgrantee may keep interest amounts up to $100 per year for administrative expenses.

§ 1470.22 Allowable costs.

(a) *Limitation on use of funds.* Grant funds may be used only for:

(1) The allowable costs of the grantees, subgrantees and cost-type contractors, including allowable costs in the form of payments to fixed-price contractors; and

(2) Reasonable fees or profit to cost-type contractors but not any fee or profit (or other increment above allowable costs) to the grantee or subgrantee.

(b) *Applicable cost principles.* For each kind of organization, there is a set of Federal principles for determining allowable costs. Allowable costs will be determined in accordance with the cost principles applicable to the organization incurring the costs. The following chart lists the kinds of organizations and the applicable cost principles.

For the costs of a—	Use the principles in—
State, local or Indian tribal government.	OMB Circular A–87.
Private nonprofit organization other than an (1) institution of higher education, (2) hospital, or (3) organization named in OMB Circular A–122 as not subject to that circular.	OMB Circular A–122.
Educational institutions.	OMB Circular A–21.
For-profit organization other than a hospital and an organization named in OBM Circular A–122 as not subject to that circular.	48 CFR part 31. Contract Cost Principles and Procedures, or uniform cost accounting standards that comply with cost principles acceptable to the Federal agency.

§ 1470.23 Period of availability of funds.

(a) *General.* Where a funding period is specified, a grantee may charge to the award only costs resulting from obligations of the funding period unless carryover of unobligated balances is permitted, in which case the carryover balances may be charged for costs resulting from obligations of the subsequent funding period.

(b) *Liquidation of obligations.* A grantee must liquidate all obligations incurred under the award not later than 90 days after the end of the funding period (or as specified in a program regulation) to coincide with the submission of the annual Financial Status Report (SF–269). The Federal agency may extend this deadline at the request of the grantee.

§ 1470.24 Matching or cost sharing.

(a) *Basic rule: Costs and contributions acceptable.* With the qualifications and exceptions listed in paragraph (b) of this section, a matching or cost sharing requirement may be satisfied by either or both of the following:

(1) Allowable costs incurred by the grantee, subgrantee or a cost-type contractor under the assistance agreement. This includes allowable costs borne by non-Federal grants or by others cash donations from non-Federal third parties.

(2) The value of third party in-kind contributions applicable to the period to which the cost sharing or matching requirements applies.

(b) *Qualifications and exceptions*—(1) *Costs borne by other Federal grant agreements.* Except as provided by Federal statute, a cost sharing or matching requirement may not be met by costs borne by another Federal grant. This prohibition does not apply to income earned by a grantee or subgrantee from a contract awarded under another Federal grant.

(2) *General revenue sharing.* For the purpose of this section, general revenue sharing funds distributed under 31 U.S.C. 6702 are not considered Federal grant funds.

(3) *Cost or contributions counted towards other Federal costs-sharing requirements.* Neither costs nor the values of third party in-kind contributions may count towards satisfying a cost sharing or matching requirement of a grant agreement if they have been or will be counted towards satisfying a cost sharing or matching requirement of another Federal grant agreement, a Federal procurement contract, or any other award of Federal funds.

(4) *Costs financed by program income.* Costs financed by program income, as defined in §1470.25, shall not count towards satisfying a cost sharing or matching requirement unless they are expressly permitted in the terms of the assistance agreement. (This use of general program income is described in §1470.25(g).)

(5) *Services or property financed by income earned by contractors.* Contractors under a grant may earn income from the activities carried out under the contract in addition to the amounts earned from the party awarding the contract. No costs of services or property supported by this income may count toward satisfying a cost sharing or matching requirement unless other provisions of the grant agreement expressly permit this kind of income to be used to meet the requirement.

(6) *Records.* Costs and third party in-kind contributions counting towards satisfying a cost sharing or matching requirement must be verifiable from the records of grantees and subgrantee or cost-type contractors. These records must show how the value placed on third party in-kind contributions was derived. To the extent feasible, volunteer services will be supported by the same methods that the organization uses to support the allocability of regular personnel costs.

(7) *Special standards for third party in-kind contributions.* (i) Third party in-kind contributions count towards satisfying a cost sharing or matching requirement only where, if the party receiving the contributions were to pay for them, the payments would be allowable costs.

(ii) Some third party in-kind contributions are goods and services that, if the grantee, subgrantee, or contractor receiving the contribution had to pay for them, the payments would have been an indirect costs. Costs sharing or matching credit for such contributions shall be given only if the grantee, subgrantee, or contractor has established, along with its regular indirect cost rate, a special rate for allocating to individual projects or programs the value of the contributions.

(iii) A third party in-kind contribution to a fixed-price contract may count towards satisfying a cost sharing or matching requirement only if it results in:

(A) An increase in the services or property provided under the contract (without additional cost to the grantee or subgrantee) or

(B) A cost savings to the grantee or subgrantee.

(iv) The values placed on third party in-kind contributions for cost sharing or matching purposes will conform to the rules in the succeeding sections of this part. If a third party in-kind contribution is a type not treated in those sections, the value placed upon it shall be fair and reasonable.

(c) *Valuation of donated services*—(1) *Volunteer services.* Unpaid services provided to a grantee or subgrantee by individuals will be valued at rates consistent with those ordinarily paid for similar work in the grantee's or subgrantee's organization. If the grantee or subgrantee does not have employees performing similar work, the rates will be consistent with those ordinarily paid by other employers for similar work in the same labor market. In either case, a reasonable amount for fringe benefits may be included in the valuation.

(2) *Employees of other organizations.* When an employer other than a grantee, subgrantee, or cost-type contractor furnishes free of charge the services of an employee in the employee's normal line of work, the services will be valued at the employee's regular rate of pay exclusive of the employee's fringe benefits and overhead costs. If the services are in a different line of work, paragraph (c)(1) of this section applies.

(d) *Valuation of third party donated supplies and loaned equipment or space.* (1) If a third party donates supplies, the contribution will be valued at the market value of the supplies at the time of donation.

(2) If a third party donates the use of equipment or space in a building but retains title, the contribution will be valued at the fair rental rate of the equipment or space.

(e) *Valuation of third party donated equipment, buildings, and land.* If a third party donates equipment, buildings, or land, and title passes to a grantee or subgrantee, the treatment of the donated property will depend upon the purpose of the grant or subgrant, as follows:

(1) *Awards for capital expenditures.* If the purpose of the grant or subgrant is to assist the grantee or subgrantee in the acquisition of property, the market value of that property at the time of donation may be counted as cost sharing or matching,

(2) *Other awards.* If assisting in the acquisition of property is not the purpose of the grant or subgrant, paragraphs (e)(2) (i) and (ii) of this section apply:

(i) If approval is obtained from the awarding agency, the market value at the time of donation of the donated equipment or buildings and the fair rental rate of the donated land may be counted as cost sharing or matching. In the case of a subgrant, the terms of the grant agreement may require that the approval be obtained from the Federal agency as well as the grantee. In all cases, the approval may be given only if a purchase of the equipment or rental of the land would be approved as an allowable direct cost. If any part of the donated property was acquired with Federal funds, only the non-Federal share of the property may be counted as cost-sharing or matching.

(ii) If approval is not obtained under paragraph (e)(2)(i) of this section, no amount may be counted for donated land, and only depreciation or use allowances may be counted for donated equipment and buildings. The depreciation or use allowances for this property are not treated as third party in-kind contributions. Instead, they are treated as costs incurred by the grantee or subgrantee. They are computed and allocated (usually as indirect costs) in accordance with the cost principles specified in § 1470.22, in the same way as depreciation or use allowances for purchased equipment and buildings. The amount of depreciation or use allowances for donated equipment and buildings is based on the property's market value at the time it was donated.

(f) *Valuation of grantee or subgrantee donated real property for construction/acquisition.* If a grantee or subgrantee donates real property for a construction or facilities acquisition project, the current market value of that property may be counted as cost sharing or matching. If any part of the donated property was acquired with Federal

funds, only the non-Federal share of the property may be counted as cost sharing or matching.

(g) *Appraisal of real property*. In some cases under paragraphs (d), (e) and (f) of this section, it will be necessary to establish the market value of land or a building or the fair rental rate of land or of space in a building. In these cases, the Federal agency may require the market value or fair rental value be set by an independent appraiser, and that the value or rate be certified by the grantee. This requirement will also be imposed by the grantee on subgrantees.

§ 1470.25 Program income.

(a) *General*. Grantees are encouraged to earn income to defray program costs. Program income includes income from fees for services performed, from the use or rental of real or personal property acquired with grant funds, from the sale of commodities or items fabricated under a grant agreement, and from payments of principal and interest on loans made with grant funds. Except as otherwise provided in regulations of the Federal agency, program income does not include interest on grant funds, rebates, credits, discounts, refunds, etc. and interest earned on any of them.

(b) *Definition of program income*. Program income means gross income received by the grantee or subgrantee directly generated by a grant supported activity, or earned only as a result of the grant agreement during the grant period. ''During the grant period'' is the time between the effective date of the award and the ending date of the award reflected in the final financial report.

(c) *Cost of generating program income*. If authorized by Federal regulations or the grant agreement, costs incident to the generation of program income may be deducted from gross income to determine program income.

(d) *Governmental revenues*. Taxes, special assessments, levies, fines, and other such revenues raised by a grantee or subgrantee are not program income unless the revenues are specifically identified in the grant agreement or Federal agency regulations as program income.

(e) *Royalties*. Income from royalties and license fees for copyrighted material, patents, and inventions developed by a grantee or subgrantee is program income only if the revenues are specifically identified in the grant agreement or Federal agency regulations as program income. (See § 1470.34.)

(f) *Property*. Proceeds from the sale of real property or equipment will be handled in accordance with the requirements of §§ 1470.31 and 1470.32.

(g) *Use of program income*. Program income shall be deducted from outlays which may be both Federal and non-Federal as described below, unless the Federal agency regulations or the grant agreement specify another alternative (or a combination of the alternatives). In specifying alternatives, the Federal agency may distinguish between income earned by the grantee and income earned by subgrantees and between the sources, kinds, or amounts of income. When Federal agencies authorize the alternatives in paragraphs (g) (2) and (3) of this section, program income in excess of any limits stipulated shall also be deducted from outlays.

(1) *Deduction*. Ordinarily program income shall be deducted from total allowable costs to determine the net allowable costs. Program income shall be used for current costs unless the Federal agency authorizes otherwise. Program income which the grantee did not anticipate at the time of the award shall be used to reduce the Federal agency and grantee contributions rather than to increase the funds committed to the project.

(2) *Addition*. When authorized, program income may be added to the funds committed to the grant agreement by the Federal agency and the grantee. The program income shall be used for the purposes and under the conditions of the grant agreement.

(3) *Cost sharing or matching*. When authorized, program income may be used to meet the cost sharing or matching requirement of the grant agreement. The amount of the Federal grant award remains the same.

(h) *Income after the award period*. There are no Federal requirements governing the disposition of program income earned after the end of the award

period (i.e., until the ending date of the final financial report, see paragraph (a) of this section), unless the terms of the agreement or the Federal agency regulations provide otherwise.

§ 1470.26 Non-Federal audit.

(a) *Basic rule.* Grantees and subgrantees are responsible for obtaining audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C. 7501–7507) and revised OMB Circular A–133, ''Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations.'' The audits shall be made by an independent auditor in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards covering financial audits.

(b) *Subgrantees.* State or local governments, as those terms are defined for purposes of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, that provide Federal awards to a subgrantee, which expends $300,000 or more (or other amount as specified by OMB) in Federal awards in a fiscal year, shall:

(1) Determine whether State or local subgrantees have met the audit requirements of the Act and whether subgrantees covered by OMB Circular A–110, ''Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations,'' have met the audit requirements of the Act. Commercial contractors (private for-profit and private and governmental organizations) providing goods and services to State and local governments are not required to have a single audit performed. State and local governments should use their own procedures to ensure that the contractor has complied with laws and regulations affecting the expenditure of Federal funds;

(2) Determine whether the subgrantee spent Federal assistance funds provided in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. This may be accomplished by reviewing an audit of the subgrantee made in accordance with the Act, Circular A–110, or through other means (e.g., program reviews) if the subgrantee has not had such an audit;

(3) Ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken within six months after receipt of the audit report in instance of noncompliance with Federal laws and regulations;

(4) Consider whether subgrantee audits necessitate adjustment of the grantee's own records; and

(5) Require each subgrantee to permit independent auditors to have access to the records and financial statements.

(c) *Auditor selection.* In arranging for audit services, §1470.36 shall be followed.

[53 FR 8087, Mar. 11, 1988, as amended at 62 FR 45939, 45942, Aug. 29, 1997]

CHANGES, PROPERTY, AND SUBAWARDS

§ 1470.30 Changes.

(a) *General.* Grantees and subgrantees are permitted to rebudget within the approved direct cost budget to meet unanticipated requirements and may make limited program changes to the approved project. However, unless waived by the awarding agency, certain types of post-award changes in budgets and projects shall require the prior written approval of the awarding agency.

(b) *Relation to cost principles.* The applicable cost principles (see §1470.22) contain requirements for prior approval of certain types of costs. Except where waived, those requirements apply to all grants and subgrants even if paragraphs (c) through (f) of this section do not.

(c) *Budget changes*—(1) *Nonconstruction projects.* Except as stated in other regulations or an award document, grantees or subgrantees shall obtain the prior approval of the awarding agency whenever any of the following changes is anticipated under a nonconstruction award:

(i) Any revision which would result in the need for additional funding.

(ii) Unless waived by the awarding agency, cumulative transfers among direct cost categories, or, if applicable, among separately budgeted programs, projects, functions, or activities which exceed or are expected to exceed ten percent of the current total approved budget, whenever the awarding agency's share exceeds $100,000.

(iii) Transfer of funds allotted for training allowances (i.e., from direct

payments to trainees to other expense categories).

(2) *Construction projects.* Grantees and subgrantees shall obtain prior written approval for any budget revision which would result in the need for additional funds.

(3) *Combined construction and nonconstruction projects.* When a grant or subgrant provides funding for both construction and nonconstruction activities, the grantee or subgrantee must obtain prior written approval from the awarding agency before making any fund or budget transfer from nonconstruction to construction or vice versa.

(d) *Programmatic changes.* Grantees or subgrantees must obtain the prior approval of the awarding agency whenever any of the following actions is anticipated:

(1) Any revision of the scope or objectives of the project (regardless of whether there is an associated budget revision requiring prior approval).

(2) Need to extend the period of availability of funds.

(3) Changes in key persons in cases where specified in an application or a grant award. In research projects, a change in the project director or principal investigator shall always require approval unless waived by the awarding agency.

(4) Under nonconstruction projects, contracting out, subgranting (if authorized by law) or otherwise obtaining the services of a third party to perform activities which are central to the purposes of the award. This approval requirement is in addition to the approval requirements of §1470.36 but does not apply to the procurement of equipment, supplies, and general support services.

(e) *Additional prior approval requirements.* The awarding agency may not require prior approval for any budget revision which is not described in paragraph (c) of this section.

(f) *Requesting prior approval.* (1) A request for prior approval of any budget revision will be in the same budget formal the grantee used in its application and shall be accompanied by a narrative justification for the proposed revision.

(2) A request for a prior approval under the applicable Federal cost principles (see §1470.22) may be made by letter.

(3) A request by a subgrantee for prior approval will be addressed in writing to the grantee. The grantee will promptly review such request and shall approve or disapprove the request in writing. A grantee will not approve any budget or project revision which is inconsistent with the purpose or terms and conditions of the Federal grant to the grantee. If the revision, requested by the subgrantee would result in a change to the grantee's approved project which requires Federal prior approval, the grantee will obtain the Federal agency's approval before approving the subgrantee's request.

§1470.31 Real property.

(a) *Title.* Subject to the obligations and conditions set forth in this section, title to real property acquired under a grant or subgrant will vest upon acquisition in the grantee or subgrantee respectively.

(b) *Use.* Except as otherwise provided by Federal statutes, real property will be used for the originally authorized purposes as long as needed for that purposes, and the grantee or subgrantee shall not dispose of or encumber its title or other interests.

(c) *Disposition.* When real property is no longer needed for the originally authorized purpose, the grantee or subgrantee will request disposition instructions from the awarding agency. The instructions will provide for one of the following alternatives:

(1) *Retention of title.* Retain title after compensating the awarding agency. The amount paid to the awarding agency will be computed by applying the awarding agency's percentage of participation in the cost of the original purchase to the fair market value of the property. However, in those situations where a grantee or subgrantee is disposing of real property acquired with grant funds and acquiring replacement real property under the same program, the net proceeds from the disposition may be used as an offset to the cost of the replacement property.

(2) *Sale of property.* Sell the property and compensate the awarding agency.

The amount due to the awarding agency will be calculated by applying the awarding agency's percentage of participation in the cost of the original purchase to the proceeds of the sale after deduction of any actual and reasonable selling and fixing-up expenses. If the grant is still active, the net proceeds from sale may be offset against the original cost of the property. When a grantee or subgrantee is directed to sell property, sales procedures shall be followed that provide for competition to the extent practicable and result in the highest possible return.

(3) *Transfer of title.* Transfer title to the awarding agency or to a third-party designated/approved by the awarding agency. The grantee or subgrantee shall be paid an amount calculated by applying the grantee or subgrantee's percentage of participation in the purchase of the real property to the current fair market value of the property.

§ 1470.32 Equipment.

(a) *Title.* Subject to the obligations and conditions set forth in this section, title to equipment acquired under a grant or subgrant will vest upon acquisition in the grantee or subgrantee respectively.

(b) *States.* A State will use, manage, and dispose of equipment acquired under a grant by the State in accordance with State laws and procedures. Other grantees and subgrantees will follow paragraphs (c) through (e) of this section.

(c) *Use.* (1) Equipment shall be used by the grantee or subgrantee in the program or project for which it was acquired as long as needed, whether or not the project or program continues to be supported by Federal funds. When no longer needed for the original program or project, the equipment may be used in other activities currently or previously supported by a Federal agency.

(2) The grantee or subgrantee shall also make equipment available for use on other projects or programs currently or previously supported by the Federal Government, providing such use will not interfere with the work on the projects or program for which it was originally acquired. First preference for other use shall be given to other programs or projects supported by the awarding agency. User fees should be considered if appropriate.

(3) Notwithstanding the encouragement in §1470.25(a) to earn program income, the grantee or subgrantee must not use equipment acquired with grant funds to provide services for a fee to compete unfairly with private companies that provide equivalent services, unless specifically permitted or contemplated by Federal statute.

(4) When acquiring replacement equipment, the grantee or subgrantee may use the equipment to be replaced as a trade-in or sell the property and use the proceeds to offset the cost of the replacement property, subject to the approval of the awarding agency.

(d) *Management requirements.* Procedures for managing equipment (including replacement equipment), whether acquired in whole or in part with grant funds, until disposition takes place will, as a minimum, meet the following requirements:

(1) Property records must be maintained that include a description of the property, a serial number or other identification number, the source of property, who holds title, the acquisition date, and cost of the property, percentage of Federal participation in the cost of the property, the location, use and condition of the property, and any ultimate disposition data including the date of disposal and sale price of the property.

(2) A physical inventory of the property must be taken and the results reconciled with the property records at least once every two years.

(3) A control system must be developed to ensure adequate safeguards to prevent loss, damage, or theft of the property. Any loss, damage, or theft shall be investigated.

(4) Adequate maintenance procedures must be developed to keep the property in good condition.

(5) If the grantee or subgrantee is authorized or required to sell the property, proper sales procedures must be established to ensure the highest possible return.

(e) *Disposition.* When original or replacement equipment acquired under a grant or subgrant is no longer needed

for the original project or program or for other activities currently or previously supported by a Federal agency, disposition of the equipment will be made as follows:

(1) Items of equipment with a current per-unit fair market value of less than $5,000 may be retained, sold or otherwise disposed of with no further obligation to the awarding agency.

(2) Items of equipment with a current per unit fair market value in excess of $5,000 may be retained or sold and the awarding agency shall have a right to an amount calculated by multiplying the current market value or proceeds from sale by the awarding agency's share of the equipment.

(3) In cases where a grantee or subgrantee fails to take appropriate disposition actions, the awarding agency may direct the grantee or subgrantee to take excess and disposition actions.

(f) *Federal equipment.* In the event a grantee or subgrantee is provided federally-owned equipment:

(1) Title will remain vested in the Federal Government.

(2) Grantees or subgrantees will manage the equipment in accordance with Federal agency rules and procedures, and submit an annual inventory listing.

(3) When the equipment is no longer needed, the grantee or subgrantee will request disposition instructions from the Federal agency.

(g) *Right to transfer title.* The Federal awarding agency may reserve the right to transfer title to the Federal Government or a third part named by the awarding agency when such a third party is otherwise eligible under existing statutes. Such transfers shall be subject to the following standards:

(1) The property shall be identified in the grant or otherwise made known to the grantee in writing.

(2) The Federal awarding agency shall issue disposition instruction within 120 calendar days after the end of the Federal support of the project for which it was acquired. If the Federal awarding agency fails to issue disposition instructions within the 120 calendar-day period the grantee shall follow §1470.32(e).

(3) When title to equipment is transferred, the grantee shall be paid an amount calculated by applying the percentage of participation in the purchase to the current fair market value of the property.

§ 1470.33 Supplies.

(a) *Title.* Title to supplies acquired under a grant or subgrant will vest, upon acquisition, in the grantee or subgrantee respectively.

(b) *Disposition.* If there is a residual inventory of unused supplies exceeding $5,000 in total aggregate fair market value upon termination or completion of the award, and if the supplies are not needed for any other federally sponsored programs or projects, the grantee or subgrantee shall compensate the awarding agency for its share.

§ 1470.34 Copyrights.

The Federal awarding agency reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes:

(a) The copyright in any work developed under a grant, subgrant, or contract under a grant or subgrant; and

(b) Any rights of copyright to which a grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

§ 1470.35 Subawards to debarred and suspended parties.

Grantees and subgrantees must not make any award or permit any award (subgrant or contract) at any tier to any party which is debarred or suspended or is otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs under Executive Order 12549, ''Debarment and Suspension.''

§ 1470.36 Procurement.

(a) *States.* When procuring property and services under a grant, a State will follow the same policies and procedures it uses for procurements from its non-Federal funds. The State will ensure that every purchase order or other contract includes any clauses required by Federal statutes and executive orders and their implementing regulations. Other grantees and subgrantees will

follow paragraphs (b) through (i) in this section.

(b) *Procurement standards.* (1) Grantees and subgrantees will use their own procurement procedures which reflect applicable State and local laws and regulations, provided that the procurements conform to applicable Federal law and the standards identified in this section.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees will maintain a contract administration system which ensures that contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts or purchase orders.

(3) Grantees and subgrantees will maintain a written code of standards of conduct governing the performance of their employees engaged in the award and administration of contracts. No employee, officer or agent of the grantee or subgrantee shall participate in selection, or in the award or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when:

(i) The employee, officer or agent,

(ii) Any member of his immediate family,

(iii) His or her partner, or

(iv) An organization which employs, or is about to employ, any of the above, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for award. The grantee's or subgrantee's officers, employees or agents will neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to subagreements. Grantee and subgrantees may set minimum rules where the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal intrinsic value. To the extent permitted by State or local law or regulations, such standards or conduct will provide for penalties, sanctions, or other disciplinary actions for violations of such standards by the grantee's and subgrantee's officers, employees, or agents, or by contractors or their agents. The awarding agency may in regulation provide additional prohibitions relative to real, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest.

(4) Grantee and subgrantee procedures will provide for a review of proposed procurements to avoid purchase of unnecessary or duplicative items. Consideration should be given to consolidating or breaking out procurements to obtain a more economical purchase. Where appropriate, an analysis will be made of lease versus purchase alternatives, and any other appropriate analysis to determine the most economical approach.

(5) To foster greater economy and efficiency, grantees and subgrantees are encouraged to enter into State and local intergovernmental agreements for procurement or use of common goods and services.

(6) Grantees and subgrantees are encouraged to use Federal excess and surplus property in lieu of purchasing new equipment and property whenever such use is feasible and reduces project costs.

(7) Grantees and subgrantees are encouraged to use value engineering clauses in contracts for construction projects of sufficient size to offer reasonable opportunities for cost reductions. Value engineering is a systematic and creative anaylsis of each contract item or task to ensure that its essential function is provided at the overall lower cost.

(8) Grantees and subgrantees will make awards only to responsible contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed procurement. Consideration will be given to such matters as contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources.

(9) Grantees and subgrantees will maintain records sufficient to detail the significant history of a procurement. These records will include, but are not necessarily limited to the following: rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, contractor selection or rejection, and the basis for the contract price.

(10) Grantees and subgrantees will use time and material type contracts only—

(i) After a determination that no other contract is suitable, and

(ii) If the contract includes a ceiling price that the contractor exceeds at its own risk.

(11) Grantees and subgrantees alone will be responsible, in accordance with good administrative practice and sound business judgment, for the settlement of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurements. These issues include, but are not limited to source evaluation, protests, disputes, and claims. These standards do not relieve the grantee or subgrantee of any contractual responsibilities under its contracts. Federal agencies will not substitute their judgment for that of the grantee or subgrantee unless the matter is primarily a Federal concern. Violations of law will be referred to the local, State, or Federal authority having proper jurisdiction.

(12) Grantees and subgrantees will have protest procedures to handle and resolve disputes relating to their procurements and shall in all instances disclose information regarding the protest to the awarding agency. A protestor must exhaust all administrative remedies with the grantee and subgrantee before pursuing a protest with the Federal agency. Reviews of protests by the Federal agency will be limited to:

(i) Violations of Federal law or regulations and the standards of this section (violations of State or local law will be under the jurisdiction of State or local authorities) and

(ii) Violations of the grantee's or subgrantee's protest procedures for failure to review a complaint or protest. Protests received by the Federal agency other than those specified above will be referred to the grantee or subgrantee.

(c) *Competition.* (1) All procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition consistent with the standards of §1470.36. Some of the situations considered to be restrictive of competition include but are not limited to:

(i) Placing unreasonable requirements on firms in order for them to qualify to do business,

(ii) Requiring unnecessary experience and excessive bonding,

(iii) Noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or between affiliated companies,

(iv) Noncompetitive awards to consultants that are on retainer contracts,

(v) Organizational conflicts of interest,

(vi) Specifying only a ''brand name'' product instead of allowing ''an equal'' product to be offered and describing the performance of other relevant requirements of the procurement, and

(vii) Any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees will conduct procurements in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed in-State or local geographical preferences in the evaluation of bids or proposals, except in those cases where applicable Federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference. Nothing in this section preempts State licensing laws. When contracting for architectural and engineering (A/E) services, geographic location may be a selection criteria provided its application leaves an appropriate number of qualified firms, given the nature and size of the project, to compete for the contract.

(3) Grantees will have written selection procedures for procurement transactions. These procedures will ensure that all solicitations:

(i) Incorporate a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product, or service to be procured. Such description shall not, in competitive procurements, contain features which unduly restrict competition. The description may include a statement of the qualitative nature of the material, product or service to be procured, and when necessary, shall set forth those minimum essential characteristics and standards to which it must conform if it is to satisfy its intended use. Detailed product specifications should be avoided if at all possible. When it is impractical or uneconomical to make a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements, a ''brand name or equal'' description may be used as a means to define the performance or other salient requirements of a procurement. The specific features of the named brand which must be met by offerors shall be clearly stated; and

(ii) Identify all requirements which the offerors must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals.

(4) Grantees and subgrantees will ensure that all prequalified lists of persons, firms, or products which are used in acquiring goods and services are current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition. Also, grantees and subgrantees will not preclude potential bidders from qualifying during the solicitation period.

(d) *Methods of procurement to be followed*—(1) *Procurement by small purchase procedures.* Small purchase procedures are those relatively simple and informal procurement methods for securing services, supplies, or other property that do not cost more than the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. 403(11) (currently set at $100,000). If small purchase procedures are used, price or rate quotations shall be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources.

(2) Procurement by *sealed bids* (formal advertising). Bids are publicly solicited and a firm-fixed-price contract (lump sum or unit price) is awarded to the responsible bidder whose bid, conforming with all the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids, is the lowest in price. The sealed bid method is the preferred method for procuring construction, if the conditions in §1470.36(d)(2)(i) apply.

(i) In order for sealed bidding to be feasible, the following conditions should be present:

(A) A complete, adequate, and realistic specification or purchase description is available;

(B) Two or more responsible bidders are willing and able to compete effectively and for the business; and

(C) The procurement lends itself to a firm fixed price contract and the selection of the successful bidder can be made principally on the basis of price.

(ii) If sealed bids are used, the following requirements apply:

(A) The invitation for bids will be publicly advertised and bids shall be solicited from an adequate number of known suppliers, providing them sufficient time prior to the date set for opening the bids;

(B) The invitation for bids, which will include any specifications and pertinent attachments, shall define the items or services in order for the bidder to properly respond;

(C) All bids will be publicly opened at the time and place prescribed in the invitation for bids;

(D) A firm fixed-price contract award will be made in writing to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Where specified in bidding documents, factors such as discounts, transportation cost, and life cycle costs shall be considered in determining which bid is lowest. Payment discounts will only be used to determine the low bid when prior experience indicates that such discounts are usually taken advantage of; and

(E) Any or all bids may be rejected if there is a sound documented reason.

(3) Procurement by *competitive proposals.* The technique of competitive proposals is normally conducted with more than one source submitting an offer, and either a fixed-price or cost-reimbursement type contract is awarded. It is generally used when conditions are not appropriate for the use of sealed bids. If this method is used, the following requirements apply:

(i) Requests for proposals will be publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Any response to publicized requests for proposals shall be honored to the maximum extent practical;

(ii) Proposals will be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources;

(iii) Grantees and subgrantees will have a method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting awardees;

(iv) Awards will be made to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered; and

(v) Grantees and subgrantees may use competitive proposal procedures for qualifications-based procurement of architectural/engineering (A/E) professional services whereby competitors' qualifications are evaluated and the most qualified competitor is selected, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation. The method, where price is not used as a selection factor, can only be used in procurement of A/E professional services. It cannot be used to purchase other types

of services though A/E firms are a potential source to perform the proposed effort.

(4) Procurement by *noncompetitive proposals* is procurement through solicitation of a proposal from only one source, or after solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

(i) Procurement by noncompetitive proposals may be used only when the award of a contract is infeasible under small purchase procedures, sealed bids or competitive proposals and one of the following circumstances applies:

(A) The item is available only from a single source;

(B) The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation;

(C) The awarding agency authorizes noncompetitive proposals; or

(D) After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

(ii) Cost analysis, i.e., verifying the proposed cost data, the projections of the data, and the evaluation of the specific elements of costs and profits, is required.

(iii) Grantees and subgrantees may be required to submit the proposed procurement to the awarding agency for pre-award review in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(e) *Contracting with small and minority firms, women's business enterprise and labor surplus area firms.* (1) The grantee and subgrantee will take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority firms, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible.

(2) Affirmative steps shall include:

(i) Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists;

(ii) Assuring that small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;

(iii) Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority business, and women's business enterprises;

(iv) Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority business, and women's business enterprises;

(v) Using the services and assistance of the Small Business Administration, and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce; and

(vi) Requiring the prime contractor, if subcontracts are to be let, to take the affirmative steps listed in paragraphs (e)(2) (i) through (v) of this section.

(f) *Contract cost and price.* (1) Grantees and subgrantees must perform a cost or price analysis in connection with every procurement action including contract modifications. The method and degree of analysis is dependent on the facts surrounding the particular procurement situation, but as a starting point, grantees must make independent estimates before receiving bids or proposals. A cost analysis must be performed when the offeror is required to submit the elements of his estimated cost, e.g., under professional, consulting, and architectural engineering services contracts. A cost analysis will be necessary when adequate price competition is lacking, and for sole source procurements, including contract modifications or change orders, unless price resonableness can be established on the basis of a catalog or market price of a commercial product sold in substantial quantities to the general public or based on prices set by law or regulation. A price analysis will be used in all other instances to determine the reasonableness of the proposed contract price.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees will negotiate profit as a separate element of the price for each contract in which there is no price competition and in all cases where cost analysis is performed. To establish a fair and reasonable profit, consideration will be given to the complexity of the work to be performed, the risk borne by the contractor, the contractor's investment, the amount of subcontracting, the quality of its record of past performance, and industry profit rates in the surrounding geographical area for similar work.

(3) Costs or prices based on estimated costs for contracts under grants will be allowable only to the extent that costs incurred or cost estimates included in negotiated prices are consistent with Federal cost principles (see §1470.22). Grantees may reference their own cost principles that comply with the applicable Federal cost principles.

(4) The cost plus a percentage of cost and percentage of construction cost methods of contracting shall not be used.

(g) *Awarding agency review.* (1) Grantees and subgrantees must make available, upon request of the awarding agency, technical specifications on proposed procurements where the awarding agency believes such review is needed to ensure that the item and/or service specified is the one being proposed for purchase. This review generally will take place prior to the time the specification is incorporated into a solicitation document. However, if the grantee or subgrantee desires to have the review accomplished after a solicitation has been developed, the awarding agency may still review the specifications, with such review usually limited to the technical aspects of the proposed purchase.

(2) Grantees and subgrantees must on request make available for awarding agency pre-award review procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc. when:

(i) A grantee's or subgrantee's procurement procedures or operation fails to comply with the procurement standards in this section; or

(ii) The procurement is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold and is to be awarded without competition or only one bid or offer is received in response to a solicitation; or

(iii) The procurement, which is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, specifies a ''brand name'' product; or

(iv) The proposed award is more than the simplified acquisition threshold and is to be awarded to other than the apparent low bidder under a sealed bid procurement; or

(v) A proposed contract modification changes the scope of a contract or increases the contract amount by more than the simplified acquisition threshold.

(3) A grantee or subgrantee will be exempt from the pre-award review in paragraph (g)(2) of this section if the awarding agency determines that its procurement systems comply with the standards of this section.

(i) A grantee or subgrantee may request that its procurement system be reviewed by the awarding agency to determine whether its system meets these standards in order for its system to be certified. Generally, these reviews shall occur where there is a continuous high-dollar funding, and third-party contracts are awarded on a regular basis.

(ii) A grantee or subgrantee may self-certify its procurement system. Such self-certification shall not limit the awarding agency's right to survey the system. Under a self-certification procedure, awarding agencies may wish to rely on written assurances from the grantee or subgrantee that it is complying with these standards. A grantee or subgrantee will cite specific procedures, regulations, standards, etc., as being in compliance with these requirements and have its system available for review.

(h) *Bonding requirements.* For construction or facility improvement contracts or subcontracts exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold, the awarding agency may accept the bonding policy and requirements of the grantee or subgrantee provided the awarding agency has made a determination that the awarding agency's interest is adequately protected. If such a determination has not been made, the minimum requirements shall be as follows:

(1) *A bid guarantee from each bidder equivalent to five percent of the bid price.* The ''bid guarantee'' shall consist of a firm commitment such as a bid bond, certified check, or other negotiable instrument accompanying a bid as assurance that the bidder will, upon acceptance of his bid, execute such contractual documents as may be required within the time specified.

(2) *A performance bond on the part of the contractor for 100 percent of the contract price.* A ''performance bond'' is

one executed in connection with a contract to secure fulfillment of all the contractor's obligations under such contract.

(3) *A payment bond on the part of the contractor for 100 percent of the contract price.* A ''payment bond'' is one executed in connection with a contract to assure payment as required by law of all persons supplying labor and material in the execution of the work provided for in the contract.

(i) *Contract provisions.* A grantee's and subgrantee's contracts must contain provisions in paragraph (i) of this section. Federal agencies are permitted to require changes, remedies, changed conditions, access and records retention, suspension of work, and other clauses approved by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy.

(1) Administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances where contractors violate or breach contract terms, and provide for such sanctions and penalties as may be appropriate. (Contracts more than the simplified acquisition threshold)

(2) Termination for cause and for convenience by the grantee or subgrantee including the manner by which it will be effected and the basis for settlement. (All contracts in excess of $10,000)

(3) Compliance with Executive Order 11246 of September 24, 1965, entitled ''Equal Employment Opportunity,'' as amended by Executive Order 11375 of October 13, 1967, and as supplemented in Department of Labor regulations (41 CFR chapter 60). (All construction contracts awarded in excess of $10,000 by grantees and their contractors or subgrantees)

(4) Compliance with the Copeland ''Anti-Kickback'' Act (18 U.S.C. 874) as supplemented in Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR part 3). (All contracts and subgrants for construction or repair)

(5) Compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 276a to 276a–7) as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR part 5). (Construction contracts in excess of $2000 awarded by grantees and subgrantees when required by Federal grant program legislation)

(6) Compliance with Sections 103 and 107 of the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 327–330) as supplemented by Department of Labor regulations (29 CFR part 5). (Construction contracts awarded by grantees and subgrantees in excess of $2000, and in excess of $2500 for other contracts which involve the employment of mechanics or laborers)

(7) Notice of awarding agency requirements and regulations pertaining to reporting.

(8) Notice of awarding agency requirements and regulations pertaining to patent rights with respect to any discovery or invention which arises or is developed in the course of or under such contract.

(9) Awarding agency requirements and regulations pertaining to copyrights and rights in data.

(10) Access by the grantee, the subgrantee, the Federal grantor agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives to any books, documents, papers, and records of the contractor which are directly pertinent to that specific contract for the purpose of making audit, examination, excerpts, and transcriptions.

(11) Retention of all required records for three years after grantees or subgrantees make final payments and all other pending matters are closed.

(12) Compliance with all applicable standards, orders, or requirements issued under section 306 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 1857(h)), section 508 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1368), Executive Order 11738, and Environmental Protection Agency regulations (40 CFR part 15). (Contracts, subcontracts, and subgrants of amounts in excess of $100,000)

(13) Mandatory standards and policies relating to energy efficiency which are contained in the state energy conservation plan issued in compliance with the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (Pub. L. 94–163, 89 Stat. 871).

[53 FR 8087, Mar. 11, 1988, as amended at 60 FR 19639, 19643, Apr. 19, 1995]

§ 1470.37 Subgrants.

(a) *States.* States shall follow State law and procedures when awarding and administering subgrants (whether on a

cost reimbursement or fixed amount basis) of financial assistance to local and Indian tribal governments. States shall:

(1) Ensure that every subgrant includes any clauses required by Federal statute and executive orders and their implementing regulations;

(2) Ensure that subgrantees are aware of requirements imposed upon them by Federal statute and regulation;

(3) Ensure that a provision for compliance with §1470.42 is placed in every cost reimbursement subgrant; and

(4) Conform any advances of grant funds to subgrantees substantially to the same standards of timing and amount that apply to cash advances by Federal agencies.

(b) *All other grantees.* All other grantees shall follow the provisions of this part which are applicable to awarding agencies when awarding and administering subgrants (whether on a cost reimbursement or fixed amount basis) of financial assistance to local and Indian tribal governments. Grantees shall:

(1) Ensure that every subgrant includes a provision for compliance with this part;

(2) Ensure that every subgrant includes any clauses required by Federal statute and executive orders and their implementing regulations; and

(3) Ensure that subgrantees are aware of requirements imposed upon them by Federal statutes and regulations.

(c) *Exceptions.* By their own terms, certain provisions of this part do not apply to the award and administration of subgrants:

(1) Section 1470.10;

(2) Section 1470.11;

(3) The letter-of-credit procedures specified in Treasury Regulations at 31 CFR part 205, cited in §1470.21; and

(4) Section 1470.50.

REPORTS, RECORDS RETENTION, AND ENFORCEMENT

§1470.40 Monitoring and reporting program performance.

(a) *Monitoring by grantees.* Grantees are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of grant and subgrant supported activities. Grantees must monitor grant and subgrant supported activities to assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements and that performance goals are being achieved. Grantee monitoring must cover each program, function or activity.

(b) *Nonconstruction performance reports.* The Federal agency may, if it decides that performance information available from subsequent applications contains sufficient information to meet its programmatic needs, require the grantee to submit a performance report only upon expiration or termination of grant support. Unless waived by the Federal agency this report will be due on the same date as the final Financial Status Report.

(1) Grantees shall submit annual performance reports unless the awarding agency requires quarterly or semi-annual reports. However, performance reports will not be required more frequently than quarterly. Annual reports shall be due 90 days after the grant year, quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. The final performance report will be due 90 days after the expiration or termination of grant support. If a justified request is submitted by a grantee, the Federal agency may extend the due date for any performance report. Additionally, requirements for unnecessary performance reports may be waived by the Federal agency.

(2) Performance reports will contain, for each grant, brief information on the following:

(i) A comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives established for the period. Where the output of the project can be quantified, a computation of the cost per unit of output may be required if that information will be useful.

(ii) The reasons for slippage if established objectives were not met.

(iii) Additional pertinent information including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs.

(3) Grantees will not be required to submit more than the original and two copies of performance reports.

(4) Grantees will adhere to the standards in this section in prescribing performance reporting requirements for subgrantees.

(c) *Construction performance reports.* For the most part, on-site technical inspections and certified percentage-of-completion data are relied on heavily by Federal agencies to monitor progress under construction grants and subgrants. The Federal agency will require additional formal performance reports only when considered necessary, and never more frequently than quarterly.

(d) *Significant developments.* Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates which have significant impact upon the grant or subgrant supported activity. In such cases, the grantee must inform the Federal agency as soon as the following types of conditions become known:

(1) Problems, delays, or adverse conditions which will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the award. This disclosure must include a statement of the action taken, or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation.

(2) Favorable developments which enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more beneficial results than originally planned.

(e) Federal agencies may make site visits as warranted by program needs.

(f) *Waivers, extensions.* (1) Federal agencies may waive any performance report required by this part if not needed.

(2) The grantee may waive any performance report from a subgrantee when not needed. The grantee may extend the due date for any performance report from a subgrantee if the grantee will still be able to meet its performance reporting obligations to the Federal agency.

§ 1470.41 Financial reporting.

(a) *General.* (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (a) (2) and (5) of this section, grantees will use only the forms specified in paragraphs (a) through (e) of this section, and such supplementary or other forms as may from time to time be authorized by OMB, for:

(i) Submitting financial reports to Federal agencies, or

(ii) Requesting advances or reimbursements when letters of credit are not used.

(2) Grantees need not apply the forms prescribed in this section in dealing with their subgrantees. However, grantees shall not impose more burdensome requirements on subgrantees.

(3) Grantees shall follow all applicable standard and supplemental Federal agency instructions approved by OMB to the extend required under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 for use in connection with forms specified in paragraphs (b) through (e) of this section. Federal agencies may issue substantive supplementary instructions only with the approval of OMB. Federal agencies may shade out or instruct the grantee to disregard any line item that the Federal agency finds unnecessary for its decisionmaking purposes.

(4) Grantees will not be required to submit more than the original and two copies of forms required under this part.

(5) Federal agencies may provide computer outputs to grantees to expedite or contribute to the accuracy of reporting. Federal agencies may accept the required information from grantees in machine usable format or computer printouts instead of prescribed forms.

(6) Federal agencies may waive any report required by this section if not needed.

(7) Federal agencies may extend the due date of any financial report upon receiving a justified request from a grantee.

(b) *Financial Status Report*—(1) *Form.* Grantees will use Standard Form 269 or 269A, Financial Status Report, to report the status of funds for all nonconstruction grants and for construction grants when required in accordance with § 1470.41(e)(2)(iii).

(2) *Accounting basis.* Each grantee will report program outlays and program income on a cash or accrual basis as prescribed by the awarding agency. If the Federal agency requires accrual information and the grantee's accounting records are not normally kept on the accural basis, the grantee shall not be

required to convert its accounting system but shall develop such accrual information through and analysis of the documentation on hand.

(3) *Frequency.* The Federal agency may prescribe the frequency of the report for each project or program. However, the report will not be required more frequently than quarterly. If the Federal agency does not specify the frequency of the report, it will be submitted annually. A final report will be required upon expiration or termination of grant support.

(4) *Due date.* When reports are required on a quarterly or semiannual basis, they will be due 30 days after the reporting period. When required on an annual basis, they will be due 90 days after the grant year. Final reports will be due 90 days after the expiration or termination of grant support.

(c) *Federal Cash Transactions Report*—(1) *Form.* (i) For grants paid by letter or credit, Treasury check advances or electronic transfer of funds, the grantee will submit the Standard Form 272, Federal Cash Transactions Report, and when necessary, its continuation sheet, Standard Form 272a, unless the terms of the award exempt the grantee from this requirement.

(ii) These reports will be used by the Federal agency to monitor cash advanced to grantees and to obtain disbursement or outlay information for each grant from grantees. The format of the report may be adapted as appropriate when reporting is to be accomplished with the assistance of automatic data processing equipment provided that the information to be submitted is not changed in substance.

(2) *Forecasts of Federal cash requirements.* Forecasts of Federal cash requirements may be required in the ''Remarks'' section of the report.

(3) *Cash in hands of subgrantees.* When considered necessary and feasible by the Federal agency, grantees may be required to report the amount of cash advances in excess of three days' needs in the hands of their subgrantees or contractors and to provide short narrative explanations of actions taken by the grantee to reduce the excess balances.

(4) *Frequency and due date.* Grantees must submit the report no later than 15 working days following the end of each quarter. However, where an advance either by letter of credit or electronic transfer of funds is authorized at an annualized rate of one million dollars or more, the Federal agency may require the report to be submitted within 15 working days following the end of each month.

(d) *Request for advance or reimbursement*—(1) *Advance payments.* Requests for Treasury check advance payments will be submitted on Standard Form 270, Request for Advance or Reimbursement. (This form will not be used for drawdowns under a letter of credit, electronic funds transfer or when Treasury check advance payments are made to the grantee automatically on a predetermined basis.)

(2) *Reimbursements.* Requests for reimbursement under nonconstruction grants will also be submitted on Standard Form 270. (For reimbursement requests under construction grants, see paragraph (e)(1) of this section.)

(3) The frequency for submitting payment requests is treated in §1470.41(b)(3).

(e) *Outlay report and request for reimbursement for construction programs*—(1) *Grants that support construction activities paid by reimbursement method.* (i) Requests for reimbursement under construction grants will be submitted on Standard Form 271, Outlay Report and Request for Reimbursement for Construction Programs. Federal agencies may, however, prescribe the Request for Advance or Reimbursement form, specified in §1470.41(d), instead of this form.

(ii) The frequency for submitting reimbursement requests is treated in §1470.41(b)(3).

(2) *Grants that support construction activities paid by letter of credit, electronic funds transfer or Treasury check advance.* (i) When a construction grant is paid by letter of credit, electronic funds transfer or Treasury check advances, the grantee will report its outlays to the Federal agency using Standard Form 271, Outlay Report and Request for Reimbursement for Construction Programs. The Federal agency will provide any necessary special instruction. However, frequency and

due date shall be governed by §1470.41(b) (3) and (4).

(ii) When a construction grant is paid by Treasury check advances based on periodic requests from the grantee, the advances will be requested on the form specified in §1470.41(d).

(iii) The Federal agency may substitute the Financial Status Report specified in §1470.41(b) for the Outlay Report and Request for Reimbursement for Construction Programs.

(3) *Accounting basis.* The accounting basis for the Outlay Report and Request for Reimbursement for Construction Programs shall be governed by §1470.41(b)(2).

§1470.42 Retention and access requirements for records.

(a) *Applicability.* (1) This section applies to all financial and programmatic records, supporting documents, statistical records, and other records of grantees or subgrantees which are:

(i) Required to be maintained by the terms of this part, program regulations or the grant agreement, or

(ii) Otherwise reasonably considered as pertinent to program regulations or the grant agreement.

(2) This section does not apply to records maintained by contractors or subcontractors. For a requirement to place a provision concerning records in certain kinds of contracts, see §1470.36(i)(10).

(b) *Length of retention period.* (1) Except as otherwise provided, records must be retained for three years from the starting date specified in paragraph (c) of this section.

(2) If any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit or other action involving the records has been started before the expiration of the 3-year period, the records must be retained until completion of the action and resolution of all issues which arise from it, or until the end of the regular 3-year period, whichever is later.

(3) To avoid duplicate recordkeeping, awarding agencies may make special arrangements with grantees and subgrantees to retain any records which are continuously needed for joint use. The awarding agency will request transfer of records to its custody when it determines that the records possess long-term retention value. When the records are transferred to or maintained by the Federal agency, the 3-year retention requirement is not applicable to the grantee or subgrantee.

(c) *Starting date of retention period*—(1) *General.* When grant support is continued or renewed at annual or other intervals, the retention period for the records of each funding period starts on the day the grantee or subgrantee submits to the awarding agency its single or last expenditure report for that period. However, if grant support is continued or renewed quarterly, the retention period for each year's records starts on the day the grantee submits its expenditure report for the last quarter of the Federal fiscal year. In all other cases, the retention period starts on the day the grantee submits its final expenditure report. If an expenditure report has been waived, the retention period starts on the day the report would have been due.

(2) *Real property and equipment records.* The retention period for real property and equipment records starts from the date of the disposition or replacement or transfer at the direction of the awarding agency.

(3) *Records for income transactions after grant or subgrant support.* In some cases grantees must report income after the period of grant support. Where there is such a requirement, the retention period for the records pertaining to the earning of the income starts from the end of the grantee's fiscal year in which the income is earned.

(4) *Indirect cost rate proposals, cost allocations plans, etc.* This paragraph applies to the following types of documents, and their supporting records: indirect cost rate computations or proposals, cost allocation plans, and any similar accounting computations of the rate at which a particular group of costs is chargeable (such as computer usage chargeback rates or composite fringe benefit rates).

(i) *If submitted for negotiation.* If the proposal, plan, or other computation is required to be submitted to the Federal Government (or to the grantee) to form the basis for negotiation of the rate, then the 3-year retention period for its supporting records starts from the date of such submission.

(ii) *If not submitted for negotiation.* If the proposal, plan, or other computation is not required to be submitted to the Federal Government (or to the grantee) for negotiation purposes, then the 3-year retention period for the proposal plan, or computation and its supporting records starts from end of the fiscal year (or other accounting period) covered by the proposal, plan, or other computation.

(d) *Substitution of microfilm.* Copies made by microfilming, photocopying, or similar methods may be substituted for the original records.

(e) *Access to records*—(1) *Records of grantees and subgrantees.* The awarding agency and the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their authorized representatives, shall have the right of access to any pertinent books, documents, papers, or other records of grantees and subgrantees which are pertinent to the grant, in order to make audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcripts.

(2) *Expiration of right of access.* The rights of access in this section must not be limited to the required retention period but shall last as long as the records are retained.

(f) *Restrictions on public access.* The Federal Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) does not apply to records Unless required by Federal, State, or local law, grantees and subgrantees are not required to permit public access to their records.

§ 1470.43 Enforcement.

(a) *Remedies for noncompliance.* If a grantee or subgrantee materially fails to comply with any term of an award, whether stated in a Federal statute or regulation, an assurance, in a State plan or application, a notice of award, or elsewhere, the awarding agency may take one or more of the following actions, as appropriate in the circumstances:

(1) Temporarily withhold cash payments pending correction of the deficiency by the grantee or subgrantee or more severe enforcement action by the awarding agency,

(2) Disallow (that is, deny both use of funds and matching credit for) all or part of the cost of the activity or action not in compliance,

(3) Wholly or partly suspend or terminate the current award for the grantee's or subgrantee's program,

(4) Withhold further awards for the program, or

(5) Take other remedies that may be legally available.

(b) *Hearings, appeals.* In taking an enforcement action, the awarding agency will provide the grantee or subgrantee an opportunity for such hearing, appeal, or other administrative proceeding to which the grantee or subgrantee is entitled under any statute or regulation applicable to the action involved.

(c) *Effects of suspension and termination.* Costs of grantee or subgrantee resulting from obligations incurred by the grantee or subgrantee during a suspension or after termination of an award are not allowable unless the awarding agency expressly authorizes them in the notice of suspension or termination or subsequently. Other grantee or subgrantee costs during suspension or after termination which are necessary and not reasonably avoidable are allowable if:

(1) The costs result from obligations which were properly incurred by the grantee or subgrantee before the effective date of suspension or termination, are not in anticipation of it, and, in the case of a termination, are noncancellable, and,

(2) The costs would be allowable if the award were not suspended or expired normally at the end of the funding period in which the termination takes effect.

(d) *Relationship to debarment and suspension.* The enforcement remedies identified in this section, including suspension and termination, do not preclude grantee or subgrantee from being subject to ''Debarment and Suspension'' under E.O. 12549 (see § 1470.35).

§ 1470.44 Termination for convenience.

Except as provided in § 1470.43 awards may be terminated in whole or in part only as follows:

(a) By the awarding agency with the consent of the grantee or subgrantee in which case the two parties shall agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date and in the

case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated, or

(b) By the grantee or subgrantee upon written notification to the awarding agency, setting forth the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and in the case of partial termination, the portion to be terminated. However, if, in the case of a partial termination, the awarding agency determines that the remaining portion of the award will not accomplish the purposes for which the award was made, the awarding agency may terminate the award in its entirety under either §1470.43 or paragraph (a) of this section.

Subpart D—After-The-Grant Requirements

§ 1470.50 Closeout.

(a) *General.* The Federal agency will close out the award when it determines that all applicable administrative actions and all required work of the grant has been completed.

(b) *Reports.* Within 90 days after the expiration or termination of the grant, the grantee must submit all financial, performance, and other reports required as a condition of the grant. Upon request by the grantee, Federal agencies may extend this timeframe. These may include but are not limited to:

(1) Final performance or progress report.

(2) Financial Status Report (SF–269) or Outlay Report and Request for Reimbursement for Construction Programs (SF–271) (as applicable).

(3) Final request for payment (SF–270) (if applicable).

(4) Invention disclosure (if applicable).

(5) Federally-owned property report:

In accordance with §1470.32(f), a grantee must submit an inventory of all federally owned property (as distinct from property acquired with grant funds) for which it is accountable and request disposition instructions from the Federal agency of property no longer needed.

(c) *Cost adjustment.* The Federal agency will, within 90 days after receipt of reports in paragraph (b) of this section, make upward or downward adjustments to the allowable costs.

(d) *Cash adjustments.* (1) The Federal agency will make prompt payment to the grantee for allowable reimbursable costs.

(2) The grantee must immediately refund to the Federal agency any balance of unobligated (unencumbered) cash advanced that is not authorized to be retained for use on other grants.

§ 1470.51 Later disallowances and adjustments.

The closeout of a grant does not affect:

(a) The Federal agency's right to disallow costs and recover funds on the basis of a later audit or other review;

(b) The grantee's obligation to return any funds due as a result of later refunds, corrections, or other transactions;

(c) Records retention as required in §1470.42;

(d) Property management requirements in §§1470.31 and 1470.32; and

(e) Audit requirements in §1470.26.

§ 1470.52 Collection of amounts due.

(a) Any funds paid to a grantee in excess of the amount to which the grantee is finally determined to be entitled under the terms of the award constitute a debt to the Federal Government. If not paid within a reasonable period after demand, the Federal agency may reduce the debt by:

(1) Making an adminstrative offset against other requests for reimbursements,

(2) Withholding advance payments otherwise due to the grantee, or

(3) Other action permitted by law.

(b) Except where otherwise provided by statutes or regulations, the Federal agency will charge interest on an overdue debt in accordance with the Federal Claims Collection Standards (4 CFR chapter II). The date from which interest is computed is not extended by litigation or the filing of any form of appeal.

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PART 1471—GOVERNMENTWIDE DEBARMENT AND SUSPENSION (NONPROCUREMENT)

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APPENDIX TO PART 1471—COVERED TRANSACTIONS

AUTHORITY: E.O. 12549 ,3 CFR 1986 Comp., p. 189; E.O. 12698, 3 CFR 1989 Comp., p. 235; sec. 2455, Pub. L. 103–355, 108 Stat. 3327 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note); 29 U.S.C. 175a.

SOURCE: 68 FR 66544, 66603, 66604, Nov. 26, 2003, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1471.25 How is this part organized?

(a) This part is subdivided into ten subparts. Each subpart contains information related to a broad topic or specific audience with special responsibilities, as shown in the following table:

In subpart . . .	You will find provisions related to . . .
A	general information about this rule.
B	the types of FMCS transactions that are covered by the Governmentwide nonprocurement suspension and debarment system.
C	the responsibilities of persons who participate in covered transactions.
D	the responsibilities of FMCS officials who are authorized to enter into covered transactions.
E	the responsibilities of Federal agencies for the *Excluded Parties List System* (Disseminated by the General Services Administration).
F	the general principles governing suspension, debarment, voluntary exclusion and settlement.
G	suspension actions.
H	debarment actions.
I	definitions of terms used in this part.
J	[Reserved]

(b) The following table shows which subparts may be of special interest to you, depending on who you are:

If you are . . .	See subpart(s) . . .
(1) a participant or principal in a nonprocurement transaction.	A, B, C, and I.
(2) a respondent in a suspension action	A, B, F, G and I.
(3) a respondent in a debarment action	A, B, F, H and I.
(4) a suspending official	A, B, D, E, F, G and I.
(5) a debarring official	A, B, D, E, F, H and I.
(6) a (n) FMCS official authorized to enter into a covered transaction.	A, B, D, E and I.
(7) Reserved	J.

§ 1471.50 How is this part written?

(a) This part uses a ''plain language'' format to make it easier for the general public and business community to use. The section headings and text, often in the form of questions and answers, must be read together.

(b) Pronouns used within this part, such as ''I'' and ''you,'' change from subpart to subpart depending on the audience being addressed. The pronoun ''we'' always is the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

(c) The ''Covered Transactions'' diagram in the appendix to this part shows the levels or ''tiers'' at which the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service enforces an exclusion under this part.

§ 1471.75 Do terms in this part have special meanings?

This part uses terms throughout the text that have special meaning. Those terms are defined in subpart I of this part. For example, three important terms are—

(a) *Exclusion or excluded*, which refers only to discretionary actions taken by a suspending or debarring official under this part or the Federal Acquisition Regulation (48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4);

(b) *Disqualification or disqualified*, which refers to prohibitions under specific statutes, executive orders (other than Executive Order 12549 and Executive Order 12689), or other authorities. Disqualifications frequently are not subject to the discretion of an agency official, may have a different scope than exclusions, or have special conditions that apply to the disqualification; and

(c) *Ineligibility or ineligible*, which generally refers to a person who is either excluded or disqualified.

Subpart A—General

§ 1471.100 What does this part do?

This part adopts a governmentwide system of debarment and suspension for FMCS nonprocurement activities. It also provides for reciprocal exclusion of persons who have been excluded under the Federal Acquisition Regulation, and provides for the consolidated listing of all persons who are excluded, or disqualified by statute, executive order, or other legal authority. This part satisfies the requirements in section 3 of Executive Order 12549, ''Debarment and Suspension'' (3 CFR 1986 Comp., p. 189), Executive Order 12689, ''Debarment and Suspension'' (3 CFR 1989 Comp., p. 235) and 31 U.S.C. 6101 note (Section 2455, Public Law 103–355, 108 Stat. 3327).

§ 1471.105 Does this part apply to me?

Portions of this part (see table at § 1471.25(b)) apply to you if you are a(n)—

(a) Person who has been, is, or may reasonably be expected to be, a participant or principal in a covered transaction;

(b) Respondent (a person against whom the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service has initiated a debarment or suspension action);

(c) FMCS debarring or suspending official; or

(d) FMCS official who is authorized to enter into covered transactions with non-Federal parties.

§ 1471.110 What is the purpose of the nonprocurement debarment and suspension system?

(a) To protect the public interest, the Federal Government ensures the integrity of Federal programs by conducting business only with responsible persons.

(b) A Federal agency uses the nonprocurement debarment and suspension system to exclude from Federal programs persons who are not presently responsible.

(c) An exclusion is a serious action that a Federal agency may take only to protect the public interest. A Federal agency may not exclude a person or commodity for the purposes of punishment.

§ 1471.115 How does an exclusion restrict a person's involvement in covered transactions?

With the exceptions stated in §§ 1471.120, 1471.315, and 1471.420, a person who is excluded by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service or any other Federal agency may not:

(a) Be a participant in a(n) FMCS transaction that is a covered transaction under subpart B of this part;

(b) Be a participant in a transaction of any other Federal agency that is a covered transaction under that agency's regulation for debarment and suspension; or

(c) Act as a principal of a person participating in one of those covered transactions.

§ 1471.120 May we grant an exception to let an excluded person participate in a covered transaction?

(a) The Agency Director may grant an exception permitting an excluded person to participate in a particular covered transaction. If the Agency Director grants an exception, the exception must be in writing and state the reason(s) for deviating from the governmentwide policy in Executive Order 12549.

(b) An exception granted by one agency for an excluded person does not extend to the covered transactions of another agency.

§ 1471.125 Does an exclusion under the nonprocurement system affect a person's eligibility for Federal procurement contracts?

If any Federal agency excludes a person under its nonprocurement common rule on or after August 25, 1995, the excluded person is also ineligible to participate in Federal procurement transactions under the FAR. Therefore, an exclusion under this part has reciprocal effect in Federal procurement transactions.

§ 1471.130 Does exclusion under the Federal procurement system affect a person's eligibility to participate in nonprocurement transactions?

If any Federal agency excludes a person under the FAR on or after August 25, 1995, the excluded person is also ineligible to participate in nonprocurement covered transactions under this

part. Therefore, an exclusion under the FAR has reciprocal effect in Federal nonprocurement transactions.

§ 1471.135 May the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service exclude a person who is not currently participating in a nonprocurement transaction?

Given a cause that justifies an exclusion under this part, we may exclude any person who has been involved, is currently involved, or may reasonably be expected to be involved in a covered transaction.

§ 1471.140 How do I know if a person is excluded?

Check the *Excluded Parties List System (EPLS)* to determine whether a person is excluded. The General Services Administration (GSA) maintains the *EPLS* and makes it available, as detailed in subpart E of this part. When a Federal agency takes an action to exclude a person under the nonprocurement or procurement debarment and suspension system, the agency enters the information about the excluded person into the *EPLS*.

§ 1471.145 Does this part address persons who are disqualified, as well as those who are excluded from nonprocurement transactions?

Except if provided for in subpart J of this part, this part—

(a) Addresses disqualified persons only to—

(1) Provide for their inclusion in the *EPLS;* and

(2) State responsibilities of Federal agencies and participants to check for disqualified persons before entering into covered transactions.

(b) Does not specify the—

(1) FMCS transactions for which a disqualified person is ineligible. Those transactions vary on a case-by-case basis, because they depend on the language of the specific statute, Executive order, or regulation that caused the disqualification;

(2) Entities to which the disqualification applies; or

(3) Process that the agency uses to disqualify a person. Unlike exclusion, disqualification is frequently not a discretionary action that a Federal agency takes.

Subpart B—Covered Transactions

§ 1471.200 What is a covered transaction?

A covered transaction is a nonprocurement or procurement transaction that is subject to the prohibitions of this part. It may be a transaction at—

(a) The primary tier, between a Federal agency and a person (see appendix to this part); or

(b) A lower tier, between a participant in a covered transaction and another person.

§ 1471.205 Why is it important if a particular transaction is a covered transaction?

The importance of a covered transaction depends upon who you are.

(a) As a participant in the transaction, you have the responsibilities laid out in subpart C of this part. Those include responsibilities to the person or Federal agency at the next higher tier from whom you received the transaction, if any. They also include responsibilities if you subsequently enter into other covered transactions with persons at the next lower tier.

(b) As a Federal official who enters into a primary tier transaction, you have the responsibilities laid out in subpart D of this part.

(c) As an excluded person, you may not be a participant or principal in the transaction unless—

(1) The person who entered into the transaction with you allows you to continue your involvement in a transaction that predates your exclusion, as permitted under §1471.310 or §1471.415; or

(2) A(n) FMCS official obtains an exception from the Agency Director to allow you to be involved in the transaction, as permitted under §1471.120.

§ 1471.210 Which nonprocurement transactions are covered transactions?

All nonprocurement transactions, as defined in §1471.970, are covered transactions unless listed in §1471.215. (See appendix to this part.)

§ 1471.215 Which nonprocurement transactions are not covered transactions?

The following types of nonprocurement transactions are not covered transactions:

(a) A direct award to—

(1) A foreign government or foreign governmental entity;

(2) A public international organization;

(3) An entity owned (in whole or in part) or controlled by a foreign government; or

(4) Any other entity consisting wholly or partially of one or more foreign governments or foreign governmental entities.

(b) A benefit to an individual as a personal entitlement without regard to the individual's present responsibility (but benefits received in an individual's business capacity are not excepted). For example, if a person receives social security benefits under the Supplemental Security Income provisions of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 1301 *et seq.*, those benefits are not covered transactions and, therefore, are not affected if the person is excluded.

(c) Federal employment.

(d) A transaction that the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service needs to respond to a national or agency-recognized emergency or disaster.

(e) A permit, license, certificate, or similar instrument issued as a means to regulate public health, safety, or the environment, unless the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service specifically designates it to be a covered transaction.

(f) An incidental benefit that results from ordinary governmental operations.

(g) Any other transaction if the application of an exclusion to the transaction is prohibited by law.

§ 1471.220 Are any procurement contracts included as covered transactions?

(a) Covered transactions under this part—

(1) Do not include any procurement contracts awarded directly by a Federal agency; but

(2) Do include some procurement contracts awarded by non-Federal participants in nonprocurement covered transactions (see appendix to this part).

(b) Specifically, a contract for goods or services is a covered transaction if any of the following applies:

(1) The contract is awarded by a participant in a nonprocurement transaction that is covered under § 1471.210, and the amount of the contract is expected to equal or exceed $25,000.

(2) The contract requires the consent of a(n) FMCS official. In that case, the contract, regardless of the amount, always is a covered transaction, and it does not matter who awarded it. For example, it could be a subcontract awarded by a contractor at a tier below a nonprocurement transaction, as shown in the appendix to this part.

(3) The contract is for federally-required audit services.

§ 1471.225 How do I know if a transaction in which I may participate is a covered transaction?

As a participant in a transaction, you will know that it is a covered transaction because the agency regulations governing the transaction, the appropriate agency official, or participant at the next higher tier who enters into the transaction with you, will tell you that you must comply with applicable portions of this part.

Subpart C—Responsibilities of Participants Regarding Transactions

DOING BUSINESS WITH OTHER PERSONS

§ 1471.300 What must I do before I enter into a covered transaction with another person at the next lower tier?

When you enter into a covered transaction with another person at the next lower tier, you must verify that the person with whom you intend to do business is not excluded or disqualified. You do this by:

(a) Checking the *EPLS;* or

(b) Collecting a certification from that person if allowed by this rule; or

(c) Adding a clause or condition to the covered transaction with that person.

§ 1471.305 May I enter into a covered transaction with an excluded or disqualified person?

(a) You as a participant may not enter into a covered transaction with an excluded person, unless the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service grants an exception under § 1471.120.

(b) You may not enter into any transaction with a person who is disqualified from that transaction, unless you have obtained an exception under the disqualifying statute, Executive order, or regulation.

§ 1471.310 What must I do if a Federal agency excludes a person with whom I am already doing business in a covered transaction?

(a) You as a participant may continue covered transactions with an excluded person if the transactions were in existence when the agency excluded the person. However, you are not required to continue the transactions, and you may consider termination. You should make a decision about whether to terminate and the type of termination action, if any, only after a thorough review to ensure that the action is proper and appropriate.

(b) You may not renew or extend covered transactions (other than no-cost time extensions) with any excluded person, unless the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service grants an exception under § 1471.120.

§ 1471.315 May I use the services of an excluded person as a principal under a covered transaction?

(a) You as a participant may continue to use the services of an excluded person as a principal under a covered transaction if you were using the services of that person in the transaction before the person was excluded. However, you are not required to continue using that person's services as a principal. You should make a decision about whether to discontinue that person's services only after a thorough review to ensure that the action is proper and appropriate.

(b) You may not begin to use the services of an excluded person as a principal under a covered transaction unless the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service grants an exception under § 1471.120.

§ 1471.320 Must I verify that principals of my covered transactions are eligible to participate?

Yes, you as a participant are responsible for determining whether any of your principals of your covered transactions is excluded or disqualified from participating in the transaction. You may decide the method and frequency by which you do so. You may, but you are not required to, check the *EPLS*.

§ 1471.325 What happens if I do business with an excluded person in a covered transaction?

If as a participant you knowingly do business with an excluded person, we may disallow costs, annul or terminate the transaction, issue a stop work order, debar or suspend you, or take other remedies as appropriate.

§ 1471.330 What requirements must I pass down to persons at lower tiers with whom I intend to do business?

Before entering into a covered transaction with a participant at the next lower tier, you must require that participant to—

(a) Comply with this subpart as a condition of participation in the transaction. You may do so using any method(s), unless § 1471.440 requires you to use specific methods.

(b) Pass the requirement to comply with this subpart to each person with whom the participant enters into a covered transaction at the next lower tier.

Disclosing Information—Primary Tier Participants

§ 1471.335 What information must I provide before entering into a covered transaction with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service?

Before you enter into a covered transaction at the primary tier, you as the participant must notify the FMCS office that is entering into the transaction with you, if you know that you or any of the principals for that covered transaction:

(a) Are presently excluded or disqualified;

(b) Have been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in §1471.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against you for one of those offenses within that time period;

(c) Are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or local) with commission of any of the offenses listed in §1471.800(a); or

(d) Have had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.

§1471.340 If I disclose unfavorable information required under §1471.335, will I be prevented from participating in the transaction?

As a primary tier participant, your disclosure of unfavorable information about yourself or a principal under §1471.335 will not necessarily cause us to deny your participation in the covered transaction. We will consider the information when we determine whether to enter into the covered transaction. We also will consider any additional information or explanation that you elect to submit with the disclosed information.

§1471.345 What happens if I fail to disclose information required under §1471.335?

If we later determine that you failed to disclose information under §1471.335 that you knew at the time you entered into the covered transaction, we may—

(a) Terminate the transaction for material failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the transaction; or

(b) Pursue any other available remedies, including suspension and debarment.

§1471.350 What must I do if I learn of information required under §1471.335 after entering into a covered transaction with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service?

At any time after you enter into a covered transaction, you must give immediate written notice to the FMCS office with which you entered into the transaction if you learn either that—

(a) You failed to disclose information earlier, as required by §1471.335; or

(b) Due to changed circumstances, you or any of the principals for the transaction now meet any of the criteria in §1471.335.

DISCLOSING INFORMATION—LOWER TIER PARTICIPANTS

§1471.355 What information must I provide to a higher tier participant before entering into a covered transaction with that participant?

Before you enter into a covered transaction with a person at the next higher tier, you as a lower tier participant must notify that person if you know that you or any of the principals are presently excluded or disqualified.

§1471.360 What happens if I fail to disclose the information required under §1471.355?

If we later determine that you failed to tell the person at the higher tier that you were excluded or disqualified at the time you entered into the covered transaction with that person, we may pursue any available remedies, including suspension and debarment.

§1471.365 What must I do if I learn of information required under §1471.355 after entering into a covered transaction with a higher tier participant?

At any time after you enter into a lower tier covered transaction with a person at a higher tier, you must provide immediate written notice to that person if you learn either that—

(a) You failed to disclose information earlier, as required by §1471.355; or

(b) Due to changed circumstances, you or any of the principals for the transaction now meet any of the criteria in §1471.355.

Subpart D—Responsibilities of FMCS Officials Regarding Transactions

§1471.400 May I enter into a transaction with an excluded or disqualified person?

(a) You as an agency official may not enter into a covered transaction with an excluded person unless you obtain an exception under §1471.120.

(b) You may not enter into any transaction with a person who is disqualified from that transaction, unless you obtain a waiver or exception under the statute, Executive order, or regulation that is the basis for the person's disqualification.

§ 1471.405 May I enter into a covered transaction with a participant if a principal of the transaction is excluded?

As an agency official, you may not enter into a covered transaction with a participant if you know that a principal of the transaction is excluded, unless you obtain an exception under § 1471.120.

§ 1471.410 May I approve a participant's use of the services of an excluded person?

After entering into a covered transaction with a participant, you as an agency official may not approve a participant's use of an excluded person as a principal under that transaction, unless you obtain an exception under § 1471.120.

§ 1471.415 What must I do if a Federal agency excludes the participant or a principal after I enter into a covered transaction?

(a) You as an agency official may continue covered transactions with an excluded person, or under which an excluded person is a principal, if the transactions were in existence when the person was excluded. You are not required to continue the transactions, however, and you may consider termination. You should make a decision about whether to terminate and the type of termination action, if any, only after a thorough review to ensure that the action is proper.

(b) You may not renew or extend covered transactions (other than no-cost time extensions) with any excluded person, or under which an excluded person is a principal, unless you obtain an exception under § 1471.120.

§ 1471.420 May I approve a transaction with an excluded or disqualified person at a lower tier?

If a transaction at a lower tier is subject to your approval, you as an agency official may not approve—

(a) A covered transaction with a person who is currently excluded, unless you obtain an exception under § 1471.120; or

(b) A transaction with a person who is disqualified from that transaction, unless you obtain a waiver or exception under the statute, Executive order, or regulation that is the basis for the person's disqualification.

§ 1471.425 When do I check to see if a person is excluded or disqualified?

As an agency official, you must check to see if a person is excluded or disqualified before you—

(a) Enter into a primary tier covered transaction;

(b) Approve a principal in a primary tier covered transaction;

(c) Approve a lower tier participant if agency approval of the lower tier participant is required; or

(d) Approve a principal in connection with a lower tier transaction if agency approval of the principal is required.

§ 1471.430 How do I check to see if a person is excluded or disqualified?

You check to see if a person is excluded or disqualified in two ways:

(a) You as an agency official must check the *EPLS* when you take any action listed in § 1471.425.

(b) You must review information that a participant gives you, as required by § 1471.335, about its status or the status of the principals of a transaction.

§ 1471.435 What must I require of a primary tier participant?

You as an agency official must require each participant in a primary tier covered transaction to—

(a) Comply with subpart C of this part as a condition of participation in the transaction; and

(b) Communicate the requirement to comply with subpart C of this part to persons at the next lower tier with whom the primary tier participant enters into covered transactions.

§ 1471.440 What method do I use to communicate those requirements to participants?

To communicate the requirement you must include a term or condition

in the transaction requiring the participants' compliance with subpart C of this part and requiring them to include a similar term or condition in lower-tier covered transactions.

[68 FR 66604, Nov. 26, 2003]

§ 1471.445 What action may I take if a primary tier participant knowingly does business with an excluded or disqualified person?

If a participant knowingly does business with an excluded or disqualified person, you as an agency official may refer the matter for suspension and debarment consideration. You may also disallow costs, annul or terminate the transaction, issue a stop work order, or take any other appropriate remedy.

§ 1471.450 What action may I take if a primary tier participant fails to disclose the information required under § 1471.335?

If you as an agency official determine that a participant failed to disclose information, as required by § 1471.335, at the time it entered into a covered transaction with you, you may—

(a) Terminate the transaction for material failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the transaction; or

(b) Pursue any other available remedies, including suspension and debarment.

§ 1471.455 What may I do if a lower tier participant fails to disclose the information required under § 1471.355 to the next higher tier?

If you as an agency official determine that a lower tier participant failed to disclose information, as required by § 1471.355, at the time it entered into a covered transaction with a participant at the next higher tier, you may pursue any remedies available to you, including the initiation of a suspension or debarment action.

Subpart E—Excluded Parties List System

§ 1471.500 What is the purpose of the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS)?

The *EPLS* is a widely available source of the most current information about persons who are excluded or disqualified from covered transactions.

§ 1471.505 Who uses the EPLS?

(a) Federal agency officials use the *EPLS* to determine whether to enter into a transaction with a person, as required under § 1471.430.

(b) Participants also may, but are not required to, use the *EPLS* to determine if—

(1) Principals of their transactions are excluded or disqualified, as required under § 1471.320; or

(2) Persons with whom they are entering into covered transactions at the next lower tier are excluded or disqualified.

(c) The *EPLS* is available to the general public.

§ 1471.510 Who maintains the EPLS?

In accordance with the OMB guidelines, the General Services Administration (GSA) maintains the *EPLS*. When a Federal agency takes an action to exclude a person under the nonprocurement or procurement debarment and suspension system, the agency enters the information about the excluded person into the *EPLS*.

§ 1471.515 What specific information is in the EPLS?

(a) At a minimum, the *EPLS* indicates—

(1) The full name (where available) and address of each excluded or disqualified person, in alphabetical order, with cross references if more than one name is involved in a single action;

(2) The type of action;

(3) The cause for the action;

(4) The scope of the action;

(5) Any termination date for the action;

(6) The agency and name and telephone number of the agency point of contact for the action; and

(7) The Dun and Bradstreet Number (DUNS), or other similar code approved

by the GSA, of the excluded or disqualified person, if available.

(b)(1) The database for the *EPLS* includes a field for the Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) (the social security number (SSN) for an individual) of an excluded or disqualified person.

(2) Agencies disclose the SSN of an individual to verify the identity of an individual, only if permitted under the Privacy Act of 1974 and, if appropriate, the Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act of 1988, as codified in 5 U.S.C. 552(a).

§ 1471.520 Who places the information into the EPLS?

Federal officials who take actions to exclude persons under this part or officials who are responsible for identifying disqualified persons must enter the following information about those persons into the *EPLS*:

(a) Information required by § 1471.515(a);

(b) The Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) of the excluded or disqualified person, including the social security number (SSN) for an individual, if the number is available and may be disclosed under law;

(c) Information about an excluded or disqualified person, generally within five working days, after—

(1) Taking an exclusion action;

(2) Modifying or rescinding an exclusion action;

(3) Finding that a person is disqualified; or

(4) Finding that there has been a change in the status of a person who is listed as disqualified.

§ 1471.525 Whom do I ask if I have questions about a person in the EPLS?

If you have questions about a person in the *EPLS*, ask the point of contact for the Federal agency that placed the person's name into the *EPLS*. You may find the agency point of contact from the *EPLS*.

§ 1471.530 Where can I find the EPLS?

(a) You may access the *EPLS* through the Internet, currently at *http://epls.arnet.gov*.

(b) As of November 26, 2003, you may also subscribe to a printed version. However, we anticipate discontinuing the printed version. Until it is discontinued, you may obtain the printed version by purchasing a yearly subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, or by calling the Government Printing Office Inquiry and Order Desk at (202) 783–3238.

Subpart F—General Principles Relating to Suspension and Debarment Actions

§ 1471.600 How do suspension and debarment actions start?

When we receive information from any source concerning a cause for suspension or debarment, we will promptly report and investigate it. We refer the question of whether to suspend or debar you to our suspending or debarring official for consideration, if appropriate.

§ 1471.605 How does suspension differ from debarment?

Suspension differs from debarment in that—

A suspending official . . .	A debarring official . . .
(a) Imposes suspension as a temporary status of ineligibility for procurement and nonprocurement transactions, pending completion of an investigation or legal proceedings.	Imposes debarment for a specified period as a final determination that a person is not presently responsible.
(b) Must—	Must conclude, based on a *preponderance of the evidence,* that the person has engaged in conduct that warrants debarment.
(1) Have *adequate evidence* that there may be a cause for debarment of a person; and.	
(2) Conclude that *immediate action* is necessary to protect the Federal interest.	
(c) Usually imposes the suspension *first,* and then promptly notifies the suspended person, giving the person an opportunity to contest the suspension and have it lifted.	Imposes debarment *after* giving the respondent notice of the action and an opportunity to contest the proposed debarment.

§ 1471.610 What procedures does the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service use in suspension and debarment actions?

In deciding whether to suspend or debar you, we handle the actions as informally as practicable, consistent with principles of fundamental fairness.

(a) For suspension actions, we use the procedures in this subpart and subpart G of this part.

(b) For debarment actions, we use the procedures in this subpart and subpart H of this part.

§ 1471.615 How does the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service notify a person of a suspension or debarment action?

(a) The suspending or debarring official sends a written notice to the last known street address, facsimile number, or e-mail address of—

(1) You or your identified counsel; or

(2) Your agent for service of process, or any of your partners, officers, directors, owners, or joint venturers.

(b) The notice is effective if sent to any of these persons.

§ 1471.620 Do Federal agencies coordinate suspension and debarment actions?

Yes, when more than one Federal agency has an interest in a suspension or debarment, the agencies may consider designating one agency as the lead agency for making the decision. Agencies are encouraged to establish methods and procedures for coordinating their suspension and debarment actions.

§ 1471.625 What is the scope of a suspension or debarment?

If you are suspended or debarred, the suspension or debarment is effective as follows:

(a) Your suspension or debarment constitutes suspension or debarment of all of your divisions and other organizational elements from all covered transactions, unless the suspension or debarment decision is limited—

(1) By its terms to one or more specifically identified individuals, divisions, or other organizational elements; or

(2) To specific types of transactions.

(b) Any affiliate of a participant may be included in a suspension or debarment action if the suspending or debarring official—

(1) Officially names the affiliate in the notice; and

(2) Gives the affiliate an opportunity to contest the action.

§ 1471.630 May the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service impute conduct of one person to another?

For purposes of actions taken under this rule, we may impute conduct as follows:

(a) *Conduct imputed from an individual to an organization.* We may impute the fraudulent, criminal, or other improper conduct of any officer, director, shareholder, partner, employee, or other individual associated with an organization, to that organization when the improper conduct occurred in connection with the individual's performance of duties for or on behalf of that organization, or with the organization's knowledge, approval or acquiescence. The organization's acceptance of the benefits derived from the conduct is evidence of knowledge, approval or acquiescence.

(b) *Conduct imputed from an organization to an individual, or between individuals.* We may impute the fraudulent, criminal, or other improper conduct of any organization to an individual, or from one individual to another individual, if the individual to whom the improper conduct is imputed either participated in, had knowledge of, or reason to know of the improper conduct.

(c) *Conduct imputed from one organization to another organization.* We may impute the fraudulent, criminal, or other improper conduct of one organization to another organization when the improper conduct occurred in connection with a partnership, joint venture, joint application, association or similar arrangement, or when the organization to whom the improper conduct is imputed has the power to direct, manage, control or influence the activities of the organization responsible for the improper conduct. Acceptance of the benefits derived from the conduct is evidence of knowledge, approval or acquiescence.

§ 1471.635 May the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service settle a debarment or suspension action?

Yes, we may settle a debarment or suspension action at any time if it is in the best interest of the Federal Government.

§ 1471.640 May a settlement include a voluntary exclusion?

Yes, if we enter into a settlement with you in which you agree to be excluded, it is called a voluntary exclusion and has governmentwide effect.

§ 1471.645 Do other Federal agencies know if the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service agrees to a voluntary exclusion?

(a) Yes, we enter information regarding a voluntary exclusion into the *EPLS*.

(b) Also, any agency or person may contact us to find out the details of a voluntary exclusion.

Subpart G—Suspension

§ 1471.700 When may the suspending official issue a suspension?

Suspension is a serious action. Using the procedures of this subpart and subpart F of this part, the suspending official may impose suspension only when that official determines that—

(a) There exists an indictment for, or other adequate evidence to suspect, an offense listed under §1471.800(a), or

(b) There exists adequate evidence to suspect any other cause for debarment listed under §1471.800(b) through (d); and

(c) Immediate action is necessary to protect the public interest.

§ 1471.705 What does the suspending official consider in issuing a suspension?

(a) In determining the adequacy of the evidence to support the suspension, the suspending official considers how much information is available, how credible it is given the circumstances, whether or not important allegations are corroborated, and what inferences can reasonably be drawn as a result. During this assessment, the suspending official may examine the basic documents, including grants, cooperative agreements, loan authorizations, contracts, and other relevant documents.

(b) An indictment, conviction, civil judgment, or other official findings by Federal, State, or local bodies that determine factual and/or legal matters, constitutes adequate evidence for purposes of suspension actions.

(c) In deciding whether immediate action is needed to protect the public interest, the suspending official has wide discretion. For example, the suspending official may infer the necessity for immediate action to protect the public interest either from the nature of the circumstances giving rise to a cause for suspension or from potential business relationships or involvement with a program of the Federal Government.

§ 1471.710 When does a suspension take effect?

A suspension is effective when the suspending official signs the decision to suspend.

§ 1471.715 What notice does the suspending official give me if I am suspended?

After deciding to suspend you, the suspending official promptly sends you a Notice of Suspension advising you—

(a) That you have been suspended;

(b) That your suspension is based on—

(1) An indictment;

(2) A conviction;

(3) Other adequate evidence that you have committed irregularities which seriously reflect on the propriety of further Federal Government dealings with you; or

(4) Conduct of another person that has been imputed to you, or your affiliation with a suspended or debarred person;

(c) Of any other irregularities in terms sufficient to put you on notice without disclosing the Federal Government's evidence;

(d) Of the cause(s) upon which we relied under §1471.700 for imposing suspension;

(e) That your suspension is for a temporary period pending the completion of an investigation or resulting legal or debarment proceedings;

(f) Of the applicable provisions of this subpart, subpart F of this part, and any other FMCS procedures governing suspension decision making; and

(g) Of the governmentwide effect of your suspension from procurement and nonprocurement programs and activities.

§ 1471.720 How may I contest a suspension?

If you as a respondent wish to contest a suspension, you or your representative must provide the suspending official with information in opposition to the suspension. You may do this orally or in writing, but any information provided orally that you consider important must also be submitted in writing for the official record.

§ 1471.725 How much time do I have to contest a suspension?

(a) As a respondent you or your representative must either send, or make rrangements to appear and present, the information and argument to the suspending official within 30 days after you receive the Notice of Suspension.

(b) We consider the notice to be received by you—

(1) When delivered, if we mail the notice to the last known street address, or five days after we send it if the letter is undeliverable;

(2) When sent, if we send the notice by facsimile or five days after we send it if the facsimile is undeliverable; or

(3) When delivered, if we send the notice by e-mail or five days after we send it if the e-mail is undeliverable.

§ 1471.730 What information must I provide to the suspending official if I contest a suspension?

(a) In addition to any information and argument in opposition, as a respondent your submission to the suspending official must identify—

(1) Specific facts that contradict the statements contained in the Notice of Suspension. A general denial is insufficient to raise a genuine dispute over facts material to the suspension;

(2) All existing, proposed, or prior exclusions under regulations implementing E.O. 12549 and all similar actions taken by Federal, state, or local agencies, including administrative agreements that affect only those agencies;

(3) All criminal and civil proceedings not included in the Notice of Suspension that grew out of facts relevant to the cause(s) stated in the notice; and

(4) All of your affiliates.

(b) If you fail to disclose this information, or provide false information, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service may seek further criminal, civil or administrative action against you, as appropriate.

§ 1471.735 Under what conditions do I get an additional opportunity to challenge the facts on which the suspension is based?

(a) You as a respondent will not have an additional opportunity to challenge the facts if the suspending official determines that—

(1) Your suspension is based upon an indictment, conviction, civil judgment, or other finding by a Federal, State, or local body for which an opportunity to contest the facts was provided;

(2) Your presentation in opposition contains only general denials to information contained in the Notice of Suspension;

(3) The issues raised in your presentation in opposition to the suspension are not factual in nature, or are not material to the suspending official's initial decision to suspend, or the official's decision whether to continue the suspension; or

(4) On the basis of advice from the Department of Justice, an office of the United States Attorney, a State attorney general's office, or a State or local prosecutor's office, that substantial interests of the government in pending or contemplated legal proceedings based on the same facts as the suspension would be prejudiced by conducting fact-finding.

(b) You will have an opportunity to challenge the facts if the suspending official determines that—

(1) The conditions in paragraph (a) of this section do not exist; and

(2) Your presentation in opposition raises a genuine dispute over facts material to the suspension.

(c) If you have an opportunity to challenge disputed material facts

under this section, the suspending official or designee must conduct additional proceedings to resolve those facts.

§ 1471.740 Are suspension proceedings formal?

(a) Suspension proceedings are conducted in a fair and informal manner. The suspending official may use flexible procedures to allow you to present matters in opposition. In so doing, the suspending official is not required to follow formal rules of evidence or procedure in creating an official record upon which the official will base a final suspension decision.

(b) You as a respondent or your representative must submit any documentary evidence you want the suspending official to consider.

§ 1471.745 How is fact-finding conducted?

(a) If fact-finding is conducted—

(1) You may present witnesses and other evidence, and confront any witness presented; and

(2) The fact-finder must prepare written findings of fact for the record.

(b) A transcribed record of fact-finding proceedings must be made, unless you as a respondent and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service agree to waive it in advance. If you want a copy of the transcribed record, you may purchase it.

§ 1471.750 What does the suspending official consider in deciding whether to continue or terminate my suspension?

(a) The suspending official bases the decision on all information contained in the official record. The record includes—

(1) All information in support of the suspending official's initial decision to suspend you;

(2) Any further information and argument presented in support of, or opposition to, the suspension; and

(3) Any transcribed record of fact-finding proceedings.

(b) The suspending official may refer disputed material facts to another official for findings of fact. The suspending official may reject any resulting findings, in whole or in part, only after specifically determining them to be arbitrary, capricious, or clearly erroneous.

§ 1471.755 When will I know whether the suspension is continued or terminated?

The suspending official must make a written decision whether to continue, modify, or terminate your suspension within 45 days of closing the official record. The official record closes upon the suspending official's receipt of final submissions, information and findings of fact, if any. The suspending official may extend that period for good cause.

§ 1471.760 How long may my suspension last?

(a) If legal or debarment proceedings are initiated at the time of, or during your suspension, the suspension may continue until the conclusion of those proceedings. However, if proceedings are not initiated, a suspension may not exceed 12 months.

(b) The suspending official may extend the 12 month limit under paragraph (a) of this section for an additional 6 months if an office of a U.S. Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Attorney, or other responsible prosecuting official requests an extension in writing. In no event may a suspension exceed 18 months without initiating proceedings under paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) The suspending official must notify the appropriate officials under paragraph (b) of this section of an impending termination of a suspension at least 30 days before the 12 month period expires to allow the officials an opportunity to request an extension.

Subpart H—Debarment

§ 1471.800 What are the causes for debarment?

We may debar a person for—

(a) Conviction of or civil judgment for—

(1) Commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public or private agreement or transaction;

(2) Violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes, including those proscribing price fixing between competitors, allocation of customers between competitors, and bid rigging;

(3) Commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, tax evasion, receiving stolen property, making false claims, or obstruction of justice; or

(4) Commission of any other offense indicating a lack of business integrity or business honesty that seriously and directly affects your present responsibility;

(b) Violation of the terms of a public agreement or transaction so serious as to affect the integrity of an agency program, such as—

(1) A willful failure to perform in accordance with the terms of one or more public agreements or transactions;

(2) A history of failure to perform or of unsatisfactory performance of one or more public agreements or transactions; or

(3) A willful violation of a statutory or regulatory provision or requirement applicable to a public agreement or transaction;

(c) Any of the following causes:

(1) A nonprocurement debarment by any Federal agency taken before October 1, 1988, or a procurement debarment by any Federal agency taken pursuant to 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, before August 25, 1995;

(2) Knowingly doing business with an ineligible person, except as permitted under §1471.120;

(3) Failure to pay a single substantial debt, or a number of outstanding debts (including disallowed costs and overpayments, but not including sums owed the Federal Government under the Internal Revenue Code) owed to any Federal agency or instrumentality, provided the debt is uncontested by the debtor or, if contested, provided that the debtor's legal and administrative remedies have been exhausted;

(4) Violation of a material provision of a voluntary exclusion agreement entered into under §1471.640 or of any settlement of a debarment or suspension action; or

(5) Violation of the provisions of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. 701); or

(d) Any other cause of so serious or compelling a nature that it affects your present responsibility.

§1471.805 What notice does the debarring official give me if I am proposed for debarment?

After consideration of the causes in §1471.800 of this subpart, if the debarring official proposes to debar you, the official sends you a Notice of Proposed Debarment, pursuant to §1471.615, advising you—

(a) That the debarring official is considering debarring you;

(b) Of the reasons for proposing to debar you in terms sufficient to put you on notice of the conduct or transactions upon which the proposed debarment is based;

(c) Of the cause(s) under §1471.800 upon which the debarring official relied for proposing your debarment;

(d) Of the applicable provisions of this subpart, subpart F of this part, and any other FMCS procedures governing debarment; and

(e) Of the governmentwide effect of a debarment from procurement and nonprocurement programs and activities.

§1471.810 When does a debarment take effect?

A debarment is not effective until the debarring official issues a decision. The debarring official does not issue a decision until the respondent has had an opportunity to contest the proposed debarment.

§1471.815 How may I contest a proposed debarment?

If you as a respondent wish to contest a proposed debarment, you or your representative must provide the debarring official with information in opposition to the proposed debarment. You may do this orally or in writing, but any information provided orally that you consider important must also be submitted in writing for the official record.

§ 1471.820 How much time do I have to contest a proposed debarment?

(a) As a respondent you or your representative must either send, or make arrangements to appear and present, the information and argument to the debarring official within 30 days after you receive the Notice of Proposed Debarment.

(b) We consider the Notice of Proposed Debarment to be received by you—

(1) When delivered, if we mail the notice to the last known street address, or five days after we send it if the letter is undeliverable;

(2) When sent, if we send the notice by facsimile or five days after we send it if the facsimile is undeliverable; or

(3) When delivered, if we send the notice by e-mail or five days after we send it if the e-mail is undeliverable.

§ 1471.825 What information must I provide to the debarring official if I contest a proposed debarment?

(a) In addition to any information and argument in opposition, as a respondent your submission to the debarring official must identify—

(1) Specific facts that contradict the statements contained in the Notice of Proposed Debarment. Include any information about any of the factors listed in §1471.860. A general denial is insufficient to raise a genuine dispute over facts material to the debarment;

(2) All existing, proposed, or prior exclusions under regulations implementing E.O. 12549 and all similar actions taken by Federal, State, or local agencies, including administrative agreements that affect only those agencies;

(3) All criminal and civil proceedings not included in the Notice of Proposed Debarment that grew out of facts relevant to the cause(s) stated in the notice; and

(4) All of your affiliates.

(b) If you fail to disclose this information, or provide false information, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service may seek further criminal, civil or administrative action against you, as appropriate.

§ 1471.830 Under what conditions do I get an additional opportunity to challenge the facts on which a proposed debarment is based?

(a) You as a respondent will not have an additional opportunity to challenge the facts if the debarring official determines that—

(1) Your debarment is based upon a conviction or civil judgment;

(2) Your presentation in opposition contains only general denials to information contained in the Notice of Proposed Debarment; or

(3) The issues raised in your presentation in opposition to the proposed debarment are not factual in nature, or are not material to the debarring official's decision whether to debar.

(b) You will have an additional opportunity to challenge the facts if the debarring official determines that—

(1) The conditions in paragraph (a) of this section do not exist; and

(2) Your presentation in opposition raises a genuine dispute over facts material to the proposed debarment.

(c) If you have an opportunity to challenge disputed material facts under this section, the debarring official or designee must conduct additional proceedings to resolve those facts.

§ 1471.835 Are debarment proceedings formal?

(a) Debarment proceedings are conducted in a fair and informal manner. The debarring official may use flexible procedures to allow you as a respondent to present matters in opposition. In so doing, the debarring official is not required to follow formal rules of evidence or procedure in creating an official record upon which the official will base the decision whether to debar.

(b) You or your representative must submit any documentary evidence you want the debarring official to consider.

§ 1471.840 How is fact-finding conducted?

(a) If fact-finding is conducted—

(1) You may present witnesses and other evidence, and confront any witness presented; and

(2) The fact-finder must prepare written findings of fact for the record.

(b) A transcribed record of fact-finding proceedings must be made, unless you as a respondent and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service agree to waive it in advance. If you want a copy of the transcribed record, you may purchase it.

§ 1471.845 What does the debarring official consider in deciding whether to debar me?

(a) The debarring official may debar you for any of the causes in § 1471.800. However, the official need not debar you even if a cause for debarment exists. The official may consider the seriousness of your acts or omissions and the mitigating or aggravating factors set forth at § 1471.860.

(b) The debarring official bases the decision on all information contained in the official record. The record includes—

(1) All information in support of the debarring official's proposed debarment;

(2) Any further information and argument presented in support of, or in opposition to, the proposed debarment; and

(3) Any transcribed record of fact-finding proceedings.

(c) The debarring official may refer disputed material facts to another official for findings of fact. The debarring official may reject any resultant findings, in whole or in part, only after specifically determining them to be arbitrary, capricious, or clearly erroneous.

§ 1471.850 What is the standard of proof in a debarment action?

(a) In any debarment action, we must establish the cause for debarment by a preponderance of the evidence.

(b) If the proposed debarment is based upon a conviction or civil judgment, the standard of proof is met.

§ 1471.855 Who has the burden of proof in a debarment action?

(a) We have the burden to prove that a cause for debarment exists.

(b) Once a cause for debarment is established, you as a respondent have the burden of demonstrating to the satisfaction of the debarring official that you are presently responsible and that debarment is not necessary.

§ 1471.860 What factors may influence the debarring official's decision?

This section lists the mitigating and aggravating factors that the debarring official may consider in determining whether to debar you and the length of your debarment period. The debarring official may consider other factors if appropriate in light of the circumstances of a particular case. The existence or nonexistence of any factor, such as one of those set forth in this section, is not necessarily determinative of your present responsibility. In making a debarment decision, the debarring official may consider the following factors:

(a) The actual or potential harm or impact that results or may result from the wrongdoing.

(b) The frequency of incidents and/or duration of the wrongdoing.

(c) Whether there is a pattern or prior history of wrongdoing. For example, if you have been found by another Federal agency or a State agency to have engaged in wrongdoing similar to that found in the debarment action, the existence of this fact may be used by the debarring official in determining that you have a pattern or prior history of wrongdoing.

(d) Whether you are or have been excluded or disqualified by an agency of the Federal Government or have not been allowed to participate in State or local contracts or assistance agreements on a basis of conduct similar to one or more of the causes for debarment specified in this part.

(e) Whether you have entered into an administrative agreement with a Federal agency or a State or local government that is not governmentwide but is based on conduct similar to one or more of the causes for debarment specified in this part.

(f) Whether and to what extent you planned, initiated, or carried out the wrongdoing.

(g) Whether you have accepted responsibility for the wrongdoing and recognize the seriousness of the misconduct that led to the cause for debarment.

(h) Whether you have paid or agreed to pay all criminal, civil and administrative liabilities for the improper activity, including any investigative or administrative costs incurred by the government, and have made or agreed to make full restitution.

(i) Whether you have cooperated fully with the government agencies during the investigation and any court or administrative action. In determining the extent of cooperation, the debarring official may consider when the cooperation began and whether you disclosed all pertinent information known to you.

(j) Whether the wrongdoing was pervasive within your organization.

(k) The kind of positions held by the individuals involved in the wrongdoing.

(l) Whether your organization took appropriate corrective action or remedial measures, such as establishing ethics training and implementing programs to prevent recurrence.

(m) Whether your principals tolerated the offense.

(n) Whether you brought the activity cited as a basis for the debarment to the attention of the appropriate government agency in a timely manner.

(o) Whether you have fully investigated the circumstances surrounding the cause for debarment and, if so, made the result of the investigation available to the debarring official.

(p) Whether you had effective standards of conduct and internal control systems in place at the time the questioned conduct occurred.

(q) Whether you have taken appropriate disciplinary action against the individuals responsible for the activity which constitutes the cause for debarment.

(r) Whether you have had adequate time to eliminate the circumstances within your organization that led to the cause for the debarment.

(s) Other factors that are appropriate to the circumstances of a particular case.

§ 1471.865 How long may my debarment last?

(a) If the debarring official decides to debar you, your period of debarment will be based on the seriousness of the cause(s) upon which your debarment is based. Generally, debarment should not exceed three years. However, if circumstances warrant, the debarring official may impose a longer period of debarment.

(b) In determining the period of debarment, the debarring official may consider the factors in §1471.860. If a suspension has preceded your debarment, the debarring official must consider the time you were suspended.

(c) If the debarment is for a violation of the provisions of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, your period of debarment may not exceed five years.

§ 1471.870 When do I know if the debarring official debars me?

(a) The debarring official must make a written decision whether to debar within 45 days of closing the official record. The official record closes upon the debarring official's receipt of final submissions, information and findings of fact, if any. The debarring official may extend that period for good cause.

(b) The debarring official sends you written notice, pursuant to §1471.615 that the official decided, either—

(1) Not to debar you; or

(2) To debar you. In this event, the notice:

(i) Refers to the Notice of Proposed Debarment;

(ii) Specifies the reasons for your debarment;

(iii) States the period of your debarment, including the effective dates; and

(iv) Advises you that your debarment is effective for covered transactions and contracts that are subject to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (48 CFR chapter 1), throughout the executive branch of the Federal Government unless an agency head or an authorized designee grants an exception.

§ 1471.875 May I ask the debarring official to reconsider a decision to debar me?

Yes, as a debarred person you may ask the debarring official to reconsider the debarment decision or to reduce the time period or scope of the debarment. However, you must put your request in writing and support it with documentation.

§ 1471.880 What factors may influence the debarring official during reconsideration?

The debarring official may reduce or terminate your debarment based on—

(a) Newly discovered material evidence;

(b) A reversal of the conviction or civil judgment upon which your debarment was based;

(c) A bona fide change in ownership or management;

(d) Elimination of other causes for which the debarment was imposed; or

(e) Other reasons the debarring official finds appropriate.

§ 1471.885 May the debarring official extend a debarment?

(a) Yes, the debarring official may extend a debarment for an additional period, if that official determines that an extension is necessary to protect the public interest.

(b) However, the debarring official may not extend a debarment solely on the basis of the facts and circumstances upon which the initial debarment action was based.

(c) If the debarring official decides that a debarment for an additional period is necessary, the debarring official must follow the applicable procedures in this subpart, and subpart F of this part, to extend the debarment.

Subpart I—Definitions

§ 1471.900 Adequate evidence.

Adequate evidence means information sufficient to support the reasonable belief that a particular act or omission has occurred.

§ 1471.905 Affiliate.

Persons are *affiliates* of each other if, directly or indirectly, either one controls or has the power to control the other or a third person controls or has the power to control both. The ways we use to determine control include, but are not limited to—

(a) Interlocking management or ownership;

(b) Identity of interests among family members;

(c) Shared facilities and equipment;

(d) Common use of employees; or

(e) A business entity which has been organized following the exclusion of a person which has the same or similar management, ownership, or principal employees as the excluded person.

§ 1471.910 Agency.

Agency means any United States executive department, military department, defense agency, or any other agency of the executive branch. Other agencies of the Federal government are not considered ''agencies'' for the purposes of this part unless they issue regulations adopting the governmentwide Debarment and Suspension system under Executive orders 12549 and 12689.

§ 1471.915 Agent or representative.

Agent or representative means any person who acts on behalf of, or who is authorized to commit, a participant in a covered transaction.

§ 1471.920 Civil judgment.

Civil judgment means the disposition of a civil action by any court of competent jurisdiction, whether by verdict, decision, settlement, stipulation, other disposition which creates a civil liability for the complained of wrongful acts, or a final determination of liability under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act of 1988 (31 U.S.C. 3801–3812).

§ 1471.925 Conviction.

Conviction means—

(a) A judgment or any other determination of guilt of a criminal offense by any court of competent jurisdiction, whether entered upon a verdict or plea, including a plea of nolo contendere; or

(b) Any other resolution that is the functional equivalent of a judgment, including probation before judgment and deferred prosecution. A disposition without the participation of the court is the functional equivalent of a judgment only if it includes an admission of guilt.

§ 1471.930 Debarment.

Debarment means an action taken by a debarring official under subpart H of this part to exclude a person from participating in covered transactions and transactions covered under the Federal

Acquisition Regulation (48 CFR chapter 1). A person so excluded is debarred.

§ 1471.935 Debarring official.

(a) *Debarring official* means an agency official who is authorized to impose debarment. A debarring official is either—

(1) The agency head; or

(2) An official designated by the agency head.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 1471.940 Disqualified.

Disqualified means that a person is prohibited from participating in specified Federal procurement or nonprocurement transactions as required under a statute, Executive order (other than Executive Orders 12549 and 12689) or other authority. Examples of disqualifications include persons prohibited under—

(a) The Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 276(a));

(b) The equal employment opportunity acts and Executive orders; or

(c) The Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7606), Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1368) and Executive Order 11738 (3 CFR, 1973 Comp., p. 799).

§ 1471.945 Excluded or exclusion.

Excluded or exclusion means—

(a) That a person or commodity is prohibited from being a participant in covered transactions, whether the person has been suspended; debarred; proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4; voluntarily excluded; or

(b) The act of excluding a person.

§ 1471.950 Excluded Parties List System

Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) means the list maintained and disseminated by the General Services Administration (GSA) containing the names and other information about persons who are ineligible. The *EPLS* system includes the printed version entitled, ''List of Parties Excluded or Disqualified from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs,'' so long as published.

§ 1471.955 Indictment.

Indictment means an indictment for a criminal offense. A presentment, information, or other filing by a competent authority charging a criminal offense shall be given the same effect as an indictment.

§ 1471.960 Ineligible or ineligibility.

Ineligible or ineligibility means that a person or commodity is prohibited from covered transactions because of an exclusion or disqualification.

§ 1471.965 Legal proceedings.

Legal proceedings means any criminal proceeding or any civil judicial proceeding, including a proceeding under the Program Fraud Civil Remedies Act (31 U.S.C. 3801–3812), to which the Federal Government or a State or local government or quasi-governmental authority is a party. The term also includes appeals from those proceedings.

§ 1471.970 Nonprocurement transaction.

(a) *Nonprocurement transaction* means any transaction, regardless of type (except procurement contracts), including, but not limited to the following:

(1) Grants.

(2) Cooperative agreements.

(3) Scholarships.

(4) Fellowships.

(5) Contracts of assistance.

(6) Loans.

(7) Loan guarantees.

(8) Subsidies.

(9) Insurances.

(10) Payments for specified uses.

(11) Donation agreements.

(b) A nonprocurement transaction at any tier does not require the transfer of Federal funds.

§ 1471.975 Notice.

Notice means a written communication served in person, sent by certified mail or its equivalent, or sent electronically by e-mail or facsimile. (See §1471.615.)

§ 1471.980 Participant.

Participant means any person who submits a proposal for or who enters into a covered transaction, including an agent or representative of a participant.

§ 1471.985 Person.

Person means any individual, corporation, partnership, association, unit of government, or legal entity, however organized.

§ 1471.990 Preponderance of the evidence.

Preponderance of the evidence means proof by information that, compared with information opposing it, leads to the conclusion that the fact at issue is more probably true than not.

§ 1471.995 Principal.

Principal means—

(a) An officer, director, owner, partner, principal investigator, or other person within a participant with management or supervisory responsibilities related to a covered transaction; or

(b) A consultant or other person, whether or not employed by the participant or paid with Federal funds, who—

(1) Is in a position to handle Federal funds;

(2) Is in a position to influence or control the use of those funds; or,

(3) Occupies a technical or professional position capable of substantially influencing the development or outcome of an activity required to perform the covered transaction.

§ 1471.1000 Respondent.

Respondent means a person against whom an agency has initiated a debarment or suspension action.

§ 1471.1005 State.

(a) *State* means—

(1) Any of the states of the United States;

(2) The District of Columbia;

(3) The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico;

(4) Any territory or possession of the United States; or

(5) Any agency or instrumentality of a state.

(b) For purposes of this part, *State* does not include institutions of higher education, hospitals, or units of local government.

§ 1471.1010 Suspending official.

(a) *Suspending official* means an agency official who is authorized to impose suspension. The suspending official is either:

(1) The agency head; or

(2) An official designated by the agency head.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 1471.1015 Suspension.

Suspension is an action taken by a suspending official under subpart G of this part that immediately prohibits a person from participating in covered transactions and transactions covered under the Federal Acquisition Regulation (48 CFR chapter 1) for a temporary period, pending completion of an agency investigation and any judicial or administrative proceedings that may ensue. A person so excluded is suspended.

§ 1471.1020 Voluntary exclusion or voluntarily excluded.

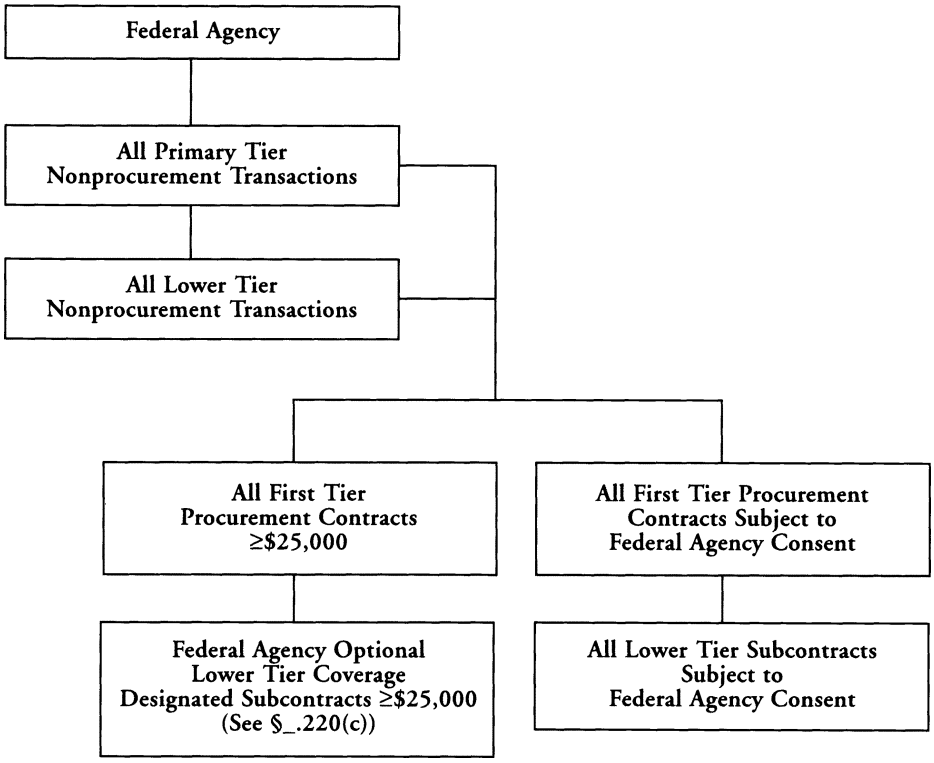
(a) *Voluntary exclusion* means a person's agreement to be excluded under the terms of a settlement between the person and one or more agencies. Voluntary exclusion must have governmentwide effect.

(b) *Voluntarily excluded* means the status of a person who has agreed to a voluntary exclusion.

Subpart J [Reserved]

APPENDIX TO PART 1471—COVERED TRANSACTIONS

COVERED TRANSACTIONS



PART 1472—GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE (FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE)

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1472.670 Suspension.

AUTHORITY: 41 U.S.C. 701, *et seq.*

SOURCE: 68 FR 66557, 66604, 66605, Nov. 26, 2003, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Purpose and Coverage

§ 1472.100 What does this part do?

This part carries out the portion of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. 701 *et seq.*, as amended) that applies to grants. It also applies the provisions of the Act to cooperative agreements and other financial assistance awards, as a matter of Federal Government policy.

§ 1472.105 Does this part apply to me?

(a) Portions of this part apply to you if you are either—

(1) A recipient of an assistance award from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service; or

(2) A(n) FMCS awarding official. (See definitions of award and recipient in §§ 1472.605 and 1472.660, respectively.)

(b) The following table shows the subparts that apply to you:

If you are . . .	see subparts . . .
(1) A recipient who is not an individual.	A, B and E.
(2) A recipient who is an individual.	A, C and E.
(3) A(n) FMCS awarding official.	A, D and E.

§ 1472.110 Are any of my Federal assistance awards exempt from this part?

This part does not apply to any award that the Agency Director determines that the application of this part would be inconsistent with the international obligations of the United States or the laws or regulations of a foreign government.

§ 1472.115 Does this part affect the Federal contracts that I receive?

It will affect future contract awards indirectly if you are debarred or suspended for a violation of the requirements of this part, as described in §1472.510(c). However, this part does not apply directly to procurement contracts. The portion of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 that applies to Federal procurement contracts is carried out through the Federal Acquisition Regulation in chapter 1 of Title 48 of the Code of Federal Regulations (the drug-free workplace coverage currently is in 48 CFR part 23, subpart 23.5).

Subpart B—Requirements for Recipients Other Than Individuals

§ 1472.200 What must I do to comply with this part?

There are two general requirements if you are a recipient other than an individual.

(a) First, you must make a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to maintain a drug-free workplace. You must agree to do so as a condition for receiving any award covered by this part. The specific measures that you must take in this regard are described in more detail in subsequent sections of this subpart. Briefly, those measures are to—

(1) Publish a drug-free workplace statement and establish a drug-free

awareness program for your employees (see §§ 1472.205 through 1472.220); and

(2) Take actions concerning employees who are convicted of violating drug statutes in the workplace (see § 1472.225).

(b) Second, you must identify all known workplaces under your Federal awards (see § 1472.230).

§ 1472.205 What must I include in my drug-free workplace statement?

You must publish a statement that—

(a) Tells your employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in your workplace;

(b) Specifies the actions that you will take against employees for violating that prohibition; and

(c) Lets each employee know that, as a condition of employment under any award, he or she:

(1) Will abide by the terms of the statement; and

(2) Must notify you in writing if he or she is convicted for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace and must do so no more than five calendar days after the conviction.

§ 1472.210 To whom must I distribute my drug-free workplace statement?

You must require that a copy of the statement described in § 1472.205 be given to each employee who will be engaged in the performance of any Federal award.

§ 1472.215 What must I include in my drug-free awareness program?

You must establish an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about—

(a) The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;

(b) Your policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;

(c) Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and

(d) The penalties that you may impose upon them for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.

§ 1472.220 By when must I publish my drug-free workplace statement and establish my drug-free awareness program?

If you are a new recipient that does not already have a policy statement as described in § 1472.205 and an ongoing awareness program as described in § 1472.215, you must publish the statement and establish the program by the time given in the following table:

If . . .	then you . . .
(a) The performance period of the award is less than 30 days	must have the policy statement and program in place as soon as possible, but before the date on which performance is expected to be completed.
(b) The performance period of the award is 30 days or more ...	must have the policy statement and program in place within 30 days after award.
(c) You believe there are extraordinary circumstances that will require more than 30 days for you to publish the policy statement and establish the awareness program.	may ask the FMCS awarding official to give you more time to do so. The amount of additional time, if any, to be given is at the discretion of the awarding official.

§ 1472.225 What actions must I take concerning employees who are convicted of drug violations in the workplace?

There are two actions you must take if an employee is convicted of a drug violation in the workplace:

(a) First, you must notify Federal agencies if an employee who is engaged in the performance of an award informs you about a conviction, as required by § 1472.205(c)(2), or you otherwise learn of the conviction. Your notification to the Federal agencies must_

(1) Be in writing;

(2) Include the employee's position title;

(3) Include the identification number(s) of each affected award;

(4) Be sent within ten calendar days after you learn of the conviction; and

(5) Be sent to every Federal agency on whose award the convicted employee was working. It must be sent to

every awarding official or his or her official designee, unless the Federal agency has specified a central point for the receipt of the notices.

(b) Second, within 30 calendar days of learning about an employee's conviction, you must either_

(1) Take appropriate personnel action against the employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), as amended; or

(2) Require the employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for these purposes by a Federal, State or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.

§ 1472.230 How and when must I identify workplaces?

(a) You must identify all known workplaces under each FMCS award. A failure to do so is a violation of your drug-free workplace requirements. You may identify the workplaces_

(1) To the FMCS official that is making the award, either at the time of application or upon award; or

(2) In documents that you keep on file in your offices during the performance of the award, in which case you must make the information available for inspection upon request by FMCS officials or their designated representatives.

(b) Your workplace identification for an award must include the actual address of buildings (or parts of buildings) or other sites where work under the award takes place. Categorical descriptions may be used (*e.g.*, all vehicles of a mass transit authority or State highway department while in operation, State employees in each local unemployment office, performers in concert halls or radio studios).

(c) If you identified workplaces to the FMCS awarding official at the time of application or award, as described in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, and any workplace that you identified changes during the performance of the award, you must inform the FMCS awarding official.

Subpart C—Requirements for Recipients Who Are Individuals

§ 1472.300 What must I do to comply with this part if I am an individual recipient?

As a condition of receiving a(n) FMCS award, if you are an individual recipient, you must agree that—

(a) You will not engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance in conducting any activity related to the award; and

(b) If you are convicted of a criminal drug offense resulting from a violation occurring during the conduct of any award activity, you will report the conviction:

(1) In writing.

(2) Within 10 calendar days of the conviction.

(3) To the FMCS awarding official or other designee for each award that you currently have, unless §1472.301 or the award document designates a central point for the receipt of the notices. When notice is made to a central point, it must include the identification number(s) of each affected award.

§ 1472.301 [Reserved]

Subpart D—Responsibilities of FMCS Awarding Officials

§ 1472.400 What are my responsibilities as a(n) FMCS awarding official?

As a(n) FMCS awarding official, you must obtain each recipient's agreement, as a condition of the award, to comply with the requirements in—

(a) Subpart B of this part, if the recipient is not an individual; or

(b) Subpart C of this part, if the recipient is an individual.

Subpart E—Violations of this Part and Consequences

§ 1472.500 How are violations of this part determined for recipients other than individuals?

A recipient other than an individual is in violation of the requirements of this part if the Agency Director determines, in writing, that—

(a) The recipient has violated the requirements of subpart B of this part; or

(b) The number of convictions of the recipient's employees for violating criminal drug statutes in the workplace is large enough to indicate that the recipient has failed to make a good faith effort to provide a drug-free workplace.

§ 1472.505 How are violations of this part determined for recipients who are individuals?

An individual recipient is in violation of the requirements of this part if the Agency Director determines, in writing, that—

(a) The recipient has violated the requirements of subpart C of this part; or

(b) The recipient is convicted of a criminal drug offense resulting from a violation occurring during the conduct of any award activity.

§ 1472.510 What actions will the Federal Government take against a recipient determined to have violated this part?

If a recipient is determined to have violated this part, as described in §1472.500 or §1472.505, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service may take one or more of the following actions—

(a) Suspension of payments under the award;

(b) Suspension or termination of the award; and

(c) Suspension or debarment of the recipient under 29 CFR part 1471, for a period not to exceed five years.

§ 1472.515 Are there any exceptions to those actions?

The Agency Director may waive with respect to a particular award, in writing, a suspension of payments under an award, suspension or termination of an award, or suspension or debarment of a recipient if the Agency Director determines that such a waiver would be in the public interest. This exception authority cannot be delegated to any other official.

Subpart F—Definitions

§ 1472.605 Award.

Award means an award of financial assistance by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service or other Federal agency directly to a recipient.

(a) The term award includes:

(1) A Federal grant or cooperative agreement, in the form of money or property in lieu of money.

(2) A block grant or a grant in an entitlement program, whether or not the grant is exempted from coverage under the Governmentwide rule 29 CFR part 1470 that implements OMB Circular A–102 (for availability, see 5 CFR 1310.3) and specifies uniform administrative requirements.

(b) The term award does not include:

(1) Technical assistance that provides services instead of money.

(2) Loans.

(3) Loan guarantees.

(4) Interest subsidies.

(5) Insurance.

(6) Direct appropriations.

(7) Veterans' benefits to individuals (*i.e.*, any benefit to veterans, their families, or survivors by virtue of the service of a veteran in the Armed Forces of the United States).

§ 1472.610 Controlled substance.

Controlled substance means a controlled substance in schedules I through V of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812), and as further defined by regulation at 21 CFR 1308.11 through 1308.15.

§ 1472.615 Conviction.

Conviction means a finding of guilt (including a plea of nolo contendere) or imposition of sentence, or both, by any judicial body charged with the responsibility to determine violations of the Federal or State criminal drug statutes.

§ 1472.620 Cooperative agreement.

Cooperative agreement means an award of financial assistance that, consistent with 31 U.S.C. 6305, is used to enter into the same kind of relationship as a grant (see definition of grant in §1472.650), except that substantial involvement is expected between the Federal agency and the recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated by the award. The term does not include cooperative research and development agreements as defined in 15 U.S.C. 3710a.

§ 1472.625 Criminal drug statute.

Criminal drug statute means a Federal or non-Federal criminal statute involving the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, use, or possession of any controlled substance.

§ 1472.630 Debarment.

Debarment means an action taken by a Federal agency to prohibit a recipient from participating in Federal Government procurement contracts and covered nonprocurement transactions. A recipient so prohibited is debarred, in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation for procurement contracts (48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4) and the common rule, Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement), that implements Executive Order 12549 and Executive Order 12689.

§ 1472.635 Drug-free workplace.

Drug-free workplace means a site for the performance of work done in connection with a specific award at which employees of the recipient are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance.

§ 1472.640 Employee.

(a) *Employee* means the employee of a recipient directly engaged in the performance of work under the award, including—

(1) All direct charge employees;

(2) All indirect charge employees, unless their impact or involvement in the performance of work under the award is insignificant to the performance of the award; and

(3) Temporary personnel and consultants who are directly engaged in the performance of work under the award and who are on the recipient's payroll.

(b) This definition does not include workers not on the payroll of the recipient (*e.g.*, volunteers, even if used to meet a matching requirement; consultants or independent contractors not on the payroll; or employees of subrecipients or subcontractors in covered workplaces).

§ 1472.645 Federal agency or agency.

Federal agency or agency means any United States executive department, military department, government corporation, government controlled corporation, any other establishment in the executive branch (including the Executive Office of the President), or any independent regulatory agency.

§ 1472.650 Grant.

Grant means an award of financial assistance that, consistent with 31 U.S.C. 6304, is used to enter into a relationship—

(a) The principal purpose of which is to transfer a thing of value to the recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States, rather than to acquire property or services for the Federal Government's direct benefit or use; and

(b) In which substantial involvement is not expected between the Federal agency and the recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated by the award.

§ 1472.655 Individual.

Individual means a natural person.

§ 1472.660 Recipient.

Recipient means any individual, corporation, partnership, association, unit of government (except a Federal agency) or legal entity, however organized, that receives an award directly from a Federal agency.

§ 1472.665 State.

State means any of the States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any territory or possession of the United States.

§ 1472.670 Suspension.

Suspension means an action taken by a Federal agency that immediately prohibits a recipient from participating in Federal Government procurement contracts and covered nonprocurement transactions for a temporary period, pending completion of an investigation and any judicial or administrative proceedings that may

ensue. A recipient so prohibited is suspended, in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation for procurement contracts (48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4) and the common rule, Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement), that implements Executive Order 12549 and Executive Order 12689. Suspension of a recipient is a distinct and separate action from suspension of an award or suspension of payments under an award.

PARTS 1473–1499 [RESERVED]

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PART 1600—EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 7301.

§ 1600.101 Cross-reference to employee ethical conduct standards and financial disclosure regulations.

Employees of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) are subject to the executive branch-wide Standards of Ethical Conduct at 5 CFR part 2635, the EEOC regulation at 5 CFR part 7201, which supplements the executive branch-wide standards, and the executive branch-wide financial disclosure regulations at 5 CFR part 2634.

[61 FR 7067, Feb. 26, 1996]

PART 1601—PROCEDURAL REGULATIONS

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 2000e to 2000e–17; 42 U.S.C. 12111 to 12117; 42 U.S.C. 2000ff to 2000ff–11; 42 U.S.C. 2000gg to 2000gg–6; 28 U.S.C. 2461 note, as amended; Pub. L. 104–134, Sec. 31001(s)(1), 110 Stat. 1373.

SOURCE: 42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1601.1 Purpose.

The regulations set forth in this part contain the procedures established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for carrying out its responsibilities in the administration and enforcement of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, and the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act. Section 107 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, section 207 of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, and section 104 of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act incorporate the powers, remedies and procedures set forth in sections 705, 706, 707, 709 and 710 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Based on its experience in the enforcement of title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, and the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, and upon its evaluation of suggestions and petitions for amendments submitted by interested persons, the Commission may from time to time amend and revise these procedures.

[89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

Subpart A—Definitions

§ 1601.2 Terms defined in title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, and the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.

The terms *person*, *employer*, *employment agency*, *labor organization*, *employee*, *commerce*, *industry affecting commerce*, *State* and *religion* as used in this part shall have the meanings set forth in section 701 of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The term *disability* shall have the meaning set forth in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended. The term *genetic information* shall have the meaning set forth in section 201 of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.

[74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009, as amended at 85 FR 65217, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1601.3 Other definitions.

(a) For the purposes of this part, the term *title VII* shall mean title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the term *ADA* shall mean the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the term *GINA* shall mean the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008; the term *PWFA* shall mean the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act; the terms *EEOC* or *Commission* shall mean the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or any of its designated representatives; the term *Washington Field Office* shall mean the Commission's primary non-Headquarters office serving the District of Columbia and Virginia suburban counties and jurisdictions; the term *FEP agency* shall mean a State or local agency which the Commission has determined satisfies the criteria stated in section 706(c) of title VII; and the term *verified* shall mean sworn to or affirmed before a notary public, designated representative of the Commission, or other person duly authorized by law to administer oaths and take acknowledgements, or supported by an unsworn declaration in writing under penalty of perjury.

(b) For the purposes of this part, the terms *file*, *serve*, *submit*, *receive*, *transmit*, *present*, *send*, *issue*, and *notify* shall include all forms of digital transmission.

(c) The delegations of authority in subpart B of this part are applicable to charges filed pursuant to either section 706 or section 707 of title VII.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 56 FR 9624, Mar. 7, 1991; 71 FR 26827, May 9, 2006; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 85 FR 65217, Oct. 15, 2020; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1601.4 Vice Chair's functions.

The member of the Commission designated by the President to serve as Vice Chair shall act as Chair in the absence or incapacity of the Chair or in the event of a vacancy in that office.

[85 FR 65217, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1601.5 District; field; area; local authority.

The term ''district'' as used herein shall mean that part of the United States or any territory thereof fixed by the Commission as a particular district. The term ''district director'' shall refer to that person designated as the Commission's chief officer in each district. The term ''Washington Field Office Director'' shall refer to that person designated as the Commission's chief officer in the Washington Field Office. Any authority of, or delegation of authority to, District Directors shall be deemed to include the Director of the Washington Field Office. The term ''field'' shall mean that part of the United States within a district fixed by the Commission as a particular subunit of a district, except for the Washington Field Office which is not part of any district fixed by the Commission. The term ''field director'' shall refer to that person designated as the Commission's chief officer in each field office. The term ''area'' shall mean that part of the United States within a district fixed by the Commission as a particular subunit of a district. The term ''area director'' shall refer to that person designated as the Commission's chief officer in each area office. The term ''local office'' shall mean an EEOC office with responsibility over a part of the United States within a district fixed by the Commission as a particular subunit of a district. The term ''local director'' shall refer to that person designated as the Commission's chief officer for the local office. Each district office and the Washington Field Office will operate under the supervision of the Director, Office of Field Programs through the Director of Field Management Programs, and the General Counsel. Each field, area and local office, except for the Washington Field Office, will operate under the supervision of the district director. Any or all delegations, or actions taken, as provided by this part may be revoked and /or exercised by the supervisor in keeping with the supervisory structure described in this section.

[71 FR 26827, May 9, 2006, as amended at 85 FR 65217, Oct. 15, 2020]

Subpart B—Procedure for the Prevention of Unlawful Employment Practices

§ 1601.6 Submission of information.

(a) The Commission shall receive information concerning alleged violations of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA from any person. Where the information discloses that a person is entitled to file a charge with the Commission, the appropriate office shall render assistance in the filing of a charge. Any person or organization may request the issuance of a Commissioner charge for an inquiry into individual or systematic discrimination. Such request, with any pertinent information, should be submitted to the nearest District, Field, Area, or Local office.

(b) A person who submits data or evidence to the Commission may retain or, on payment of lawfully prescribed costs, procure a copy of transcript thereof, except that a witness may for good cause be limited to inspection of the official transcript of his or her testimony.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 52 FR 26957, July 17, 1987; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 56 FR 9624, Mar. 7, 1991; 71 FR 26828, May 9, 2006; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1601.7 Charges by or on behalf of persons claiming to be aggrieved.

(a) A charge that any person has engaged in or is engaging in an unlawful employment practice within the meaning of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA may be made by or on behalf of any person claiming to be aggrieved. A charge on behalf of a person claiming to be aggrieved may be made by any person, agency, or organization. The written charge need not identify by name the person on whose behalf it is made. The person making the charge, however, must provide the Commission with the name and contact information of the person on whose behalf the charge is made During the Commission investigation, Commission personnel shall verify the authorization of such charge by the person on whose behalf the charge is made. Any such person may request that the Commission shall keep his or her identity confidential.

However, such request for confidentiality shall not prevent the Commission from disclosing the identity to Federal, State or local agencies that have agreed to keep such information confidential. If this condition is violated by a recipient agency, the Commission may decline to honor subsequent requests for such information.

(b) The person claiming to be aggrieved has the responsibility to provide the Commission with notice of any change in contact information so that the Commission may communicate with him or her during the Commission's consideration of the charge.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 56 FR 9624, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 85 FR 65217, Oct. 15, 2020; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1601.8 Where to make a charge.

A charge may be made using the EEOC's designated digital systems, in person, by facsimile, or by mail to any EEOC office or to any designated representative of the Commission. The addresses of the EEOC's offices appear at *www.eeoc.gov*.

[85 FR 65217, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1601.9 Form of charge.

A charge shall be in writing and signed and shall be verified.

§ 1601.10 Withdrawal of a charge by a person claiming to be aggrieved.

A charge filed by or on behalf of a person claiming to be aggrieved may be withdrawn only by the person claiming to be aggrieved and only with the consent of the Commission. The Commission hereby delegates authority to District Directors, Field Directors, Area Directors, Local Directors, the Director of the Office of Field Programs and the Director of Field Management Programs, or their designees, to grant consent to a request to withdraw a charge, other than a Commissioner charge, where the withdrawal of the charge will not defeat the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA.

[44 FR 4669, Jan. 23, 1979, as amended at 47 FR 46275, Oct. 18, 1982; 49 FR 13024, Apr. 2, 1984; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 56 FR 9624, Mar. 7, 1991; 71 FR 26828, May 9, 2006; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1601.11 Charges by members of the Commission.

(a) Any member of the Commission may file a charge with the Commission. Such charge shall be in writing and signed and shall be verified.

(b) A Commissioner who files a charge under paragraph (a) of this section may withdraw the charge with the consent of the Commission. The Commission may withdraw any charge filed under paragraph (a) of this section by a Commissioner who is no longer holding office when it determines that the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA are no longer served by processing the charge. Commissioner charges may not be withdrawn pursuant to this section after a determination as to reasonable cause has been made. This paragraph does not apply to a charge filed by a Commissioner which is on behalf of a person claiming to be aggrieved within the meaning of §1601.7 unless such person submits a written request for withdrawal to the Commission.

[43 FR 30798, July 18, 1978, as amended at 56 FR 9624, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1601.12 Contents of charge; amendment of charge.

(a) Each charge should contain the following:

(1) The full name and contact information of the person making the charge except as provided in §1601.7;

(2) The full name and contact information of the person against whom the charge is made, if known (hereinafter referred to as the respondent);

(3) A clear and concise statement of the facts, including pertinent dates, constituting the alleged unlawful employment practices: See §1601.15(b);

(4) If known, the approximate number of employees of the respondent employer or the approximate number of members of the respondent labor organization, as the case may be; and

(5) A statement disclosing whether proceedings involving the alleged unlawful employment practice have been commenced before a State or local agency charged with the enforcement of fair employment practice laws and, if so, the date of such commencement and the name of the agency.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section, a charge is sufficient when the Commission receives from the person making the charge a written statement sufficiently precise to identify the parties, and to describe generally the action or practices complained of. A charge may be amended to cure technical defects or omissions, including failure to verify the charge, or to clarify and amplify allegations made therein. Such amendments and amendments alleging additional acts which constitute unlawful employment practices related to or growing out of the subject matter of the original charge will relate back to the date the charge was first received. A charge that has been so amended shall not be required to be redeferred.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 85 FR 65217, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1601.13 Filing; deferrals to State and local agencies.

(a) *Initial presentation of a charge to the Commission.* (1) Charges arising in jurisdictions having no FEP agency are filed with the Commission upon receipt. Such charges are timely filed if received by the Commission within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation.

(2) A jurisdiction having a FEP agency without jurisdiction over the statutory basis alleged in the charge (e.g., an agency that does not have enforcement authority over sex discrimination) is equivalent to a jurisdiction having no FEP agency. Charges over which a FEP agency has no jurisdiction over the statutory basis alleged are filed with the Commission upon receipt and are timely filed if received by the Commission within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation.

(3) Charges arising in jurisdictions having a FEP agency with jurisdiction over the statutory basis alleged in the charge are to be processed in accordance with the Commission's deferral policy set in paragraphs (a)(3)(i) through (iii) and the procedures in paragraph (a)(4) of this section.

(i) In order to give full weight to the policy of section 706(c) of title VII, which affords State and local fair employment practice agencies that come within the provisions of that section an opportunity to remedy alleged discrimination concurrently regulated by title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA and State or local law, the Commission adopts the following procedures with respect to allegations of discrimination filed with the Commission. It is the intent of the Commission to thereby encourage the maximum degree of effectiveness in the State and local agencies. The Commission shall endeavor to maintain close communication with the State and local agencies with respect to all matters forwarded to such agencies and shall provide such assistance to State and local agencies as is permitted by law and as is practicable.

(ii) Section 706(c) of title VII grants States and their political subdivisions the exclusive right to process allegations of discrimination filed by a person other than a Commissioner for a period of 60 days (or 120 days during the first year after the effective date of the qualifying State or local law). This right exists where, as set forth in § 1601.70, a State or local law prohibits the employment practice alleged to be unlawful and a State or local agency has been authorized to grant or seek relief. After the expiration of the exclusive processing period, the Commission may commence processing the allegation of discrimination.

(iii) A FEP agency may waive its right to the period of exclusive processing of charges provided under section 706(c) of title VII with respect to any charge or category of charges. Copies of all such charges will be forwarded to the appropriate FEP agency.

(4) The following procedures shall be followed with respect to charges which arise in jurisdictions having a FEP agency with jurisdiction over the statutory basis alleged in the charge:

(i) Where any document, whether or not verified, is received by the Commission as provided in § 1601.8 which may constitute a charge cognizable under title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA, and where the FEP agency has not waived its right to the period of exclusive processing with respect to that document, that document shall be deferred to the appropriate FEP agency as provided in the procedures set forth below:

(A) The document shall reflect the date and time it was received by the EEOC.

(B) The original document shall be transmitted by registered mail, return receipt requested, to the appropriate FEP agency, or by any other means acceptable to the FEP agency. State or local proceedings are deemed to have commenced on the date such document is transmitted.

(C) The person claiming to be aggrieved and any person filing a charge on behalf of such person shall be notified, in writing, that the document which he or she sent to the Commission has been forwarded to the FEP agency pursuant to the provisions of section 706(c) of title VII.

(ii) Such charges are deemed to be filed with the Commission as follows:

(A) Where the document on its face constitutes a charge within a category of charges over which the FEP agency has waived its rights to the period of exclusive processing referred to in paragraph (a)(3)(iii) of this section, the charge is deemed to be filed with the Commission upon receipt of the document. Such filing is timely if the charge is received within 300 days from the date of the alleged violation.

(B) Where the document on its face constitutes a charge which is not within a category of charges over which the FEP agency has waived its right to the period of exclusive processing referred to in paragraph (a)(3)(iii) of this section, the Commission shall process the document in accordance with paragraph (a)(4)(i) of this section. The charge shall be deemed to be filed with the Commission upon expiration of 60 (or where appropriate, 120) days after deferral, or upon the termination of FEP agency proceedings, or upon waiver of the FEP agency's right to exclusively process the charge, whichever is earliest. Where the FEP agency earlier terminates its proceedings or waives its right to exclusive processing of a charge, the charge shall be deemed to be filed with the Commission on the date the FEP agency terminated its proceedings or the FEP agency waived its right to exclusive processing of the charge. Such filing is timely if effected within 300 days from the date of the alleged violation.

(b) *Initial presentation of a charge to a FEP agency.* (1) When a charge is initially presented to a FEP agency and the charging party requests that the charge be presented to the Commission, the charge will be deemed to be filed with the Commission upon expiration of 60 (or where appropriate, 120) days after a written and signed statement of facts upon which the charge is based was sent to the FEP agency by registered mail or was otherwise received by the FEP agency, or upon the termination of FEP agency proceedings, or upon waiver of the FEP agency's right to exclusively process the charge, whichever is earliest. Such filing is timely if effected within 300 days from the date of the alleged violation.

(2) When a charge is initially presented to a FEP agency but the charging party does not request that the charge be presented to the Commission, the charging party may present the charge to the Commission as follows:

(i) If the FEP agency has refused to accept a charge, a subsequent submission of the charge to the Commission will be processed as if it were an initial presentation in accordance with paragraph (a) of this section.

(ii) If the FEP agency proceedings have terminated, the charge may be timely filed with the Commission within 30 days of receipt of notice that the FEP agency proceedings have been terminated or within 300 days from the date of the alleged violation, whichever is earlier.

(iii) If the FEP agency proceedings have not been terminated, the charge may be presented to the Commission within 300 days from the date of the alleged violation. Once presented, such a charge will be deemed to be filed with the Commission upon expiration of 60 (or where appropriate, 120) days after a written and signed statement of facts upon which the charge is based was sent to the FEP agency by registered mail or was otherwise received by the FEP agency, or upon the termination of the FEP agency proceedings, or upon waiver of the FEP agency's right to exclusively process the charge, whichever is earliest. To be timely, however, such

filing must be effected within 300 days from the date of the alleged violation.

(c) *Agreements with Fair Employment Practice agencies.* Pursuant to section 705(g)(1) and section 706(b) of title VII, the Commission shall endeavor to enter into agreements with FEP agencies to establish effective and integrated resolution procedures. Such agreements may include, but need not be limited to, cooperative arrangements to provide for processing of certain charges by the Commission, rather than by the FEP agency during the period specified in section 706(c) and section 706(d) of title VII.

(d) *Preliminary relief.* When a charge is filed with the Commission, the Commission may make a preliminary investigation and commence judicial action for immediate, temporary or preliminary relief pursuant to section 706(f)(2) of title VII.

(e) *Commissioner charges.* A charge made by a member of the Commission shall be deemed filed upon receipt by the Commission office responsible for investigating the charge. The Commission will notify a FEP agency when an allegation of discrimination is made by a member of the Commission concerning an employment practice occurring within the jurisdiction of the FEP agency. The FEP agency will be entitled to process the charge exclusively for a period of not less than 60 days if the FEP agency makes a written request to the Commission within 10 days of receiving notice that the allegation has been filed. The 60-day period shall be extended to 120 days during the first year after the effective date of the qualifying State or local law.

[46 FR 43039, Aug. 26, 1981, as amended at 46 FR 48189, Oct. 1, 1981; 52 FR 10224, Mar. 31, 1987; 52 FR 18354, May 15, 1987; 56 FR 9624, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 85 FR 65217, Oct. 15, 2020; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1601.14 Service of charge or notice of charge.

(a) Within ten days after the filing of a charge in the appropriate Commission office, the Commission shall serve respondent the charge by digital transmission, by mail, or in person, except when it is determined that providing the charge would impede the law enforcement functions of the Commission. Where the charge is not provided, the respondent will be served with a notice of the charge within ten days after the filing of the charge. The notice shall include the date, place and circumstances of the alleged unlawful employment practice. Where appropriate, the notice may include the identity of the person or organization filing the charge.

(b) District Directors, Field Directors, Area Directors, Local Directors, the Director of the Office of Field Programs, and the Director of Field Management Programs, or their designees, are hereby delegated the authority to issue the notice described in paragraph (a) of this section.

[44 FR 4669, Jan. 23, 1979, as amended at 47 FR 46275, Oct. 18, 1982; 49 FR 13024, Apr. 2, 1984; 49 FR 13874, Apr. 9, 1984; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 71 FR 26828, May 9, 2006; 85 FR 65218, Oct. 15, 2020]

INVESTIGATION OF A CHARGE

§ 1601.15 Investigative authority.

(a) The investigation of a charge shall be made by the Commission, its investigators, or any other representative designated by the Commission. During the course of such investigation, the Commission may utilize the services of State and local agencies which are charged with the administration of fair employment practice laws or appropriate Federal agencies, and may utilize the information gathered by such authorities or agencies. As part of each investigation, the Commission will accept any statement of position or evidence with respect to the allegations of the charge which the person claiming to be aggrieved, the person making the charge on behalf of such person, if any, or the respondent wishes to submit.

(b) As part of the Commission's investigation, the Commission may require the person claiming to be aggrieved to provide a statement which includes:

(1) A statement of each specific harm that the person has suffered and the date on which each harm occurred;

(2) For each harm, a statement specifying the act, policy or practice which is alleged to be unlawful;

(3) For each act, policy, or practice alleged to have harmed the person claiming to be aggrieved, a statement of the facts which lead the person claiming to be aggrieved to believe that the act, policy or practice is discriminatory.

(c) The Commission may require a fact-finding conference with the parties prior to a determination on a charge of discrimination. The conference is primarily an investigative forum intended to define the issues, to determine which elements are undisputed, to resolve those issues that can be resolved and to ascertain whether there is a basis for negotiated settlement of the charge.

(d) The Commission's authority to investigate a charge is not limited to the procedures outlined in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section.

§ 1601.16 Access to and production of evidence; testimony of witnesses; procedure and authority.

(a) To effectuate the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, and the PWFA, any member of the Commission shall have the authority to sign and issue a subpoena requiring:

(1) The attendance and testimony of witnesses;

(2) The production of evidence including, but not limited to, books, records, correspondence, or documents, in the possession or under the control of the person subpoenaed; and

(3) Access to evidence for the purposes of examination and the right to copy.

Any District Director, and the Director of the Office of Field Programs, or upon delegation, the Director of Field Management Programs, or any representatives designated by the Commission, may sign and issue a subpoena on behalf of the Commission. The subpoena shall state the name and address of its issuer, identify the person or evidence subpoenaed, the person to whom and the place, date, and the time at which it is returnable or the nature of the evidence to be examined or copied, and the date and time when access is requested. A subpoena shall be returnable to a duly authorized investigator or other representative of the Commission. Neither the person claiming to be aggrieved, the person filing a charge on behalf of such person nor the respondent shall have the right to demand that a subpoena be issued.

(b)(1) Any person served with a district director-issued subpoena who intends not to comply shall petition the issuing director to seek its revocation or modification. Any person served with a Commissioner-issued subpoena who intends not to comply shall petition the General Counsel to seek its revocation or modification. Petitions must be transmitted digitally or mailed to the issuing director at the address stated on the subpoena (or, if the subpoena was issued by a Commissioner, to the General Counsel) within five days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal legal holidays) after service of the subpoena. Petitions to the General Counsel pertaining to subpoenas issued by a Commissioner may be transmitted digitally or mailed to 131 M Street NE, Washington, DC 20507 and a copy of the petition shall also be served upon the issuing Commissioner.

(2) The petition shall separately identify each portion of the subpoena with which the petitioner does not intend to comply and shall state, with respect to each such portion, the basis for noncompliance with the subpoena. A copy of the subpoena shall be attached to the petition and shall be designated ''Attachment A.'' Within eight calendar days after receipt or as soon as practicable, the General Counsel or Director, as appropriate, shall either grant the petition to revoke or modify in its entirety or make a proposed determination on the petition, stating reasons, and submit the petition and proposed determination to the Commission for its review and final determination. A Commissioner who has issued a subpoena shall abstain from reviewing a petition concerning that subpoena. The Commission shall serve a copy of the final determination on the petitioner.

(c) Upon the failure of any person to comply with a subpoena issued under this section, the Commission may utilize the procedures of section 11(2) of the National Labor Relations Act, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 161(2), to compel enforcement of the subpoena.

(d) If a person who is served with a subpoena does not comply with the subpoena and does not petition for its revocation or modification pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section, the General Counsel or his or her designee may institute proceedings to enforce the subpoena in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (c) of this section. Likewise, if a person who is served with a subpoena petitions for revocation or modification of the subpoena pursuant to paragraph (b), and the Commission issues a final determination upholding all or part of the subpoena, and the person does not comply with the subpoena, the General Counsel or his or her designee may institute proceedings to enforce the subpoena in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section.

(e) Witnesses who are subpoenaed pursuant to §1601.16(a) shall be entitled to the same fees and mileage that are paid witnesses in the courts of the United States.

[43 FR 30798, July 18, 1978, as amended at 47 FR 46275, Oct. 18, 1982; 51 FR 29098, Aug. 14, 1986; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 55 FR 14245, Apr. 17, 1990; 56 FR 9624, Mar. 7, 1991; 71 FR 26828, May 9, 2006; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 85 FR 65218, Oct. 15, 2020; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§1601.17 Witnesses for public hearings.

(a) To effectuate the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, and the PWFA, any Commissioner, upon approval of the Commission, may demand in writing that a person appear at a stated time and place within the State in which such person resides, transacts business, or is served with the demand, for the purpose of testifying under oath before the Commission or its representative. If there be noncompliance with any such demand, the Commission may utilize the procedures of section 710 of title VII, the ADA, GINA, and the PWFA to compel such person to testify. A transcript of testimony may be made a part of the record of each investigation.

(b) Witnesses who testify as provided in paragraph (a) of this section shall be entitled to the same fees and mileage that are paid witnesses in the courts of the United States.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 56 FR 9624, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024; 89 FR 13618, Feb. 23, 2024]

PROCEDURE FOLLOWING FILING OF A CHARGE

§1601.18 Dismissal: Procedure and authority.

(a) Where a charge on its face, or as amplified by the statements of the person claiming to be aggrieved discloses, or where after investigation the Commission determines, that the charge and every portion thereof is not timely filed, or otherwise fails to state a claim under title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA, the Commission shall dismiss the charge. A charge which raises a claim exclusively under section 717 of title VII or the Rehabilitation Act shall not be taken and persons seeking to raise such claims shall be referred to the appropriate Federal agency.

(b) Written notice of disposition, pursuant to this section, shall be issued to the person claiming to be aggrieved and to the person making the charge on behalf of such person, where applicable; in the case of a Commissioner charge, to all persons specified in §1601.28(b)(3)(ii); and to the respondent. The dismissal shall include a notice of rights informing the person claiming to be aggrieved or the person on whose behalf a charge was filed of the right to sue in Federal district court within 90 days of receipt of the determination. Appropriate notices of right to sue shall be issued pursuant to §1601.28.

(c) The Commission hereby delegates authority to District Directors; the Director of the Office of Field Programs, or upon delegation, the Director of Field Management Programs, as appropriate, to dismiss charges, as limited by §1601.21(d). The Commission hereby delegates authority to Field Directors, Area Directors and Local Directors, or their designees, to dismiss charges pursuant to paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of this section, as limited by §1601.21(d). The authority of the Commission to reconsider decisions and determinations

as set forth in §1601.21 (b) and (d) shall be applicable to this section.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 48 FR 19165, Apr. 28, 1983; 49 FR 13024, Apr. 2, 1984. Redesignated and amended at 52 FR 26957, July 17, 1987; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 55 FR 26684, June 29, 1990; 56 FR 9624, 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 71 FR 26828, May 9, 2006; 73 FR 3388, Jan. 18, 2008; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 85 FR 65218, Oct. 15, 2020; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§1601.19 No cause determinations: Procedure and authority.

(a) Where the Commission completes its investigation of a charge and finds that there is not reasonable cause to believe that an unlawful employment practice has occurred or is occurring as to all issues addressed in the determination, the Commission shall issue a determination to all parties to the charge indicating the finding. This determination does not mean the claims in the charge have no merit. The Commission's determination shall be the final determination of the Commission, unless a final determination of no reasonable cause is vacated pursuant to §1601.19(b). The determination shall inform the person claiming to be aggrieved or the person on whose behalf a charge was filed of the right to sue in Federal district court within 90 days of receipt of the determination. The Commission hereby delegates authority to the Director of the Office of Field Programs, or upon delegation to the Director of Field Management Programs, and District Directors or upon delegation to Field Directors, Area Directors, or Local Directors, or their designees, except in those cases involving issues currently designated by the Commission for priority review, to issue no cause determinations.

(b) The Commission may on its own initiative reconsider a final determination of no reasonable cause and a director of the issuing office may, on his or her own initiative, reconsider a final determination of no reasonable cause. If the Commission or the director of the issuing office decides to reconsider a final no cause determination, a notice of intent to reconsider shall promptly issue to all parties to the charge. If such notice of intent to reconsider is issued within 90 days of receipt of the final no cause determination, and the person claiming to be aggrieved or the person on whose behalf a charge was filed has not filed suit and did not request and receive a notice of right to sue pursuant to §1601.28(a)(1) or (2), the notice of intent to reconsider shall vacate the determination and shall revoke the charging party's right to bring suit within 90 days. If the 90-day suit period has expired, the charging party has filed suit, or the charging party has requested a notice of right to sue pursuant to §1601.28(a)(1) or (2), the notice of intent to reconsider shall vacate the determination but shall not revoke the charging party's right to sue within 90 days. After reconsideration, the Commission or a director of the issuing office shall issue a new determination. In those circumstances where the charging party's right to bring suit within 90 days was revoked, the determination shall include notice that a new 90-day suit period shall begin upon the charging party's receipt of the determination. Where a member of the Commission has filed a Commissioner charge, he or she shall abstain from making a determination in that case.

[85 FR 65218, Oct. 15, 2020]

§1601.20 Negotiated settlement.

(a) Prior to the issuance of a determination as to reasonable cause the Commission may encourage the parties to settle the charge on terms that are mutually agreeable. District Directors, Field Directors, Area Directors, Local Directors, the Director of the Office of Field Programs, the Director of Field Management Programs, or their designees, shall have the authority to sign any settlement agreement which is agreeable to both parties. When the Commission agrees in any negotiated settlement not to process that charge further, the Commission's agreement shall be in consideration for the promises made by the other parties to the agreement. Such an agreement shall not affect the processing of any other charge, including, but not limited to, a Commissioner charge or a charge, the allegations of which are like or related to the individual allegations settled.

(b) In the alternative, the Commission may facilitate a settlement between the person claiming to be aggrieved and the respondent by permitting withdrawal of the charge pursuant to § 1601.10.

[44 FR 4669, Jan. 23, 1979, as amended at 47 FR 46275, Oct. 18, 1982; 49 FR 13024, Apr. 2, 1984; 49 FR 13874, Apr. 9, 1984; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 71 FR 26828, May 9, 2006; 85 FR 65218, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1601.21 Reasonable cause determination: Procedure and authority.

(a) After completing its investigation, where the Commission has not settled or dismissed a charge or made a no cause finding as to every allegation addressed in the determination under § 1601.19, the Commission shall issue a determination that reasonable cause exists to believe that an unlawful employment practice has occurred or is occurring under title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA. A determination finding reasonable cause is based on, and limited to, evidence obtained by the Commission and does not reflect any judgment on the merits of allegations not addressed in the determination.

(b) The Commission shall provide prompt notification of its determination under paragraph (a) of this section to the person claiming to be aggrieved, the person making the charge on behalf of such person, if any, and the respondent, or in the case of a Commissioner charge, the person named in the charge or identified by the Commission in the third party certificate, if any, and the respondent. The Commission may, however, on its own initiative reconsider its decision or the determination of any of its designated officers who have authority to issue Letters of Determination, except that the Commission will not reconsider determinations of reasonable cause previously issued against a government, governmental entity or political subdivision after a failure of conciliation as set forth in § 1601.25.

(1) In cases where the Commission decides to reconsider a dismissal or a determination finding reasonable cause to believe a charge is true, a notice of intent to reconsider will promptly issue. If such notice of intent to reconsider is issued within 90 days from receipt of a notice of right to sue and the charging party has not filed suit and did not receive a notice of right to sue pursuant to § 1601.28(a)(1) or (2), the notice of intent to reconsider will vacate the dismissal or letter of determination and revoke the notice of right to sue. If the 90- day period has expired, the charging party has filed suit, or the charging party has requested a notice of right to sue pursuant to § 1601.28(a)(1) or (2), the notice of intent to reconsider will vacate the dismissal or letter of determination, but will not revoke the notice of right to sue. After reconsideration the Commission will issue a determination anew. In those circumstances where the notice of right to sue has been revoked, the Commission will, in accordance with § 1601.28, issue a notice of right to sue anew which will provide the charging party with 90 days within which to bring suit.

(2) The Commission shall provide prompt notification of its intent to reconsider, which is effective upon issuance, and its final decision after reconsideration to the person claiming to be aggrieved, the person making the charge on behalf of such person, if any, and the respondent, or in the case of a Commissioner charge, the person named in the charge or identified by the Commissioner in the third-party certificate, if any, and the respondent.

(c) Where a member of the Commission has filed a Commissioner charge, he or she shall abstain from making a determination in that case.

(d) The Commission hereby delegates to District Directors, or upon delegation, Field Directors, Area Directors or Local Directors; and the Director of the Office of Field Programs, or upon delegation, the Director of Field Management Programs, the authority, except in those cases involving issues currently designated by the Commission for priority review, upon completion of an investigation, to make a determination finding reasonable cause, issue a cause letter of determination and serve the determination upon the parties. Each determination issued under this section is final when the letter of determination is issued. However, the Director of the Office of Field

Programs, or upon delegation, the Director of Field Management Programs; each District Director; each Field Director; each Area Director and each Local Director, for the determinations issued by his or her office, may on his or her own initiative reconsider such determinations, except that such directors may not reconsider determinations of reasonable cause previously issued against a government, governmental agency or political subdivision after a failure of conciliation as set forth in §1601.25.

(1) In cases where the issuing Director decides to reconsider a dismissal or a determination finding reasonable cause to believe a charge is true, a notice of intent to reconsider will promptly issue. If such notice of intent to reconsider is issued within 90 days from receipt of a notice of right to sue and the charging party has not filed suit and did not request a notice of right to sue pursuant to §1601.28(a)(1) or (2), the notice of intent to reconsider will vacate the dismissal or letter of determination and revoke the notice of right to sue. If the 90-day period has expired, the charging party has filed suit, or the charging party has received a notice of right to sue pursuant to §1601.28(a)(1) or (2), the notice of intent to reconsider will vacate the dismissal or letter of determination, but will not revoke the notice of right to sue. After reconsideration the issuing Director will issue a determination anew. In those circumstances where the notice of right to sue has been revoked, the issuing Director will, in accordance with §1601.28, issue a notice of right to sue anew which will provide the charging party with 90 days within which to bring suit.

(2) When the issuing Director does reconsider, he or she shall provide prompt notification of his or her intent to reconsider, which is effective upon issuance, and final decision after reconsideration to the person claiming to be aggrieved, the person making the charge on behalf of such person, if any, and the respondent, or in the charge or identified by the Commissioner in the third party certificate, if any, and the respondent.

(e) In making a determination as to whether reasonable cause exists, substantial weight shall be accorded final findings and orders made by designated FEP agencies to which the Commission defers charges pursuant to §1601.13. For the purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) ''Final findings and orders'' shall mean:

(i) The findings of fact and order incident thereto issued by a FEP agency on the merits of a charge; or

(ii) The consent order or consent decree entered into by the FEP agency on the merits of a charge.

Provided, however, That no findings and order of a FEP agency shall be considered final for purposes of this section unless the FEP agency shall have served a copy of such findings and order upon the Commission and upon the person claiming to be aggrieved and shall have informed such person of his or her rights of appeal or to request reconsideration, or rehearing or similar rights; and the time for such appeal, reconsideration, or rehearing request shall have expired or the issues of such appeal, reconsideration or rehearing shall have been determined.

(2) ''Substantial weight'' shall mean that such full and careful consideration shall be accorded to final findings and orders, as defined above, as is appropriate in light of the facts supporting them when they meet all of the prerequisites set forth below:

(i) The proceedings were fair and regular; and

(ii) The practices prohibited by the State or local law are comparable in scope to the practices prohibited by Federal law; and

(iii) The final findings and order serve the interest of the effective enforcement of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA: *Provided,* That giving substantial weight to final findings and orders of a FEP agency does not include according weight, for purposes of applying Federal law, to such Agency's conclusions of law.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 45 FR 73036, Nov. 4, 1980; 48 FR 19165, Apr. 28, 1983; 49 FR 13024, Apr. 2, 1984; 51 FR 18778, May 22, 1986; 52 FR 26959, July 17, 1987; 53 FR 3370, Feb. 7, 1988; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 56 FR 9624, 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 71 FR 26828, May 9, 2006; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 85 FR 65218, Oct. 15, 2020; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1601.22 Confidentiality.

Neither a charge, nor information obtained during the investigation of a charge of employment discrimination under title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA, nor information obtained from records required to be kept or reports required to be filed pursuant to title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA, shall be made matters of public information by the Commission prior to the institution of any proceeding under title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA involving such charge or information. This provision does not apply to such earlier disclosures to charging parties, or their attorneys, respondents or their attorneys, or witnesses where disclosure is deemed necessary for securing appropriate relief. This provision also does not apply to such earlier disclosures to representatives of interested Federal, State, and local authorities as may be appropriate or necessary to the carrying out of the Commission's function under title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA, nor to the publication of data derived from such information in a form which does not reveal the identity of charging parties, respondents, or persons supplying the information.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 56 FR 9624, 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 63982, 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

PROCEDURE TO RECTIFY UNLAWFUL EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

§ 1601.23 Preliminary or temporary relief.

(a) In the interest of the expeditious procedure required by section 706(f)(2) of title VII, the Commission hereby delegates to the Director of the Office of Field Programs or upon delegation, the Director of Field Management Programs and each District Director the authority, upon the basis of a preliminary investigation, to make the initial determination on its behalf that prompt judicial action is necessary to carry out the purposes of the Act and recommend such action to the General Counsel. The Commission authorizes the General Counsel to institute an appropriate action on behalf of the Commission in such a case not involving a government, governmental agency, or political subdivision.

(b) In a case involving a government, governmental agency, or political subdivision, any recommendation for preliminary or temporary relief shall be transmitted directly to the Attorney General by the Director of the Office of Field Programs or upon delegation, the Director of Field Management Programs or the District Director.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit private individuals from exercising their rights to seek temporary or preliminary relief on their own motion.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 47 FR 46275, Oct. 18, 1982; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 71 FR 26828, May 9, 2006]

§ 1601.24 Conciliation: Procedure and authority.

(a) Where the Commission determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that an unlawful employment practice has occurred or is occurring, the Commission shall endeavor to eliminate such practice by informal methods of conference, conciliation and persuasion. In conciliating a case in which a determination of reasonable cause has been made, the Commission shall attempt to achieve a just resolution of all violations found and to obtain agreement that the respondent will eliminate the unlawful employment practice and provide appropriate affirmative relief. Where such conciliation attempts are successful, the terms of the conciliation agreement shall be reduced to writing and shall be signed by the Commission's designated representative and the parties. A copy of the signed agreement shall be sent to the respondent and the person claiming to be aggrieved. Where a charge has been filed on behalf of a person claiming to be aggrieved, the conciliation agreement may be signed by the person filing the charge or by the person on whose behalf the charge was filed.

(b) District Directors; the Director of the Office of Field Programs or the Director of Field Management Programs; or their designees are hereby delegated authority to enter into informal conciliation efforts. District Directors or upon delegation, Field Directors, Area Directors, or Local Directors; the Director of the Office of Field Programs; or the Director of Field Management

Programs are hereby delegated the authority to negotiate and sign conciliation agreements. When a suit brought by the Commission is in litigation, the General Counsel is hereby delegated the authority to negotiate and sign conciliation agreements where, pursuant to section 706(f)(1) of title VII, a court has stayed proceedings in the case pending further efforts of the Commission to obtain voluntary compliance.

(c) Proof of compliance with title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA in accordance with the terms of the agreement shall be obtained by the Commission before the case is closed. In those instances in which a person claiming to be aggrieved or a member of the class claimed to be aggrieved by the practices alleged in the charge is not a party to such an agreement, the agreement shall not extinguish or in any way prejudice the rights of such person to proceed in court under section 706(f)(1) of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 48 FR 19165, Apr. 28, 1983; 49 FR 13024, Apr. 2, 1984; 49 FR 13874, Apr. 9, 1984; 52 FR 26959, July 17, 1987; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 56 FR 9624, 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 71 FR 26828, May 9, 2006; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 85 FR 65218, Oct. 15, 2020, 86 FR 2985, Jan. 14, 2021; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024; 89 FR 12232, Feb. 16, 2024]

§ 1601.25 Failure of conciliation; notice.

Where the Commission is unable to obtain voluntary compliance as provided by title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA and it determines that further efforts to do so would be futile or nonproductive, it shall, through the appropriate District Director, the Director of the Office of Field Programs, or Director of Field Management Programs, or their designees, so notify the respondent in writing.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 47 FR 46275, Oct. 18, 1982; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 56 FR 9624, Mar. 7, 1991; 71 FR 26829, May 9, 2006; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1601.26 Confidentiality of endeavors.

(a) Nothing that is said or done during and as part of the informal endeavors of the Commission to eliminate unlawful employment practices by informal methods of conference, conciliation, and persuasion may be made a matter of public information by the Commission, its officers or employees, or used as evidence in a subsequent proceeding without the written consent of the persons concerned. This provision does not apply to such disclosures to the representatives of Federal, State or local agencies as may be appropriate or necessary to the carrying out of the Commission's functions under title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA: *Provided, however,* That the Commission may refuse to make disclosures to any such agency which does not maintain the confidentiality of such endeavors in accord with this section or in any circumstances where the disclosures will not serve the purposes of the effective enforcement of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA.

(b) Factual information obtained by the Commission during such informal endeavors, if such information is otherwise obtainable by the Commission under section 709 of title VII, for disclosure purposes will be considered by the Commission as obtained during the investigatory process.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

PROCEDURE CONCERNING THE INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ACTIONS

§ 1601.27 Civil actions by the Commission.

The Commission may bring a civil action against any respondent named in a charge not a government, governmental agency or political subdivision, after thirty (30) days from the date of the filing of a charge with the Commission unless a conciliation agreement acceptable to the Commission has been secured: *Provided, however,* That the Commission may seek preliminary or temporary relief pursuant to section 706(f)(2) of title VII, according to the procedures set forth in §1601.23 of this part, at any time.

§ 1601.28 Notice of right to sue: Procedure and authority.

(a) *Issuance of notice of right to sue upon request.* (1) When a person claiming to be aggrieved requests, in writing, that a notice of right to sue be issued and the charge to which the request relates is filed against a respondent other than a government, governmental agency or political subdivision, the Commission shall promptly issue such notice as described in §1601.28(e) to all parties, at any time after the expiration of one hundred eighty (180) days from the date of filing of the charge with the Commission, or in the case of a Commissioner charge 180 days after the filing of the charge or 180 days after the expiration of any period of reference under section 706(d) of title VII as appropriate.

(2) When a person claiming to be aggrieved requests, in writing, that a notice of right to sue be issued, and the charge to which the request relates is filed against a respondent other than a government, governmental agency or political subdivision, the Commission may issue such notice as described in §1601.28(e) with copies to all parties, at any time prior to the expiration of 180 days from the date of filing of the charge with the Commission; provided that the District Director, the Field Director, the Area Director, the Local Director, the Director of the Office of Field Programs or upon delegation, the Director of Field Management Programs has determined that it is probable that the Commission will be unable to complete its administrative processing of the charge within 180 days from the filing of the charge and has attached a written certificate to that effect.

(3) Issuance of a notice of right to sue shall terminate further proceeding of any charge that is not a Commissioner charge unless the District Director; Field Director; Area Director; Local Director; Director of the Office of Field Programs or upon delegation, the Director of Field Management Programs; or the General Counsel, determines at that time or at a later time that it would effectuate the purpose of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA to further process the charge. Issuance of a notice of right to sue shall not terminate the processing of a Commissioner charge.

(4) The issuance of a notice of right to sue does not preclude the Commission from offering such assistance to a person issued such notice as the Commission deems necessary or appropriate.

(b) *Issuance of notice of right to sue following Commission disposition of charge.* (1) Where the Commission has found reasonable cause to believe that title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA has been violated, has been unable to obtain voluntary compliance with title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA, and where the Commission has decided not to bring a civil action against the respondent, it will issue a notice of right to sue on the charge as described in §1601.28(e) to:

(i) The person claiming to be aggrieved, or,

(ii) In the case of a Commissioner charge, to any member of the class who is named in the charge, identified by the Commissioner in a third-party certificate, or otherwise identified by the Commission as a member of the class and provide a copy thereof to all parties.

(2) Where the Commission has entered into a conciliation agreement to which the person claiming to be aggrieved is not a party, the Commission shall issue a notice of right to sue on the charge to the person claiming to be aggrieved.

(3) Where the Commission has dismissed a charge pursuant to §1601.18, it shall issue a notice of right to sue as described in §1601.28(e) to:

(i) The person claiming to be aggrieved, or,

(ii) In the case of a Commissioner charge, to any member of the class who is named in the charge, identified by the Commissioner in a third-party certificate, or otherwise identified by the Commission as a member of the class, and provide a copy thereof to all parties.

(4) The issuance of a notice of right to sue does not preclude the Commission from offering such assistance to a person issued such notice as the Commission deems necessary or appropriate.

(c) The Commission hereby delegates authority to District Directors, Field Directors, Area Directors, Local Directors, the Director of the Office of Field Programs, or Director of Field Management Programs or their designees, to issue notices of right to sue, in accordance with this section, on behalf of the Commission. Where a charge has been filed on behalf of a person claiming to be aggrieved, the notice of right to sue shall be issued in the name of the person or organization who filed the charge.

(d) *Notices of right to sue for charges against Governmental respondents.* In all cases where the respondent is a government, governmental agency, or a political subdivision, the Commission will issue the notice of right to sue when there has been a dismissal of a charge. The notice of right to sue will be issued in accordance with §1601.28(e). In all other cases where the respondent is a government, governmental agency, or political subdivision, the Attorney General will issue the notice of right to sue, including the following cases:

(1) When there has been a finding of reasonable cause by the Commission, there has been a failure of conciliation, and the Attorney General has decided not to file a civil action; and

(2) Where a charging party has requested a notice of right to sue pursuant to §1601.28(a)(1) or (2). In cases where a charge of discrimination results in a finding of cause in part and no cause in part, the case will be treated as a ''cause'' determination and will be referred to the Attorney General.

(e) *Content of notice of right to sue.* The notice of right to sue shall include:

(1) Authorization to the aggrieved person to bring a civil action under title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA pursuant to section 706(f)(1) of title VII, section 107 of the ADA, section 207 of GINA, or section 104 of the PWFA within 90 days from receipt of such authorization;

(2) Advice concerning the institution of such civil action by the person claiming to be aggrieved, where appropriate;

(3) The charge;

(4) The Commission's decision, determination, or dismissal, as appropriate.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 44 FR 4669, Jan. 23, 1979; 45 FR 73037, Nov. 4, 1980; 47 FR 46275, Oct. 18, 1982; 48 FR 19165, Apr. 28, 1983; 49 FR 13024, Apr. 2, 1984; 49 FR 13874, Apr. 9, 1984; 52 FR 26959, July 17, 1987; 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989; 56 FR 9624, 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 71 FR 26829, May 9, 2006; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 85 FR 65218, Oct. 15, 2020; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§1601.29 Referral to the Attorney General.

If the Commission is unable to obtain voluntary compliance in a charge involving a government, governmental agency or political subdivision, it shall inform the Attorney General of the appropriate facts in the case with recommendations for the institution of a civil action by him or her against such respondent or for intervention by him or her in a civil action previously instituted by the person claiming to be aggrieved.

Subpart C—Notices to Employees, Applicants for Employment and Union Members

§1601.30 Notices to be posted.

(a) Every employer, employment agency, labor organization, and joint labor-management committee controlling an apprenticeship or other training program that has an obligation under title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA shall post and keep posted in conspicuous places upon its premises notices in an accessible format, to be prepared or approved by the Commission, describing the applicable provisions of title VII, the ADA, GINA, and the PWFA. Such notice must be posted in prominent and accessible places where notices to employees, applicants and members are customarily maintained.

(b) Section 711(b) of Title VII and the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act, as amended, make failure to comply with this section punishable by a fine of not more than $680 for each separate offense.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 55 FR 2518, Jan. 25, 1990; 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 62 FR 26934, May 16, 1997; 74 FR 63982, 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 79 FR 15221, Mar. 19, 2014; 81 FR 35270, June 2, 2016; 82 FR 8813, Jan. 31, 2017; 83 FR 2537, Jan. 18, 2018; 84 FR 10411, Mar. 21, 2019; 85 FR 15376, Mar. 18, 2020; 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020; 86 FR 28264, May 26, 2021; 87 FR 10073, Feb. 23, 2022; 88 FR 17373, Mar. 23, 2023; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024; 89 FR 12232, Feb. 16, 2024]

Subpart D—Construction of Rules

§ 1601.34 Rules to be liberally construed.

These rules and regulations shall be liberally construed to effectuate the purpose and provisions of title VII, the ADA, GINA, and the PWFA.

[44 FR 4670, Jan. 23, 1979. Redesignated and amended at 56 FR 9624, 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

Subpart E—Issuance, Amendment, or Repeal of Rules

§ 1601.35 Petitions.

Any interested person may petition the Commission, in writing, for the issuance, amendment, or repeal of a rule or regulation. Such petition shall be filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 131 M Street, NE., Washington DC 20507, and shall state the rule or regulation proposed to be issued, amended, or repealed, together with a statement of grounds in support of such petition.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977, as amended at 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989. Redesignated at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009]

§ 1601.36 Action on petition.

Upon the filing of such petition, the Commission shall consider the same and may thereupon either grant or deny the petition in whole or in part, conduct an appropriate proceeding thereon, or make other disposition of the petition. Should the petition be denied in whole or in part, prompt notice shall be given of the denial, accompanied by a simple statement of the grounds unless the denial be self-explanatory.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977. Redesignated at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991]

Subpart F [Reserved]

Subpart G—FEP Agency Designation Procedures

§ 1601.70 FEP agency qualifications.

(a) State and local fair employment practice agencies or authorities which qualify under section 706(c) of title VII and this section shall be designated as ''FEP agencies.'' The qualifications for designation under section 706(c) are as follows:

(1) That the state or political subdivision has a fair employment practice law which makes unlawful employment practices based upon race; color; religion; sex; national origin; disability; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; and

(2) That the State or political subdivision has either established a State or local authority or authorized an existing State or local authority that is empowered with respect to employment practices found to be unlawful, to do one of three things: To grant relief from the practice; to seek relief from the practice; or to institute criminal proceedings with respect to the practice.

(b) Any State or local agency or authority seeking FEP agency designation should submit a written request to the Chair of the Commission. However, if the Commission is aware that an agency or authority meets the above criteria for FEP agency designation, the Commission shall defer charges to such agency or authority even though no request for FEP agency designation has been made.

(c) A request for FEP agency designation should include a copy of the agency's fair employment practices law and any rules, regulations and guidelines of general interpretation issued pursuant thereto. Submission of such data will allow the Commission to ascertain which employment practices are made

unlawful and which bases are covered by the State or local entity. Agencies or authorities are requested, but not required, to provide the following helpful information:

(1) A chart of the organization of the agency or authority responsible for administering and enforcing said law;

(2) The amount of funds made available to or allocated by the agency or authority for fair employment purposes;

(3) The identity and telephone number of the agency (authority) representative whom the Commission may contact with reference to any legal or other questions that may arise regarding designation;

(4) A detailed statement as to how the agency or authority meets the qualifications of paragraph (a) (1) and (2) of §1601.70.

(d) Where both State and local FEP agencies exist, the Commission reserves the right to defer to the State FEP agency only. However, where there exist agencies of concurrent jurisdiction, the Commission may defer to the FEP agency which would best serve the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA, or to both.

(e) The Chair or his or her designee, will provide to the Attorney General of the concerned State (and corporation counsel of a concerned local government, if appropriate) an opportunity to comment upon aspects of State or local law which might affect the qualifications of any new agency in that State otherwise cognizable under this section.

[45 FR 33606, May 20, 1980, as amended at 47 FR 53733, Nov. 29, 1982. Redesignated and amended at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 60 FR 46220, Sept. 6, 1995; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020; 89 FR 11169, 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

§1601.71 FEP agency notification.

(a) When the Commission determines that an agency or authority meets the criteria outlined in section 706(c) of title VII and §1601.70, the Commission shall so notify the agency by letter and shall notify the public by publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER of an amendment to §1601.74.

(b) Where the Commission determines that an agency or authority does not come within the definition of a FEP agency for purposes of a particular basis of discrimination or where the agency or authority applies for designation as a Notice Agency, the Commission shall notify that agency or authority of the filing of charges for which the agency or authority is not a FEP agency. For such purposes that State or local agency will be deemed a Notice Agency.

(c) Where the Chair becomes aware of events which lead him or her to believe that a deferral Agency no longer meets the requirements of a FEP agency and should no longer be considered a FEP agency, the Chair will so notify the affected agency and give it 15 days in which to respond to the preliminary findings. If the Chair deems necessary, he or she may convene a hearing for the purpose of clarifying the matter. The Commission shall render a final determination regarding continuation of the agency as a FEP agency.

[45 FR 33606, May 20, 1980, as amended at 47 FR 53733, Nov. 29, 1982. Redesignated at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 60 FR 46220, Sept. 6, 1995; 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020]

§§1601.72–1601.73 [Reserved]

§1601.74 Designated and notice agencies.

The Commission has made the following designations[2]:

(a) The designated FEP agencies are:

Alaska Commission for Human Rights
Alexandria (VA) Human Rights Office
Allentown (PA) Human Relations Commission
Anchorage (AK) Equal Rights Commission
Anderson (IN) Human Relations Commission
Arizona Civil Rights Division
Arlington County (VA) Human Rights Commission[3]

[2] State and local laws may change and that can affect the timeliness of a claim. It is advisable for individuals to contact the FEP agency to confirm coverage, or otherwise determine that the above designation reflects the current status of the agency under state and local law.

[3] The Arlington Human Rights Commission has been designated as a FEP agency for all charges except charges alleging a violation of title VII by a government, government agency, or political subdivision of the State of Virginia. For these types of charges it

Austin (TX) Human Relations Commission[4]
Baltimore (MD) Community Relations Commission
Bloomington (IL) Human Relations Commission
Bloomington (IN) Human Rights Commission
Broward County (FL) Human Relations Commission
California Department of Fair Employment and Housing
Charleston (WV) Human Rights Commission
City of Salina (KS) Human Relations Commission and Department
City of Springfield (IL) Department of Community Relations
Clearwater (FL) Office of Community Relations
Colorado Civil Rights Commission
Colorado State Personnel Board[5]
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Department of Labor[6]
Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunity
Corpus Christi (TX) Human Relations Commission
Dade County (FL) Fair Housing and Employment Commission
Delaware Department of Labor
District of Columbia Office of Human Rights
Durham (NC) Human Relations Commission
East Chicago (IN) Human Rights Commission
Evansville (IN) Human Relations Commission
Fairfax County (VA) Human Rights Commission
Florida Commission on Human Relations
Fort Dodge-Webster County (IA) Human Rights Commission
Fort Wayne (IN) Metropolitan Human Relations Commission
Fort Worth (TX) Human Relations Commission
Gary (IN) Human Relations Commission
Georgia Office of Fair Employment Practices[7]
Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations[8]
Hillsborough County (FL) Equal Opportunity and Human Relations Department
Howard County (MD) Human Rights Commission[9]
Huntington (WV) Human Relations Commission
Idaho Human Rights Commission
Illinois Department of Human Rights
Indiana Civil Rights Commission
Iowa Civil Rights Commission
Jacksonville (FL) Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Kansas City (KS) Human Relations Department
Kansas City (MO) Human Relations Department
Kansas Human Rights Commission
Kentucky Commission on Human Rights
Lee County (FL) Department of Equal Opportunity
Lexington-Fayette (KY) Urban County Human Rights Commission

shall be deemed a ''Notice agency'' pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.71(b).

[4]The Austin (TX) Human Relations Commission has been designated as a FEP agency for all charges except charges alleging a violation of title VII by a government, government agency, or political subdivision of the State of Texas. For these types of charges it shall be deemed a ''Notice Agency,'' pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.71(b).

[5]The Colorado State Personnel Board has been designated as a FEP agency for only those charges which relate to appointments, promotions, and other personnel actions that take place in the State personnel system. In addition, it has been designated as a FEP agency for all of the above mentioned charges except charges which allege a violation of section 704(a) of title VII. For this type of charge it shall be deemed a ''Notice Agency'' pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.71(b).

[6]The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Department of Labor has been designated as a FEP agency for all charges except charges alleging a ''labor union'' has violated title VII; charges alleging an ''employment agency'' has violated title VII; and charges alleging violations of title VII by agencies or instrumentalities of the Government of Puerto Rico when they are not operating as private businesses or enterprises. For these types of charges it shall be deemed a ''Notice Agency,'' pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.71(b). With respect to charges alleging retaliation under section 704(a) of Title VII, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Department of Labor is a FEP agency for charges alleging retaliation for having opposed unlawful sexual harassment or participated in a statutory sexual harassment complaint proceeding and a ''Notice Agency'' for all other charges alleging violation of section 704(a) of Title VII.

[7]The Georgia Office of Fair Employment Practices has been designated as a FEP agency for all charges covering the employment practices of the departments of the State of Georgia only.

[8]The Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations has been granted FEP agency designation of all charges except those filed against units of the State and local government, in which case it shall be deemed a ''Notice Agency.''

[9]The Howard County (MD) Human Rights Commission has been granted designation of all charges except those filed against agencies of Howard County in which case it shall be deemed a ''Notice Agency.''

Lincoln (NE) Commission on Human Rights[10]
Louisiana (LA) Commission on Human Rights
Louisville and Jefferson County (KY) Human Relations Commission
Madison (WI) Equal Opportunities Commission
Maine Human Rights Commission
Maryland Commission on Human Relations
Mason City (IA) Human Rights Commission
Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
Michigan City (IN) Human Rights Commission
Michigan Department of Civil Rights
Minneapolis (MN) Department of Civil Rights
Minnesota Department of Human Rights
Missouri Commission on Human Rights
Montana Human Rights Division
Montgomery County (MD) Human Relations Commission
Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission
Nevada Commission on Equal Rights of Citizens
New Hampshire Commission for Human Rights
New Hanover (NC) Human Relations Commission[11]
New Haven (CT) Commission on Equal Opportunities
New Jersey Division of Civil Rights, Department of Law and Public Safety
New Mexico Human Rights Commission
New York City (NY) Commission on Human Rights
New York State Division on Human Rights
North Carolina State Office of Administrative Hearings
North Dakota Department of Labor
Ohio Civil Rights Commission
Oklahoma Human Rights Commission
Omaha (NE) Human Relations Department
Orange County (NC) Human Relations Commission
Oregon Bureau of Labor
Orlando (FL) Human Relations Department
Paducah (KY) Human Rights Commission
Palm Beach County (FL) Office of Equal Opportunity
Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
Philadelphia (PA) Commission on Human Relations
Pinellas County (FL) Affirmative Action Office
Pittsburgh (PA) Commission on Human Rights
Prince George's County (MD) Human Relations Commission
Prince William County (VA) Human Rights Commission
Reading (PA) Human Relations Commission
Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights
Richmond County (GA) Human Rights Commission
Rockville (MD) Human Rights Commission
St. Louis (MO) Civil Rights Enforcement Agency
St. Paul (MN) Department of Human Rights
St. Petersburg (FL) Human Relations Division[12]
Seattle (WA) Human Rights Commission
Sioux Falls (SD) Human Relations Commission
South Bend (IN) Human Rights Commission
South Carolina Human Affairs Commission
South Dakota Division of Human Rights
Springfield (OH) Human Relations Department
Tacoma (WA) Human Relations Commission
Tampa (FL) Office of Community Relations
Tennessee Commission for Human Development
Texas Commission on Human Rights
Topeka (KS) Human Relations Commission
Utah Industrial Commission, Anti-Discrimination Division

[10] The Lincoln (NE) Commission on Human Rights has been designated as a FEP agency for all charges except (1) a charge by an ''applicant for membership'' alleging a violation of section 703(c)(2) of title VII (2) a charge by an individual alleging that a ''joint labor-management committee'' has violated section 704(a) of title VII; and (3) a charge by an individual alleging that a ''joint labor-management committee'' has violated section 704(b) of title VII. For those types of charges, it shall be deemed a ''Notice Agency,'' pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.71(b).

[11] The New Hanover Human Relations Commission is being designated as a FEP agency for charges covering employment practices under section 706(c) of title VII and CFR 1601.70 *et seq.* (1980) within New Hanover County and ''such cities within the county as may by resolution of their governing boards, permit the Ordinance of the Board of Commissioners of New Hanover County entitled 'Prohibition of Discrimination in Employment' to be applicable within such cities.'' This covers Wilmington City and the unincorporated area of New Hanover County. At this time Wrightsville Beach, Carolina Beach and Kure Beach are not included in this designation. For charges from these latter locales the New Hanover Human Relations Commission shall be deemed a ''Notice Agency,'' pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.71(b).

[12] On June 1, 1979, the St. Petersburg Office of Human Relations was designated a FEP agency for all charges except those charges alleging retaliation under section 704(a) of title VII. Accordingly, ''for retaliation charges'' it was deemed a ''Notice Agency,'' pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.71(c). See 44 FR 31638. On May 23, 1979, an ordinance amended the St. Petersburg, FL Human Relations law to include charges of retaliation. Therefore, retaliation charges will be deferred to that agency effective immediately.

Vermont Attorney General's Office, Civil Rights Division
Vermont Human Rights Commission
Virgin Islands Department of Labor
Virginia Council on Human Rights
Washington Human Rights Commission
West Virginia Human Rights Commission
Wheeling (WV) Human Rights Commission
Wichita Falls (TX) Human Relations Commission
Wisconsin Equal Rights Division, Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
Wisconsin State Personnel Commission[13]
Wyoming Fair Employment Practices Commission
York (PA) Human Relations Commission
Youngstown (OH) Human Relations Commission

(b) The designated Notice Agencies are:

Arkansas Governor's Committee on Human Resources
Ohio Director of Industrial Relations
Raleigh (NC) Human Resources Department, Civil Rights Unit

(Sec. 713(a) 78 Stat. 265 (42 U.S.C. 2000e—12(a)))

[46 FR 33030, June 26, 1981. Redesignated at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991]

EDITORIAL NOTE: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 1601.74, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at *www.govinfo.gov*.

§ 1601.75 Certification of designated FEP agencies.

(a) The Commission may certify designated FEP agencies based upon the past, satisfactory performance of those agencies. The effect of such certification is that the Commission shall accept the findings and resolutions of designated FEP agencies in regard to cases processed under contracts with those agencies without individual, case-by-case substantial weight review by the Commission except as provided in §§ 1601.76 and 1601.77 of this part.

(b) Eligibility criteria for certification of a designated FEP agency are as follows:

(1) That the State or local agency has been a designated FEP agency for 4 years;

(2) That the State or local designated FEP agency's work product has been evaluated within the past 12 months by State, Local, and Tribal Programs, Office of Field Programs, and found to be in conformance with the Commission's Substantial Weight Review Procedures; and

(3) That the State or local designated FEP agency's findings and resolutions pursuant to its contract with the Commission, as provided in section 709(b) of title VII, have been accepted by the Commission in at least 95% of the cases processed by the FEP agency in the past 12 months.

(c) Upon Commission approval of a designated FEP agency for certification, it shall notify the agency of its certification and shall effect such certification by issuance and publication of an amendment to § 1601.80 of this part.

[46 FR 50367, Oct. 13, 1981, as amended at 54 FR 32061, Aug. 4, 1989. Redesignated and amended at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1601.76 Right of party to request review.

The Commission shall notify the parties whose cases are to be processed by the designated, certified FEP agency of their right, if aggrieved by the agency's final action, to request review by the Commission within 15 days of that action. The Commission, on receipt of a request for review, shall conduct such review in accord with the procedures set forth in the Substantial Weight Review Procedures.

[46 FR 50367, Oct. 13, 1981. Redesignated at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1601.77 Review by the Commission.

After a designated FEP agency has been certified, the Commission shall accept the findings and resolutions of that agency as final in regard to all cases processed under contract with the Commission, as provided in section

[13] The Wisconsin State Personnel Commission is being designated as a FEP agency for all charges covering the employment practices of the agencies of the State of Wisconsin except those charges alleging retaliation under 704(a) of title VII. Accordingly, for retaliation charges, it shall be deemed a Notice Agency pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.71(b).

709(b) of title VII, except that the Commission shall review charges closed by the certified FEP agency for lack of jurisdiction, as a result of unsuccessful conciliation, or where the charge involves an issue currently designated by the Commission for priority review.

[46 FR 50367, Oct. 13, 1981, as amended at 51 FR 18778, May 22, 1986. Redesignated at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991]

§ 1601.78 Evaluation of designated FEP agencies certified by the Commission.

To assure that designated FEP agencies certified by the Commission, as provided in §1601.75 of this part, continue to maintain performance consistent with the Commission's Substantial Weight Review Procedures, the Commission shall provide for the evaluation of such agencies as follows:

(a) Each designated FEP agency certified by the Commission shall be evaluated at least once every 3 years; and

(b) Each designated FEP agency certified by the Commission shall be evaluated when, as a result of a substantial weight review requested as provided in §1601.76 of this part or required in regard to cases closed as a result of unsuccessful conciliation or for lack of jurisdiction as provided in §1601.77 of this part, the Commission rejects more than 5% of a designated FEP agency's findings at the end of the year or 20% or more of its findings for two consecutive quarters. When the Commission rejects 20% or more of a designated FEP agency's findings during any quarter, the Commission shall initiate an inquiry and may conduct an evaluation.

(c) The Commission may, on its own motion, require an evaluation at any time.

[46 FR 50367, Oct. 13, 1981. Redesignated at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1601.79 Revocation of certification.

Certification of a designated FEP agency is discretionary with the Commission and the Commission may, upon its own motion, withdraw such certification as a result of an evaluation conducted pursuant to §1601.78 or for any reason which leads the Commission to believe that such certification no longer serves the interest of effective enforcement of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA. The Commission will accept comments from any individual or organization concerning the efficacy of the certification of any designated FEP agency. The revocation shall be effected by the issuance and publication of an amendment to §1601.80 of this part.

[46 FR 50367, Oct. 13, 1981. Redesignated and amended at 56 FR 9624, 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11169, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1601.80 Certified designated FEP agencies.

The designated FEP agencies receiving certification by the Commission are as follows:

Alaska Commission for Human Rights
Alexandria (VA) Human Rights Office
Anchorage (AK) Equal Rights Commission
Arizona Civil Rights Division
Arlington County (VA) Human Rights Commission
Austin Human Relations Commission
Baltimore (MD) Community Relations Commission
Broward County (FL) Human Relations Commission
California Department of Fair Employment and Housing
City of Tampa Office of Human Rights
Clearwater (FL) Office of Community Relations
Colorado Civil Rights Division
Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunity
Corpus Christi (TX) Human Relations Commission
Dade County (FL) Fair Housing and Employment Commission
Delaware Department of Labor
District of Columbia Office of Human Rights
East Chicago (IN) Human Rights Commission
Fairfax County (VA) Human Rights Commission
Florida Commission on Human Rights
Fort Wayne (IN) Metropolitan Human Relations Commission
Fort Worth (TX) Human Relations Commission
Gary (IN) Human Relations Commission
Georgia Commission on Equal Opportunity
Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Howard County (MD) Office of Human Rights
Idaho Human Rights Commission
Illinois Department of Human Rights
Indiana Civil Rights Commission
Iowa Civil Rights Commission

Jacksonville (FL) Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Kansas Commission on Civil Rights
Lee County Office of Equal Opportunity
Lexington-Fayette (KY) Urban County Human Rights Commission
Louisville and Jefferson County Human Relations Commission
Madison Equal Opportunity Commission
Maine Human Rights Commission
Maryland Commission on Human Relations
Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
Michigan Department of Civil Rights
Minneapolis (MN) Department of Civil Rights
Minnesota Department of Human Rights
Missouri Commission on Civil Rights
Montana Human Rights Division
Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission
Nevada Commission on Equal Rights of Citizens
New Hampshire Commission for Human Rights
New Hanover Human Relations Commission
New Jersey Division on Civil Rights
New Mexico Human Rights Commission
New York City (NY) Commission on Human Rights
New York State Division on Human Rights
North Carolina Civil Rights Division, Office of Administrative Hearings
North Dakota Department of Labor
Ohio Civil Rights Commission
Oklahoma Human Rights Commission
Omaha (NE) Human Relations Department
Oregon Bureau of Labor
Orlando (FL) Human Relations Department
Palm Beach County Office of Equal Opportunity
Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations
Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations
Puerto Rico Department of Labor and Human Resources
Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights
St. Louis (MO) Civil Rights Enforcement Agency
St. Paul Department of Human Rights
St. Petersburg (FL) Human Relations Department
Seattle (WA) Human Rights Commission
South Bend (IN) Human Rights Commission
South Carolina Human Affairs Commission
South Dakota Division of Human Rights
Tacoma (WA) Human Relations Division
Tennessee Human Rights Commission
Texas Commission on Human Rights
Utah Industrial Commission, Anti-Discrimination Division
Vermont Attorney General's Office, Civil Rights Division
Virgin Islands Department of Labor
Washington Human Rights Commission
West Virginia Human Rights Commission
Wisconsin Equal Rights Division, Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations
Wyoming Fair Employment Practices Commission

(42 U.S.C. 2000e—12(a))

[46 FR 50367, Oct. 13, 1981. Redesignated at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991]

EDITORIAL NOTE: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting §1601.80, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at *www.govinfo.gov*.

Subpart H—Title VII Interpretations and Opinions by the Commission

§ 1601.91 Request for title VII interpretation or opinion.

Any interested person desiring a written title VII interpretation or opinion from the Commission may make such a request. However, issuance of title VII interpretations or opinions is discretionary.

[56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991]

§ 1601.92 Contents of request; where to file.

A request for an ''opinion letter'' shall be in writing, signed by the person making the request, addressed to the Chair, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 131 M Street, NE., Washington, DC 20507 and shall contain:

(a) The names and addresses of the person making the request and of other interested persons.

(b) A statement of all known relevant facts.

(c) A statement of reasons why the title VII interpretation or opinion should be issued.

[42 FR 55388, Oct. 14, 1977. Redesignated and amended at 56 FR 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009; 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1601.93 Opinions—title VII.

Only the following may be relied upon as a ''written interpretation or opinion of the Commission'' within the meaning of section 713 of title VII:

(a) A letter entitled ''opinion letter'' and signed by the Legal Counsel on behalf of and as approved by the Commission, or, if issued in the conduct of litigation, by the General Counsel on behalf of and as approved by the Commission, or

(b) Matter published and specifically designated as such in the FEDERAL REGISTER, including the Commission's Guidelines on Affirmative Action, or

(c) A Commission determination of no reasonable cause, issued, under the circumstances described in §1608.10 (a) or (b) of the Commission's Guidelines on Affirmative Action, 29 CFR part 1608, when such determination contains a statement that it is a ''written interpretation or opinion of the Commission.''

[49 FR 31411, Aug. 7, 1984. Redesignated at 56 FR 9626, Mar. 7, 1991]

PART 1602—RECORDKEEPING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER TITLE VII, THE ADA, GINA, AND THE PWFA

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AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 2000e–8, 2000e–12; 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.;* 42 U.S.C. 12117; 42 U.S.C. 2000ff–6; 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2.

Subpart A—General

§ 1602.1 Purpose and scope.

Section 709 of title VII (42 U.S.C. 2000e–8), section 107 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C. 12117), section 207(a) of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) (42 U.S.C. 2000ff–6), and section 104 of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) (42 U.S.C 2000gg–2) require the Commission to establish regulations pursuant to which employers, labor organizations, joint labor-management committees, and employment agencies subject to those Acts shall make and preserve certain records and shall furnish specified information to aid in the administration and enforcement of the Acts.

[89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

§§ 1602.2–1602.6 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Employer Information Report

§ 1602.7 Requirement for filing of report.

On or before September 30 of each year, every employer that is subject to title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and that has 100 or more employees shall file with the Commission or its delegate executed copies of Standard Form 100, as revised (otherwise known as ''Employer Information Report EEO–1'') in conformity with the directions set forth in the form and accompanying instructions. Notwithstanding the provisions of §1602.14, every such employer shall retain at all times at each reporting unit, or at company or divisional headquarters, a copy of the most recent report filed for each such unit and shall make the same available if requested by an officer, agent, or employee of the Commission under the authority of section 710 of title VII. Appropriate copies of Standard Form 100 in blank will be supplied to every employer known to the Commission to be subject to the reporting requirements, but it is the responsibility of all such employers to obtain necessary supplies of the form from the Commission or its delegate prior to the filing date.

[37 FR 9219, May 6, 1972, as amended at 56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991]

§ 1602.8 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

The making of willfully false statements on Report EEO–1 is a violation of the United States Code, title 18, section 1001, and is punishable by fine or imprisonment as set forth therein.

[31 FR 2833, Feb. 17, 1966]

§ 1602.9 Commission's remedy for employer's failure to file report.

Any employer failing or refusing to file Report EEO–1 when required to do so may be compelled to file by order of a U.S. District Court, upon application of the Commission.

[31 FR 2833, Feb. 17, 1966]

§ 1602.10 Employer's exemption from reporting requirements.

If an employer claims that the preparation or filing of the report would create undue hardship, the employer may apply to the Commission for an exemption from the requirements set forth in this part, according to instruction 5. If an employer is engaged in activities for which the reporting unit criteria described in section 5 of the instructions are not readily adaptable, special reporting procedures may be required. If an employer seeks to change the date for filing its Standard Form 100 or seeks to change the period for which data are reported, an alternative reporting date or period may be permitted. In such instances, the employer should so advise the Commission by submitting to the Commission or its delegate a specific written proposal for an alternative reporting system prior to the date on which the report is due.

[56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991]

§ 1602.11 Additional reporting requirements.

The Commission reserves the right to require reports, other than that designated as the Employer Information Report EEO–1, about the employment practices of individual employers or groups of employers whenever, in its judgment, special or supplemental reports are necessary to accomplish the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA. Any system for the requirement of such reports will be established in accordance with the procedures referred to in section 709(c) of title VII, section 107 of the ADA, section 207(a) of GINA, or section 104 of the PWFA and as otherwise prescribed by law.

[31 FR 2833, Feb. 17, 1966, as amended at 56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

Subpart C—Recordkeeping by Employers

§ 1602.12 Records to be made or kept.

The Commission has not adopted any requirement, generally applicable to employers, that records be made or kept. It reserves the right to impose recordkeeping requirements upon individual employers or groups of employers subject to its jurisdiction whenever, in its judgment, such records (a) are necessary for the effective operation of the EEO–1 reporting system or of any special or supplemental reporting system as described above; or (b) are further required to accomplish the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA. Such record-keeping requirements will be adopted in accordance with the procedures referred to in section 709(c) of title VII, section 107 of the ADA, section 207(a) of GINA, or section 104 of the PWFA, and otherwise prescribed by law.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0040)

[31 FR 2833, Feb. 17, 1966, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981; 56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1602.13 Records as to racial or ethnic identity of employees.

Employers may acquire the information necessary for completion of items 5 and 6 of Report EEO–1 either by visual surveys of the work force, or at their option, by the maintenance of post-employment records as to the identity of employees where the same is permitted by State law. In the latter case, however, the Commission recommends the maintenance of a permanent record as to the racial or ethnic identity of an individual for purpose of completing the report form only where the employer keeps such records separately from the employee's basic personnel form or other records available to those responsible for personnel decisions, e.g., as part of an automatic data processing system in the payroll department.

[31 FR 2833, Feb. 17, 1966]

§ 1602.14 Preservation of records made or kept.

Any personnel or employment record made or kept by an employer (including but not necessarily limited to requests for reasonable accommodation, application forms submitted by applicants and other records having to do with hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, lay-off or termination, rates of pay or other terms of compensation, and selection for training or apprenticeship) shall be preserved by the employer for a period of one year from the date of the making of the record or the personnel action involved, whichever occurs later. In the case of involuntary termination of an employee, the personnel records of the individual terminated shall be kept for a period of one year from the date of termination. Where a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought by the Commission or the Attorney General, against an employer under title VII, the ADA, or GINA, the respondent employer shall preserve all personnel records relevant to the charge or action until final disposition of the charge or the action. The term ''personnel records relevant to the charge,'' for example, would include personnel or employment records relating to the aggrieved person and to all other employees holding positions similar to that held or sought by the aggrieved person and application forms or test papers completed by an unsuccessful applicant and by all other candidates for the same position as that for which the aggrieved person applied and was rejected. The date of *final disposition of the charge or the action* means the date of expiration of the statutory period within which the aggrieved person may bring an action in a U.S. District Court or, where an action is brought against an employer either by the aggrieved person, the Commission, or by the Attorney General, the date on which such litigation is terminated.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0040)

[37 FR 9219, May 6, 1972, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981; 56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991; 77 FR 5398, Feb. 3, 2012; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024; 89 FR 46021, May 28, 2024]

Subpart D—Apprenticeship Information Report

§ 1602.15 Requirement for filing and preserving copy of report.

On or before September 30, 1967, and annually thereafter, certain joint labor-management committees subject to title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which control apprenticeship programs shall file with the Commission, or its delegate, executed copies of Apprenticeship Information Report EEO–2 in conformity with the directions set forth in the form and accompanying instructions. The committees covered by this regulation are those which (a) have five or more apprentices enrolled in the program at any time during August and September of the reporting year, and (b) represent at least one employer sponsor and at least one labor organization sponsor which are themselves subject to title VII. Every such committee shall retain at all times among the records maintained in the ordinary course of its affairs a copy of the most recent report filed, and shall make the same available if requested by an officer, agent, or employee of the Commission under the authority of section 710 of title VII. It is the responsibility of all such committees to obtain from the Commission or its delegate necessary supplies of the form.

[37 FR 9220, May 6, 1972]

§ 1602.16 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

The making of willfully false statements on Report EEO–2 is a violation of the U.S. Code, title 18, section 1001, and is punishable by fine or imprisonment as set forth therein.

[32 FR 10650, July 20, 1967]

§ 1602.17 Commission's remedy for failure to file report.

Any person failing or refusing to file Report EEO–2 when required to do so may be compelled to file by order of a U.S. District Court, upon application of the Commission, under authority of section 709(c) of title VII.

[37 FR 9220, May 6, 1972]

§ 1602.18 Exemption from reporting requirements.

If it is claimed that the preparation or filing of Report EEO–2 would create undue hardship, the committee may apply to the Commission for an exemption from the requirements set forth in this part.

[32 FR 10650, July 20, 1967]

§ 1602.19 Additional reporting requirements.

The Commission reserves the right to require reports, other than that designated as Report EEO–2, about apprenticeship procedures of joint labor-management committees, employers, and labor organizations whenever, in its judgment, special or supplemental reports are necessary to accomplish the purpose of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA. Any system for the requirement of such reports will be established in accordance with the procedures referred to in section 709(c) of title VII, section 107 of the ADA, section 207(a) of GINA, or section 104 of the PWFA and as otherwise prescribed by law.

[32 FR 10650, July 20, 1967, as amended at 56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

Subpart E—Apprenticeship Recordkeeping

§ 1602.20 Records to be made or kept.

(a) Every person required to file Report EEO–2 shall make or keep such records as are necessary for its completion under the conditions and circumstances set forth in the instructions accompanying the report, which are specifically incorporated herein by reference and have the same force and effect as other sections of this part.

(b) Every employer, labor organization, and joint labor-management committee subject to title VII which controls an apprenticeship program (regardless of any joint or individual obligation to file a report) shall beginning August 1, 1967, maintain a list in chronological order containing the names and addresses of all persons who have applied to participate in the apprenticeship program, including the dates on which such applications were received. (See section 709(c), title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964.) Such list shall, contain a notation of the sex of the applicant and of the applicant's identification as ''White,'' ''Black,'' ''Hispanic,'' ''Asian or Pacific Islander'' or ''American Indian or Alaskan Native.'' The methods of making such identification are set forth in the instruction accompanying Report EEO–2. The words ''applied,'' ''applicant'' and ''application'' as used in this section refer to situations involving actual applications only. An applicant is considered to be a person who files a formal application, or in some informal way indicates a specific intention to be considered for admission to the apprenticeship program. A person who casually appears to make an informal inquiry about the program, or about apprenticeship in general, is not considered to be an applicant. The term ''apprenticeship program'' as used herein refers to programs described in the instructions accompanying Report EEO–2.

(c) In lieu of maintaining the chronological list referred to in § 1602.20 (b), persons required to compile the list may maintain on file written applications for participation in the apprenticeship program, provided that the application form contains a notation of the date the form was received, the address of the applicant, and a notation of the sex, and the race, color, or national origin of the applicant as described above.

[32 FR 10650, July 20, 1967, as amended at 33 FR 282, Jan. 9, 1968; 42 FR 33557, Aug. 10, 1977]

§ 1602.21 Preservation of records made or kept.

(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1602.14, every person subject to § 1602.20 (b) or (c) shall preserve the list of applicants or application forms, as the case may be, for a period of 2 years from the date the application was received, except that in those instances where an annual report is required by the Commission calling for statistics as to the sex, and the race, color, or national origin of apprentices, the person required to file the report shall preserve the list and forms for a period of 2 years or the period of a successful applicant's apprenticeship, whichever is

longer. Persons required to file Report EEO–2, or other reports calling for information about the operation of an apprenticeship program similar to that required on Report EEO–2, shall preserve any other record made solely for the purpose of completing such reports for a period of 1 year from the due date thereof.

(b) Other records: Except to the extent inconsistent with the law or regulation of any State or local fair employment practices agency, or of any other Federal or State agency involved in the enforcement of an antidiscrimination program in apprenticeship, other records relating to apprenticeship made or kept by a person required to file Report EEO–2, including but not necessarily limited to requests for reasonable accommodation, test papers completed by applicants for apprenticeship and records of interviews with applicants, shall be kept for a period of 2 years from the date of the making of the record. Where a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought by the Attorney General under title VII, the ADA, or GINA the respondent shall preserve all records relevant to the charge or action until final disposion of the charge or the action. The term ''records relevant to the charge,'' for example, would include applications, forms or test papers completed by an unsuccessful applicant and by all other candidates for the same position as that for which the charging party applied and was rejected. The date of ''final disposition of the charge or the action'' means the date of expiration of the statutory period within which a charging party may bring an action in a U.S. District Court or, where an action is brought either by a charging party or by the Attorney General, the date on which such litigation is terminated.

[32 FR 10660, July 20, 1967, as amended at 56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991; 77 FR 5398, Feb. 3, 2012; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024; 89 FR 46021, May 28, 2024]

Subpart F—Local Union Equal Employment Opportunity Report

§ 1602.22 Requirements for filing and preserving copy of report.

On or before December 31, 1986, and biennially thereafter, every labor organization subject to title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, shall file with the Commission or its delegate an executed copy of Local Union Report EEO–3 in conformity with the directions set forth in the form and accompanying instructions, provided that the labor organization has 100 or more members at any time during the 12 months preceding the due date of the report, and is a ''local union'' (as that term is commonly understood) or an independent or unaffiliated union. Labor organizations required to report are those which perform, in a specific jurisdiction, the functions ordinarily performed by a local union, whether or not they are so designated. Every local union or a labor organization acting in its behalf, shall retain at all times among the records maintained in the ordinary course of its affairs a copy of the most recent report filed, and shall make the same available if requested by an officer, agent, or employee of the Commission under the authority of section 709 of title VII. It is the responsibility of all persons required to file to obtain from the Commission or its delegate necessary supplies of the form.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0006)

[51 FR 11018, Apr. 1, 1986]

§ 1602.23 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on reports.

The making of willfully false statements on Report EEO–3 is a violation of the United States Code, title 18, section 1001, and is punishable by fine or imprisonment as set forth herein.

[32 FR 10651, July 20, 1967]

§ 1602.24 Commission's remedy for failure to file report.

Any person failing or refusing to file Report EEO–3 when required to do so may be compelled to file by order of a U.S. District Court, upon application of

the Commission, under authority of section 709(c) of title VII.

[37 FR 9220, May 6, 1972]

§ 1602.25 Exemption from reporting requirements.

If it is claimed that the preparation or filing of Report EEO–3 would create undue hardship, the labor organization may apply to the Commission for an exemption from the requirements set forth in this part.

[32 FR 10651, July 20, 1967]

§ 1602.26 Additional reporting requirements.

The Commission reserves the right to require reports, other than that designated as Report EEO–3, about the membership or referral practices or other procedures of labor organizations, whenever, in its judgment, special or supplemental reports are necessary to accomplish the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA. Any system for requirement of such reports will be established in accordance with the procedures referred to in section 709(c) of title VII, section 107 of the ADA, section 207(a) of GINA, or section 104 of the PWFA, and as otherwise prescribed by law.

[32 FR 10651, July 20, 1967, as amended at 56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

Subpart G—Recordkeeping by Labor Organizations

§ 1602.27 Records to be made or kept.

Those portions of Report EEO–3 calling for information about union policies and practices and for the compilation of statistics on the race, color, national origin, and sex of members, persons referred, and apprentices, are deemed to be ''records'' within the meaning of section 709(c), title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964. Every local, independent, or unaffiliated union with 100 or more members (or any agent acting in its behalf, if the agent has responsibility for referral of persons for employment) shall make these records or such other records as are necessary for the completion of Report EEO–3 under the circumstances and conditions set forth in the instructions accompanying it, which are specifically incorporated herein by reference and have the same force and effect as other sections of this part.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0006)

[32 FR 10651, July 20, 1967, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981]

§ 1602.28 Preservation of records made or kept.

(a) All records made by a labor organization or its agent solely for the purpose of completing Report EEO–3 shall be preserved for a period of 1 year from the due date of the report for which they were compiled. Any labor organization identified as a ''referral union'' in the instructions accompanying Report EEO–3, or agent thereto, shall preserve other membership or referral records (including applications for same) made or kept by it for a period of 1 year from the date of the making of the record. Where a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought by the Commission or the Attorney General, against a labor organization under title VII, the ADA, or GINA, the respondent labor organization shall preserve all records relevant to the charge or action until final disposition of the charge or the action. The date of ''final disposition of the charge or the action'' means the date of expiration of the statutory period within which the aggrieved person may bring an action in a U.S. District Court or, where an action is brought against a labor organization either by the Commission, the aggrieved person, or by the Attorney General, the date on which such litigation is terminated.

(b) Nothing herein shall relieve any labor organization covered by title VII of the obligations set forth in subpart E, §§ 1602.20 and 1602.21, relating to the establishment and maintenance of a list of applicants wishing to participate in an apprenticeship program controlled by it.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0040)

[37 FR 9220, May 6, 1972, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981; 56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991; 77 FR 5398, Feb. 3, 2012; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024; 89 FR 46021, May 28, 2024]

Subpart H—Records and Inquiries as to Race, Color, National Origin, or Sex

§ 1602.29 Applicability of State or local law.

The requirements imposed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in these regulations, subparts D through G, supersede any provisions of State or local law which may conflict with them. Any State or local laws prohibiting inquiries and recordkeeping with respect to race, color, national origin, or sex do not apply to inquiries required to be made under these regulations and under the instructions accompanying Reports EEO–2 and EEO–3.

[32 FR 10652, July 20, 1967]

Subpart I—State and Local Governments Recordkeeping

§ 1602.30 Records to be made or kept.

On or before September 30, 1974, and annually thereafter, every political jurisdiction with 15 or more employees is required to make or keep records and the information therefrom which are or would be necessary for the completion of report EEO–4 under the circumstances set forth in the instructions thereto, whether or not the political jurisdiction is required to file such report under § 1602.32 of the regulations in this part. The instructions are specifically incorporated herein by reference and have the same force and effect as other sections of this part.[1] Such reports and the information therefrom shall be retained at all times for a period of 3 years at the central office of the political jurisdiction and shall be made available if requested by an officer, agent, or employee of the Commission under section 710 of title VII, as amended. Although agency data are aggregated by functions for purposes of reporting, separate data for each agency must be maintained either by the agency itself or by the office of the political jurisdiction responsible for preparing the EEO–4 form. It is the responsibility of every political jurisdiction to obtain from the Commission or its delegate necessary instructions in order to comply with the requirements of this section.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0008)

[38 FR 12604, May 14, 1973, as amended at 39 FR 30832, Aug. 26, 1974; 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981]

§ 1602.31 Preservation of records made or kept.

Any personnel or employment record made or kept by a political jurisdiction (including but not necessarily limited to requests for reasonable accommodation application forms submitted by applicants and other records having to do with hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, or termination, rates of pay or other terms of compensation, and selection for training or apprenticeship) shall be preserved by the political jurisdiction for a period of 2 years from the date of the making of the record or the personnel action involved, whichever occurs later. In the case of involuntary termination of an employee, the personnel records of the individual terminated shall be kept for a period of 2 years from the date of termination. Where a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought by the Attorney General against a political jurisdiction under title VII, the ADA, or GINA, the respondent political jurisdiction shall preserve all personnel records relevant to the charge or action until final disposition of the charge or the action. The term ''personnel record relevant to the charge,'' for example, would include personnel or employment records relating to the person claiming to be aggrieved and to all other employees holding positions similar to that held or sought by the person claiming to be aggrieved; and application forms or test papers completed by an unsuccessful applicant and by all other candidates for the same position as that for which the person claiming to be aggrieved applied and was rejected. The date of final disposition of the charge or the action means the date of expiration of the statutory period within which a person claiming to be aggrieved may bring an action in a U.S.

[1] NOTE: Instructions were published as an appendix to the proposed regulations on Mar. 2, 1973 (38 FR 5662).

district court or, where an action is brought against a political jurisdiction either by a person claiming to be aggrieved or by the Attorney General, the date on which such litigation is terminated.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0040)

[38 FR 12605, May 14, 1973, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981; 56 FR 35756, July 26, 1991; 77 FR 5398, Feb. 3, 2012; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024; 89 FR 46021, May 28, 2024]

Subpart J—State and Local Government Information Report

SOURCE: 38 FR 12605, May 14, 1973, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1602.32 Requirement for filing and preserving copy of report.

On or before September 30, 1993, and biennially thereafter, certain political jurisdictions subject to title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, shall file with the Commission or its delegate executed copies of ''State and Local Government Information Report EEO–4'' in conformity with the directions set forth in the form and accompanying instructions. The political jurisdictions covered by this section are (a) those which have 100 or more employees, and (b) those other political jurisdictions which have 15 or more employees from whom the Commission requests the filing of reports.

Every such political jurisdiction shall retain at all times a copy of the most recently filed EEO–4 at the central office of the political jurisdiction for a period of 3 years and shall make the same available if requested by an officer, agent, or employee of the Commission under the authority of section 710 of title VII, as amended.

[58 FR 29536, May 21, 1993]

§ 1602.33 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

The making of willfully false statements on report EEO–4, is a violation of the United States Code, title 18, section 1001, and is punishable by fine or imprisonment as set forth therein.

§ 1602.34 Commission's remedy for political jurisdiction's failure to file report.

Any political jurisdiction failing or refusing to file report EEO–4 when required to do so may be compelled to file by order of a U.S. district court, upon application of the Attorney General.

§ 1602.35 Political jurisdiction's exemption from reporting requirements.

If it is claimed that the preparation or filing of the report would create undue hardship, the political jurisdiction may apply to the Commission for an exemption from the requirements set forth in this part by submitting to the Commission or its delegate a specific proposal for an alternative reporting system prior to the date on which the report is due.

§ 1602.36 Schools exemption.

The recordkeeping and report-filing requirements of subparts I and J of this part shall not apply to State or local educational institutions or to school districts or school systems or any other educational functions. The previous sentence of this section shall not act to bar jurisdiction which otherwise would attach under § 1602.30.

§ 1602.37 Additional reporting requirements.

The Commission reserves the right to require reports, other than that designated as the ''State and Local Government Information Report EEO–4,'' about the employment practices of individual political jurisdictions or group of political jurisdictions whenever, in its judgment, special or supplemental reports are necessary to accomplish the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA. Any system for the requirement of such reports will be established in accordance with the procedures referred to in section 709(c) of title VII, section 107 of the ADA, section 207(a) of GINA, or section 104 of the PWFA and as otherwise prescribed by law.

[38 FR 12605, May 14, 1973, as amended at 56 FR 35756, July 26, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

Subpart K—Records and Inquiries as to Race, Color, National Origin, or Sex

§ 1602.38 Applicability of State or local law.

The requirements imposed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in these regulations, subparts I and J, supersede any provisions of State or local law which may conflict with them.

[38 FR 12605, May 14, 1973]

Subpart L—Elementary and Secondary School Systems, Districts, and Individual Schools Recordkeeping

§ 1602.39 Records to be made or kept.

On or before November 30, 1974, and annually thereafter, every public elementary and secondary school system or district, including every individually or separately administered district within a system, with 15 or more employees and every individual school within such system or district, regardless of the size of the school shall make or keep all records and information therefrom which are or would be necessary for the completion of report EEO–5 whether or not it is required to file such a report under § 1602.41. The instructions for completion of report EEO–5 are specifically incorporated herein by reference and have the same force and effect as other sections of this part.[1] Such records and the information therefrom shall be retained at all times for a period of 3 years at the central office of the elementary or secondary school system or district, or at the individual school which is the subject of the records and the information therefrom, where more convenient, and shall be made available if requested by an officer, agent, or employee of the Commission under section 710 of title VII, as amended. It is the responsibility of every such school system or district, to obtain from the Commission or its delegate necessary instructions in order to comply with the requirements of this section.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0003)

[38 FR 26719, Sept. 25, 1973, as amended at 39 FR 30832, Aug. 26, 1974; 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981]

§ 1602.40 Preservation of records made or kept.

Any personnel or employment record made or kept by a school system, district, or individual school (including but not necessarily limited to requests for reasonable accommodation, application forms submitted by applicants and other records having to do with hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, or termination, rates of pay or other terms of compensation, and selection for training or apprenticeship) shall be preserved by such school system, district, or school, as the case may be, for a period of 2 years from the date of the making of the record or the personnel action involved, whichever occurs later. In the case of involuntary termination of an employee, the personnel records of the individual terminated shall be kept for a period of 2 years from the date of termination. Where a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought against an elementary or secondary school by the Commission or the Attorney General, the respondent elementary or secondary school system, district, or individual school shall preserve similarly at the central office of the system or district or individual school which is the subject of the charge or action, where more convenient, all personnel records relevant to the charge or action until final disposition thereof. The term ''personnel record relevant to the charge,'' for example, would include personnel or employment records relating to the person claiming to be aggrieved and to all other employees holding positions similar to that held or sought by the person claiming to be aggrieved; and application forms or test papers completed by an unsuccessful applicant and by all other candidates for the same position as that for which the person claiming to be aggrieved applied and was rejected. The date of ''final disposition of the charge

[1] NOTE: Instructions were published as an appendix to the proposed regulations on June 12, 1973 (38 FR 15463).

or the action'' means the date of expiration of the statutory period within which a person claiming to be aggrieved may bring an action in a U.S. district court or, where an action is brought against a school system, district, or school either by a person claiming to be aggrieved, the Commission, or the Attorney General, the date on which such litigation is terminated.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0040)

[38 FR 26719, Sept. 25, 1973, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981; 56 FR 35756, July 26, 1991]

Subpart M—Elementary-Secondary Staff Information Report

SOURCE: 38 FR 26719, Sept. 25, 1973, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1602.41 Requirement for filing and preserving copy of report.

On or before November 30, 1982, and biennially thereafter, certain public elementary and secondary school systems and districts, including individually or separately administered districts within such systems, shall file with the Commission or its delegate executed copies of Elementary-Secondary Staff Information Report EEO–5 in conformity with the directions set forth in the form and accompanying instructions. The elementary and secondary school systems and districts covered are:

(a) Every one of those which have 100 or more employees, and

(b) Every one of those others which have 15 or more employees from whom the Commission requests the filing of reports.

Every such elementary or secondary school system or district shall retain at all times, for a period of 3 years, a copy of the most recently filed report EEO–5 at the central office of the school system or district, and shall make the same available if requested by an officer, agent, or employee of the Commission under the authority of section 710 of title VII, as amended. It is the responsibility of the school systems or districts above described in this section to obtain from the Commission or its delegate necessary supplies of the form.

[48 FR 8058, Feb. 25, 1983, as amended at 61 FR 33660, June 28, 1996]

§ 1602.42 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

The making of willfully false statements on report EEO–5 is a violation of the United States Code, title 18, section 1001, and is punishable by fine or emprisonment as set forth therein.

§ 1602.43 Commission's remedy for school systems' or districts' failure to file report.

Any school system or district failing or refusing to file report EEO–5 when required to do so may be compelled to file by order of a U.S. district court, upon application of the Commission or the Attorney General.

[61 FR 33660, June 28, 1996]

§ 1602.44 School systems' or districts' exemption from reporting requirements.

If it is claimed that the preparation or filing of the report would create undue hardship, the school system or district may apply to the Commission for an exemption from the requirements set forth in this part by submitting to the Commission or its delegate a specific proposal for an alternative reporting system prior to the date on which the report is due.

[61 FR 33660, June 28, 1996]

§ 1602.45 Additional reporting requirements.

The Commission reserves the right to require reports, other than that designated as the Elementary-Secondary Information Report EEO–5, about the employment practices of private or public individual school systems, districts, or schools, or groups thereof, whenever, in its judgment, special or supplemental reports are necessary to accomplish the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA. Any system for the requirement of such reports will be established in accordance with the procedures referred to in section 709(c) of title VII, section 107 of the ADA, section 207(a) of GINA, or

section 104 of the PWFA and as otherwise prescribed by law.

[38 FR 27619, Sept. 25, 1973, as amended at 56 FR 35756, July 26, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

Subpart N—Records and Inquiries as to Race, Color, National Origin, or Sex

§ 1602.46 Applicability of State or local law.

The requirements imposed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in these regulations, subparts L and M of this part, supersede any provisions of State or local law which may conflict with them.

[38 FR 26720, Sept. 25, 1973]

Subpart O—Recordkeeping for Institutions of Higher Education

§ 1602.47 Definition.

Under subparts O and P of this part, the term *institution of higher education* means an institutional system, college, university, community college, junior college, and any other educational institution which offers an associate degree, baccalaureate degree or higher degree or which offers a two year program of college level studies without degree. The term *college level studies* means a post secondary program which is wholly or principally creditable toward a baccalaureate degree or terminates in an associate degree.

[40 FR 25188, June 12, 1975]

§ 1602.48 Records to be made or kept.

Commencing August 1, 1975, every institution of higher education, whether public or private, with 15 or more employees, shall make or keep all records, and information therefrom, which are or would be necessary for the completion of Higher Education Staff Information Report EEO–6 whether or not it is required to file such a report under § 1602.50. The instructions for completion of Report EEO–6 are specifically incorporated herein by reference and have the same force and effect as other sections of this part.[1] Such records, and the information therefrom, shall be retained at all times for a period of three years at the central administrative office of the institution of higher education, at the central administrative office of a separate campus or branch, or at an individual school which is the subject of the records and information, where more convenient. Such records, and the information therefrom, shall be made available if requested by the Commission or its representative under section 710 of title VII and 29 U.S.C. 161. It is the responsibility of every institution of higher education to obtain from the Commission or its delegate the necessary instructions in order to comply with the requirements of this section.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0009)

[40 FR 25188, June 12, 1975, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981]

§ 1602.49 Preservation of records made or kept.

(a) Any personnel or employment record (including but not necessarily limited to requests for reasonable accommodation, application forms submitted by applicants and other records having to do with hiring, promotion, tenure, demotion, transfer, layoff, or termination, rates of pay or other terms of compensation, and selection for training) made or kept by an institution of higher education shall be preserved by such institution of higher education for a period of two years from the date of the making of the personnel action or record involved, whichever occurs later. In the case of the involuntary termination of an employee, the personnel records of the individual terminated shall be kept for a period of two years from the date of termination. Where a charge of discrimination has been filed, or a civil action brought against an institution of higher education by the Commission

[1] NOTE: Instructions were published as an appendix to the regulations at 40 FR 25188, June 12, 1975.

or the Attorney General, the respondent shall preserve similarly at the central administrative office of the institution of higher education, at the central office of a separate campus or branch, or at the individual school which is the subject of the charge or action, where more convenient, all personnel records relevant to the charge or action until final disposition thereof. The term ''personnel records relevant to the charge,'' for example, would include personnel or employment records relating to the person claiming to be aggrieved and to all other employees holding positions similar to that held or sought by the person claiming to be aggrieved; it would also include application forms or test papers completed by an unsuccessful applicant and by all other candidates for the same position as that for which the person claiming to be aggrieved applied and was rejected. The date of ''final disposition of the charge or the action'' means the date of expiration of the statutory period within which a person claiming to be aggrieved may bring an action in the United States District Court, or, where an action is brought against an institution of higher education by a person claiming to be aggrieved, the Commission, or the Attorney General, the date on which such litigation is terminated.

(b) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this section shall not apply to application forms and other preemployment records of non-student applicants for positions known to non-student applicants to be of a temporary or seasonal nature.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0040)

[40 FR 25188, June 12, 1975, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981; 56 FR 35756, July 26, 1991]

Subpart P—Higher Education Staff Information Report EEO–6

SOURCE: 40 FR 25189, June 12, 1975, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1602.50 Requirement for filing and preserving copy of report.

On or before November 30, 1975, and biennially thereafter, every public and private institution of higher education having fifteen (15) or more employees shall file with the Commission or its delegate executed copies of Higher Education Staff Information Report EEO–6 in conformity with the directions set forth in the form and accompanying instructions. Every institution of higher education shall retain at all times, for a period of three years a copy of the most recently filed Report EEO–6 at its central administrative office, at the central office of a separate campus or branch, or at an individual school which is the subject of the report, where more convenient. An institution of higher education shall make the same available if requested by the Commission or is representative under the authority of section 710 of the Act and 29 U.S.C. 161. It is the responsibility of the institutions above described in this section to obtain from the Commission or its delegate necessary supplies of the form.

§ 1602.51 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

The making of willfully false statements on Report EEO–6 is a violation of the United States Code, title 18, section 1001, and is punishable by fine or imprisonment as set forth therein.

§ 1602.52 Commission's remedy for failure to file.

Any institution of higher education failing or refusing to keep records, in accordance with §1602.48 or §1602.49 of subpart O of this part, or failing or refusing to file Report EEO–6 when required to do so, in accordance with §1602.50 of this part, may be compelled to keep records or to file by order of a United States District Court upon application of the Commission, or the Attorney General in a case involving a public institution.

§ 1602.53 Exemption from reporting requirements.

If it is claimed that the preparation or filing of the report would create undue hardship, the institution of higher education may apply to the Commission for an exemption from the requirements set forth in subparts O and P of this part by submitting to the Commission or its delegate a specific

proposal for an alternative reporting system no later than 45 days prior to the date on which the report must be filed.

§ 1602.54 Additional reporting requirements.

The Commission reserves the right to require reports, other than that designated as the Higher Education Staff Information Report EEO–6, about the employment practices of private or public institutions of higher education whenever, in its judgment, special or supplemental reports are necessary to accomplish the purposes of title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA. Any system for the requirement of such reports will be established in accordance with the procedures referred to in section 709(c) of title VII, section 107 of the ADA, section 207(a) of GINA, or section 104 of the PWFA and as otherwise prescribed by law.

[40 FR 25189, June 12, 1975, as amended at 56 FR 35756, July 26, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

Subpart Q—Records and Inquiries as to Race, Color, National Origin, or Sex

§ 1602.55 Applicability of State or local law.

The requirements imposed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in these regulations, subparts O, P, and Q of this part, supersede any provisions of State or local law which may conflict with them.

[40 FR 25189, June 12, 1975]

Subpart R—Investigation of Reporting or Recordkeeping Violations

§ 1602.56 Investigation of reporting or recordkeeping violations.

When it has received an allegation, or has reason to believe, that a person has not complied with the reporting or recordkeeping requirements of this part or of part 1607 of this chapter, the Commission may conduct an investigation of the alleged failure to comply.

[56 FR 35756, July 26, 1991]

PART 1603—PROCEDURES FOR PREVIOUSLY EXEMPT STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE COMPLAINTS OF EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION UNDER SECTION 304 OF THE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE RIGHTS ACT OF 1991

Sec.

1603.100 Purpose.

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AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16c; 42 U.S.C. 2000ff–6(b); 42 U.S.C 2000gg–2.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47851, June 4, 2024, the authority citation for part 1603 was revised, effective July 5, 2024. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 2000e–12 and–16c; 42 U.S.C. 2000ff–6(b); 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(d).

SOURCE: 62 FR 17543, Apr. 10, 1997, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1603.100 Purpose.

This part contains the regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (hereinafter the Commission) for processing complaints of discrimination filed under section 304 of the Government Employee Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16c.

[62 FR 17543, Apr. 10, 1997, as amended at 72 FR 5616, Feb. 7, 2007]

Subpart A—Administrative Process

§ 1603.101 Coverage.

Section 304 of the Government Employee Rights Act of 1991 applies to employment, which includes application for employment, of any individual chosen or appointed by a person elected to public office in any State or political subdivision of any State by the qualified voters thereof:

(a) To be a member of the elected official's personal staff;

(b) To serve the elected official on the policymaking level; or

(c) To serve the elected official as an immediate advisor with respect to the exercise of the constitutional or legal powers of the office.

[62 FR 17543, Apr. 10, 1997, as amended at 72 FR 5616, Feb. 7, 2007]

§ 1603.102 Filing a complaint.

(a) *Who may make a complaint.* Individuals referred to in §1603.101 who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race; color; religion; sex; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; or retaliated against for opposing any practice made unlawful by federal laws protecting equal employment opportunity or for participating in any stage of administrative or judicial proceedings under federal laws protecting equal employment opportunity may file a complaint not later than 180 days after the occurrence of the alleged discrimination.

(b) *Where to file a complaint.* A complaint may be filed in person, by mail or by facsimile machine to any Commission office or with any designated agent or representative of the Commission. The addresses of the Commission's District, Field, Area and Local offices appear in 29 CFR 1610.4.

(c) *Contents of a complaint.* A complaint shall be in writing, signed and verified. In addition, each complaint should contain the following:

(1) The full name, address and telephone number of the person making the complaint;

(2) The full name and address of the person, governmental entity or political subdivision against whom the complaint is made (hereinafter referred to as the respondent);

(3) A clear and concise statement of the facts, including pertinent dates, constituting the alleged unlawful employment practices (See 29 CFR 1601.15(b)); and

(4) A statement disclosing whether proceedings involving the alleged unlawful employment practice have been commenced before a State or local FEP agency charged with the enforcement of fair employment practice laws and, if so, the date of such commencement and the name of the agency.

(d) *Amendment of a complaint.* Notwithstanding paragraph (c) of this section, a complaint is sufficient when the Commission receives from the person making the complaint a written statement sufficiently precise to identify the parties and to describe generally the alleged discriminatory action or practices. A complaint may be amended to cure technical defects or omissions, including failure to verify the complaint, or to clarify and amplify its allegations. Such amendments, and amendments alleging additional acts that constitute discriminatory employment practices related to or growing out of the subject matter of the original complaint, will relate back to the date the complaint was first received. A complaint that has been amended after it was referred shall not be again referred to the appropriate state or local fair employment practices agency.

(e) *Misfiled complaint.* A charge filed pursuant to 29 CFR part 1601 or part 1626, that is later deemed to be a matter under this part, shall be processed as a complaint under this part and

shall relate back to the date of the initial charge or complaint. A complaint filed under this part that is later deemed to be a matter under 29 CFR part 1601 or part 1626 shall be processed as a charge under the appropriate regulation and shall relate back to the date of the initial complaint.

[62 FR 17543, Apr. 10, 1997, as amended at 71 FR 26829, May 9, 2006; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47851, June 4, 2024, §1603.102 was amended by revising paragraphs (a), (b), (c) introductory text, (c)(1) and (2), (c)(4), and the last sentence of paragraph (d); and by removing the commas from the first sentence of paragraph (e), effective July 5, 2024. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 1603.102 Filing a complaint.

(a) *Who may make a complaint.* Individuals referred to in §1603.101 who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race; color; religion; sex; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; or retaliated against for opposing any practice made unlawful by Federal laws protecting equal employment opportunity or for participating in any stage of administrative or judicial proceedings under those Federal laws, may file a complaint not later than 180 days after the occurrence of the alleged discrimination or retaliation.

(b) *Where to file a complaint.* A complaint may be filed using the Commission's designated digital systems, in person, by facsimile, or by mail to any Commission office or with any designated agent or representative of the Commission. The addresses of the Commission's offices may be found at *www.eeoc.gov*.

(c) *Contents of a complaint.* A complaint shall be in writing and signed and shall be verified as defined in §1601.3(a). In addition, each complaint should contain the following:

(1) The full name and contact information of the person making the complaint;

(2) The full name and contact information of the person, governmental entity, or political subdivision against whom the complaint is made, if known (hereinafter referred to as the respondent);

* * * * *

(4) A statement disclosing whether proceedings involving the alleged unlawful employment practice have been commenced before a State or local Fair Employment Practices (FEP) agency charged with the enforcement of fair employment practice laws and, if so, the date of such commencement and the name of the agency.

(d) * * * A complaint that has been amended after it was referred (see §1603.103) shall not be again referred to the appropriate State or local FEP agency.

* * * * *

§ 1603.103 Referral of complaints.

(a) The Commission will notify an FEP agency, as defined in 29 CFR 1601.3(a), when a complaint is filed by a state or local government employee or applicant under this part concerning an employment practice within the jurisdiction of the FEP agency. The FEP agency will be entitled to process the complaint exclusively for a period of not less than 60 days if the FEP agency makes a written request to the Commission within 10 days of receiving notice that the complaint has been filed, unless the complaint names the FEP agency as the respondent.

(b) The Commission may enter into an agreement with an FEP agency that authorizes the FEP agency to receive complaints under this part on behalf of the Commission, or waives the FEP agency's right to exclusive processing of complaints.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47852, June 4, 2024, §1603.103 was amended by removing the comma from paragraph (b), effective July 5, 2024.

§ 1603.104 Service of the complaint.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Commission shall promptly serve the respondent with a copy of the complaint.

§ 1603.105 Withdrawal of a complaint.

The complainant may withdraw a complaint at any time by so advising the Commission in writing.

§ 1603.106 Computation of time.

(a) All time periods in this part that are stated in terms of days are calendar days unless otherwise stated.

(b) A document shall be deemed timely if it is delivered by facsimile not exceeding 20 pages, in person or postmarked before the expiration of the applicable filing period, or, in the absence of a legible postmark, if it is received

by mail within five days of the expiration of the applicable filing period.

(c) All time limits in this part are subject to waiver, estoppel and equitable tolling.

(d) The first day counted shall be the day after the event from which the time period begins to run and the last day of the period shall be included unless it falls on a Saturday, Sunday or federal holiday, in which case the period shall be extended to include the next business day.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47852, June 4, 2024, §1603.106 was revised, effective July 5, 2024. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 1603.106 Computation of time generally and for timely receipt by the Commission.

(a)(1) All time periods in this part that are stated in terms of days are calendar days unless otherwise stated.

(2) The first day counted shall be the day after the event from which the time period begins to run, and the last day of the period shall be included unless it falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, in which case the period shall be extended to include the next business day.

(3) All time limits in this part are subject to waiver, estoppel, and equitable tolling.

(b) Documents submitted to the Commission are deemed timely received as follows:

(1) A document submitted by digital transmission, by facsimile not exceeding 20 pages, or by personal delivery or commercial delivery service shall be deemed timely if it is received before the expiration of the applicable filing period. A document submitted by digital means shall be deemed received on the date the EEOC's designated digital system records the upload.

(2) A document submitted by mail shall be deemed timely if it is postmarked before the expiration of the applicable filing period or, in the absence of a legible postmark, if it is received within 5 days of the expiration of the applicable filing period.

(c) For the purposes of this part, the terms *file, serve, receive, issue, transmit, send,* and any other word forms of these terms, such as *filing* or *serving,* when used to describe transmission of documents, shall include all forms of digital transmission.

§ 1603.107 Dismissals of complaints.

(a) Where a complaint on its face, or after further inquiry, is determined to be not timely filed or otherwise fails to state a claim under this part, the Commission shall dismiss the complaint.

(b) Where the complainant cannot be located, the Commission may dismiss the complaint provided that reasonable efforts have been made to locate the complainant and the complainant has not responded within 30 days to a notice sent by the Commission to the complainant's last known address.

(c) Where the complainant fails to provide requested information, fails or refuses to appear or to be available for interviews or conferences as necessary, or otherwise refuses to cooperate, the Commission, after providing the complainant with notice and 30 days in which to respond, may dismiss the complaint.

(d) Written notice of dismissal pursuant to paragraphs (a), (b), or (c) of this section shall be issued to the complainant and the respondent. The Commission hereby delegates authority to the Program Director, Office of Field Programs, or to his or her designees, and District Directors, or to their designees, to dismiss complaints.

(e) A complainant who is dissatisfied with a dismissal issued pursuant to paragraphs (a), (b), or (c) of this section may appeal to the Commission in accordance with the procedures in subpart C of this part.

[62 FR 17543, Apr. 10, 1997, as amended at 64 FR 28744, May 27, 1999]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47852, June 4, 2024, §1603.107 was revised, effective July 5, 2024. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 1603.107 Dismissals of complaints.

(a) Where a complaint is not timely filed or, except as described in §1603.102(e), fails to state a claim under this part, the Commission shall dismiss the complaint.

(b) Written notice of dismissal pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section shall be issued to the complainant and the respondent. The Commission hereby delegates authority to dismiss complaints to the Director, Office of Field Programs or the Director's designees, and to District Directors or their designees.

(c) A complainant who is dissatisfied with a dismissal issued pursuant to this section may appeal to the Commission in accordance with the procedures in subpart C of this part.

§ 1603.108 Settlement and alternative dispute resolution.

(a) The parties are at all times free to settle all or part of a complaint on terms that are mutually agreeable. Any settlement reached shall be in writing and signed by both parties and

shall identify the allegations resolved. A copy of any settlement shall be served on the Commission.

(b) With the agreement of the parties, the Commission may refer a complaint to a neutral mediator or to any other alternative dispute resolution process authorized by the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act, 5 U.S.C. 571 to 583, or other statute.

(c) The Commission may use the services of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, other federal agencies, appropriate professional organizations, employees of the Commission and other appropriate sources in selecting neutrals for alternative dispute resolution processes.

(d) The alternative dispute resolution process shall be strictly confidential, and no party to a complaint or neutral shall disclose any dispute resolution communication or any information provided in confidence to the neutral except as provided in 5 U.S.C. 584.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47852, June 4, 2024, §1603.108 was amended by adding a comma after the words ''employees of the Commission'' in paragraph (c) and removing the number ''584'' and adding in its place the number ''574'' in paragraph (d), effective July 5, 2024.

§1603.109 Investigations.

(a) Before referring a complaint to an administrative law judge under section 201 of this part, the Commission may conduct investigation using an exchange of letters, interrogatories, fact-finding conferences, interviews, on-site visits or other fact-finding methods that address the matters at issue.

(b) During an investigation of a complaint under this part, the Commission shall have the authority to sign and issue a subpoena requiring the attendance and testimony of witnesses, the production of evidence and access to evidence for the purposes of examination and the right to copy. The subpoena procedures contained in 29 CFR 1601.16 shall apply to subpoenas issued pursuant to this section.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47852, June 4, 2024, §1603.109 was amended by adding the word ''an'' before the word ''investigation'' and adding a comma after the word ''visits'' in paragraph (a) and adding a comma after the words ''the production of evidence'' in the first sentence of paragraph (b), effective July 5, 2024.

Subpart B—Hearings

§1603.201 Referral and scheduling for hearing.

(a) Upon request by the complainant under paragraph (b) of this section or if the complaint is not dismissed or resolved under subpart A of this part, on behalf of the Commission, the Office of Federal Operations shall transmit the complaint file to an administrative law judge, appointed under 5 U.S.C. 3105, for a hearing.

(b) If the complaint has not been referred to an administrative law judge within 180 days after filing, the complainant may request that the complaint be immediately transmitted to an administrative law judge for a hearing.

(c) The administrative law judge shall fix the time, place, and date for the hearing with due regard for the convenience of the parties, their representatives or witnesses and shall notify the parties of the same.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47852, June 4, 2024, §1603.201 was amended by adding a comma after the words ''of this section or'' in paragraph (a) and removing the words ''representatives or witnesses'' and adding in their place the words ''representatives, and their witnesses'', effective July 5, 2024.

§1603.202 Administrative law judge.

The administrative law judge shall have all the powers necessary to conduct fair, expeditious, and impartial hearings as provided in 5 U.S.C. 556(c). In addition, the administrative law judge shall have the power to:

(a) Change the time, place or date of the hearing;

(b) Enter a default decision against a party failing to appear at a hearing unless the party shows good cause by contacting the administrative law judge and presenting arguments as to why the party or the party's representative could not appear either prior to the hearing or within two days after the scheduled hearing; and

(c) Take any appropriate action authorized by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (28 U.S.C. appendix).

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47852, June 4, 2024, §1603.202 was amended by adding a comma after the word ''place'' in paragraph (a) and revising paragraph (b), effective July 5, 2024. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 1603.202 Administrative law judge.

* * * * *

(b) Enter a default decision against a party failing to appear at a hearing unless the party shows good cause by contacting the administrative law judge either prior to the hearing or within 2 days after the scheduled hearing and presenting arguments as to why the party or the party's representative could not appear; and

* * * * *

§ 1603.203 Unavailability or withdrawal of administrative law judges.

(a) In the event the administrative law judge designated to conduct the hearing becomes unavailable or withdraws from the adjudication, another administrative law judge may be designated for the purpose of further hearing or issuing a decision on the record as made, or both.

(b) The administrative law judge may withdraw from the adjudication at any time the administrative law judge deems himself or herself disqualified. Prior to issuance of the decision, any party may move that the administrative law judge withdraw on the ground of personal bias or other disqualification, by filing with the administrative law judge promptly upon discovery of the alleged facts an affidavit setting forth in detail the matters alleged to constitute grounds for withdrawal.

(c) The administrative law judge shall rule upon the motion for withdrawal. If the administrative law judge concludes that the motion is timely and has merit, the administrative law judge shall immediately withdraw from the adjudication. If the administrative law judge does not withdraw, the adjudication shall proceed.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47852, June 4, 2024, §1603.203 was revised, effective July 5, 2024. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 1603.203 Unavailability or withdrawal of administrative law judges.

(a) In the event the administrative law judge designated to conduct the hearing becomes unavailable or withdraws from the adjudication, another administrative law judge may be designated for the purpose of further hearing or issuing a decision on the record as made, or both. At any time administrative law judges deem themselves disqualified, they may withdraw from an adjudication.

(b) Prior to issuance of a decision on the complaint, any party may move that the administrative law judge withdraw on the grounds of personal bias or other disqualification by filing with the administrative law judge an affidavit setting forth in detail the matters alleged to constitute grounds for withdrawal promptly upon discovery of the alleged facts. The administrative law judge shall rule upon the motion for withdrawal. If the administrative law judge concludes that the motion was filed promptly and has merit, the administrative law judge shall immediately withdraw from the adjudication. If the administrative law judge does not withdraw, the adjudication shall proceed.

§ 1603.204 Ex parte communications.

(a) Oral or written communications concerning the merits of an adjudication between the administrative law judge or decision-making personnel of the Commission and an interested party to the adjudication without providing the other party a chance to participate are prohibited from the time the matter is assigned to an administrative law judge until the Commission has rendered a final decision. Communications concerning the status of the case, the date of a hearing, the method of transmitting evidence to the Commission and other purely procedural questions are permitted.

(b) Decision-making personnel of the Commission include members of the Commission and their staffs and personnel in the Office of Federal Operations, but do not include investigators and intake staff.

(c) Any communication made in violation of this section shall be made part of the record and an opportunity for rebuttal by the other party allowed. If the communication was oral, a memorandum stating the substance of the discussion shall be placed in the record.

(d) Where it appears that a party has engaged in prohibited ex parte communications, that party may be required

to show cause why, in the interest of justice, his or her claim or defense should not be dismissed, denied or otherwise adversely affected.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47852, June 4, 2024, §1603.204 was amended by revising the last sentence of paragraph (a) and paragraphs (b) and (d), effective July 5, 2024. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 1603.204 Ex parte communications.

(a) * * * Communications between the administrative law judge or Commission personnel and one party concerning the status of the case, the date of a hearing, the method of transmitting evidence to the Commission, and other purely procedural questions are permitted.

(b) ''Decision-making personnel of the Commission'' includes members of the Commission and their staffs as well as personnel in the Office of Federal Operations but does not include investigators and intake staff.

* * * * *

(d) Where it appears that a party has engaged in prohibited ex parte communications, that party may be required to show cause why, in the interest of justice, the party's claim or defense should not be dismissed, denied, or otherwise adversely affected.

§ 1603.205 Separation of functions.

(a) The administrative law judge may not be responsible to or subject to the supervision or direction of a Commission employee engaged in investigating complaints under this part.

(b) No Commission employee engaged in investigating complaints under this part shall participate or advise in the decision of the administrative law judge, except as a witness or counsel in the adjudication, or its appellate review.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47852, June 4, 2024, §1603.205 was amended by removing the comma after the words ''in the adjudication'', effective July 5, 2024.

§ 1603.206 Consolidation and severance of hearings.

(a) The administrative law judge may, upon motion by a party or upon his or her own motion, after providing reasonable notice and opportunity to object to all parties affected, consolidate any or all matters at issue in two or more adjudications docketed under this part where common parties, or factual or legal questions exist; where such consolidation would expedite or simplify consideration of the issues; or where the interests of justice would be served. For purposes of this section, no distinction is made between joinder and consolidation of adjudications.

(b) The administrative law judge may, upon motion of a party or upon his or her own motion, for good cause shown, order any adjudication severed with respect to some or all parties, claims or issues.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.206 was amended in the first sentence of paragraph (a) by removing the words ''his or her'' and adding in their place the words ''the administrative law judge's''; removing the comma after the words ''common parties''; and adding the word ''common'' before the word ''factual''; and in paragraph (b), removing the words ''his or her'' and adding in their place the words ''the administrative law judge's'' and adding a comma after the word ''claims'', effective July 5, 2024.

§ 1603.207 Intervention.

(a) Any person or entity that wishes to intervene in any proceeding under this subpart shall file a motion to intervene in accordance with §1603.208.

(b) A motion to intervene shall indicate the question of law or fact common to the movant's claim or defense and the complaint at issue and state all other facts or reasons the movant should be permitted to intervene.

(c) Any party may file a response to a motion to intervene within 15 days after the filing of the motion to intervene.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.207 was amended in paragraph (b) by adding the word ''relevant'' before the words ''facts or reasons'', and in paragraph (c) by removing the text ''15 days after the filing'' and adding in its place the text ''10 business days after service'' effective July 5, 2024.

§ 1603.208 Motions.

(a) All motions shall state the specific relief requested. All motions shall be in writing, except that a motion may be made orally during a conference or during the hearing. After providing an opportunity for response, the administrative law judge may rule

on an oral motion immediately or may require that it be submitted in writing.

(b) Unless otherwise directed by the administrative law judge, any other party may file a response in support of or in opposition to any written motion within ten (10) business days after service of the motion. If no response is filed within the response period, the party failing to respond shall be deemed to have waived any objection to the granting of the motion. The moving party shall have no right to reply to a response, unless the administrative law judge, in his or her discretion, orders that a reply be filed.

(c) Except for procedural matters, the administrative law judge may not grant a written motion prior to the expiration of the time for filing responses. The administrative law judge may deny a written motion without awaiting a response. The administrative law judge may allow oral argument (including that made by telephone) on written motions. Any party adversely affected by the *ex parte* grant of a motion for a procedural order may request, within five (5) business days of service of the order, that the administrative law judge reconsider, vacate or modify the order.

(d) The administrative law judge may summarily deny dilatory, repetitive or frivolous motions. Unless otherwise ordered by the administrative law judge, the filing of a motion does not stay the proceeding.

(e) All motions and responses must comply with the filing and service requirements of § 1603.209.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, § 1603.208 was amended by:

a. In paragraph (b):

i. In the first sentence, removing the text ''ten (10)'' and adding in its place the number ''10''; and

ii. In the last sentence, removing the words ''judge, in his or her discretion, orders'' and adding in their place the words ''judge exercises discretion to order''; and

b. In paragraph (c):

i. In the third sentence, adding the words ''or other digital means'' after the word ''telephone'';

ii. In the last sentence, removing the text ''five (5)'' and adding in its place the number ''5'' and adding a comma after the word ''vacate''; and

c. In paragraph (d), removing the words ''dilatory, repetitive or frivolous motions'' and adding in their place the words ''motions that are repetitive, frivolous, or intended to delay the proceedings''.

The amendments are effective July 5, 2024.

§ 1603.209 Filing and service.

(a) Unless otherwise ordered by the administrative law judge, a signed original of each motion, brief or other document shall be filed with the administrative law judge, with a certificate of service indicating that a copy has been sent to all other parties, and the date and manner of service. All documents shall be on standard size (8½ × 11) paper. Each document filed shall be clear and legible.

(b) Filing and service shall be made by first class mail or other more expeditious means of delivery, including, at the discretion of the administrative law judge, by facsimile. The administrative law judge, may in his discretion, limit the number of pages that may be filed or served by facsimile. Service shall be made on a party's representative, or, if not represented, on the party.

(c) Every document shall contain a caption, the complaint number or docket number assigned to the matter, a designation of the type of filing (e.g., motion, brief, etc.), and the filing person's signature, address, telephone number and telecopier number, if any.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, § 1603.209 was revised, effective July 5, 2024. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 1603.209 Filing and service.

(a) Unless otherwise ordered by the administrative law judge, a signed original of each motion, brief, or other document shall be filed with the administrative law judge, with a certificate of service indicating that a copy has been sent to all other parties and stating the date and manner of service. Digitally submitted documents may be electronically signed. All documents presented in hard copy shall be on standard size (8½ x 11) paper. Each document filed shall be clear and legible.

(b) Filing and service shall be made by first class mail or other more expeditious means of delivery, including, at the discretion of the administrative law judge, by facsimile, digital transmission, or other means. The administrative law judge may exercise discretion to limit the number of pages that may be filed or served by facsimile. Service shall

be made on a party's representative or, if not represented, on the party.

(c) Every document shall contain a caption including the parties' names, the complaint number or docket number assigned to the matter, a designation of the type of filing (*e.g.*, motion, brief, etc.), and the filing person's signature and contact information.

§ 1603.210 Discovery.

(a) Unless otherwise ordered by the administrative law judge, discovery may begin as soon as the complaint has been transmitted to the administrative law judge pursuant to §1603.201. Discovery shall be completed as expeditiously as possible within such time as the administrative law judge directs.

(b) Unless otherwise ordered by the administrative law judge, parties may obtain discovery by written interrogatories (not to exceed 20 interrogatories including subparts), depositions upon oral examination or written questions, requests for production of documents or things for inspection or other purposes, requests for admission or any other method found reasonable and appropriate by the administrative law judge.

(c) Except as otherwise specified, the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure shall govern discovery in proceedings under this part.

(d) Neutral mediators who have participated in the alternative dispute resolution process in accordance with §1603.108 shall not be called as witnesses or be subject to discovery in any adjudication under this part.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.210(b) was amended by adding a comma after the word ''admission'', effective July 5, 2024.

§ 1603.211 Subpoenas.

(a) Upon written application of any party, the administrative law judge may on behalf of the Commission issue a subpoena requiring the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of any evidence, including, but not limited to, books, records, correspondence, or documents, in their possession or under their control. The subpoena shall state the name and address of the party at whose request the subpoena was issued, identify the person and evidence subpoenaed, and the date and time the subpoena is returnable.

(b) Any person served with a subpoena who intends not to comply shall, within 5 days after service of the subpoena, petition the administrative law judge in writing to revoke or modify the subpoena. All petitions to revoke or modify shall be served upon the party at whose request the subpoena was issued. The requestor may file with the administrative law judge a response to the petition to revoke or modify within 5 days after service of the petition.

(c) Upon the failure of any person to comply with a subpoena issued under this section, the administrative law judge may refer the matter to the Commission for enforcement in accordance with 29 CFR 1601.16(c).

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.211 was amended by adding the word ''state'' before the words ''the date and time'' in the last sentence of paragraph (a) and adding the word ''also'' before the words ''be served upon'' in the second sentence of paragraph (b), effective July 5, 2024.

§ 1603.212 Witness fees.

Witnesses summoned under this part shall receive the same fees and mileage as witnesses in the courts of the United States. Those fees must be paid or offered to the witness by the party requesting the subpoena at the time the subpoena is served, or, if the witness appears voluntarily, at the time of appearance. A federal agency or corporation is not required to pay or offer witness fees and mileage allowances in advance.

§ 1603.213 Interlocutory review.

(a) Interlocutory review may not be sought except when the administrative law judge determines upon motion of a party or upon his or her own motion that:

(1) The ruling involves a controlling question of law or policy about which there is substantial ground for difference of opinion;

(2) An immediate ruling will materially advance the completion of the proceeding; or

(3) The denial of an immediate ruling will cause irreparable harm to the party or the public.

(b) Application for interlocutory review shall be filed within ten (10) days after notice of the administrative law judge's ruling. Any application for review shall:

(1) Designate the ruling or part thereof from which appeal is being taken; and

(2) Contain arguments or evidence that tend to establish one or more of the grounds for interlocutory review contained in paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) Any party opposing the application for interlocutory review shall file a response to the application within 10 days after service of the application. The applicant shall have no right to reply to a response unless the administrative law judge, within his or her discretion, orders that a reply be filed.

(d) The administrative law judge shall promptly certify in writing any ruling that qualifies for interlocutory review under paragraph (a) of this section.

(e) The filing of an application for interlocutory review and the grant of an application shall not stay proceedings before the administrative law judge unless the administrative law judge or the Commission so orders. The Commission shall not consider a motion for a stay unless the motion was first made to the administrative law judge.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.213 was amended by:

a. In paragraph (a) introductory text, adding the words ''either independently or'' before the words ''upon motion of a party'', and removing the words ''or upon his or her own motion'';

b. In paragraph (a)(2), removing the word ''ruling'' and adding in its place the word ''appeal'', and removing the word ''or'' and adding in its place the word ''and'';

c. In paragraph (a)(3), removing the word ''ruling'' and adding in its place the word ''appeal'';

d. In paragraph (b) introductory text, removing the text ''ten (10)'' and adding in its place the number ''10''; and

e. In paragraph (c), in the last sentence, removing the text '', within his or her discretion,''.

The amendments are effective July 5, 2024.

§1603.214 Evidence.

The administrative law judge shall accept relevant non-privileged evidence in accordance with the Federal Rules of Evidence (28 U.S.C. appendix), except the rules on hearsay will not be strictly applied.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.214 was amended by adding the word ''that'' before the words ''the rules on hearsay'', effective July 5, 2024.

§1603.215 Record of hearings.

(a) All hearings shall be mechanically or stenographically reported. All evidence relied upon by the administrative law judge for decision shall be contained in the transcript of testimony, either directly or by appropriate reference. All exhibits introduced as evidence shall be marked for identification, with a copy provided for all parties, if not previously provided, and incorporated into the record. Transcripts may be obtained by the parties and the public from the official reporter at rates fixed by the contract with the reporter.

(b) Corrections to the official transcript will be permitted upon motion, only when errors of substance are involved and upon approval of the administrative law judge. Motions for correction must be submitted within ten (10) days of the receipt of the transcript unless additional time is permitted by the administrative law judge.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.215 was amended by:

a. In paragraph (a), in the first sentence, removing the words ''mechanically or stenographically reported'' and adding in their place the words ''audio or video recorded, stenographically reported, or both'' and in the last sentence, removing the words ''and the public''; and

b. In paragraph (b), removing the comma after the words ''upon motion'' and removing the text ''ten (10)'' and adding in its place the number ''10''.

The amendments are effective July 5, 2024.

§1603.216 Summary decision.

Upon motion of a party or after notice to the parties, the administrative law judge may issue a summary decision without a hearing if the administrative law judge finds that there is no genuine issue of material fact or that the complaint may be dismissed pursuant to §1603.107 or any other grounds authorized by this part. A summary decision shall otherwise conform to the requirements of §1603.217.

§ 1603.217 Decision of the administrative law judge.

(a) The administrative law judge shall issue a decision on the merits of the complaint within 270 days after referral of a complaint for hearing, unless the administrative law judge makes a written determination that good cause exists for extending the time for issuing a decision. The decision shall contain findings of fact and conclusions of law, shall order appropriate relief where discrimination is found, and shall provide notice of appeal rights consistent with subpart C of this part.

(b) The administrative law judge shall serve the decision promptly on all parties to the proceeding and their counsel. Thereafter, the administrative law judge shall transmit the case file to the Office of Federal Operations including the decision and the record. The record shall include the complaint; the investigative file, if any; referral notice; motions; briefs; rulings; orders; official transcript of the hearing; all discovery and any other documents submitted by the parties.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.217 was amended by adding a semicolon after the word ''discovery'' in the last sentence, effective July 5, 2024.

Subpart C—Appeals

§ 1603.301 Appeal to the Commission.

Any party may appeal to the Commission the dismissal of a complaint under §1603.107, any matter certified for interlocutory review under §1613.213, or the administrative law judge's decision under §1603.216 or §1603.217.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.301 was amended by removing the citation ''§1613.213'' and adding in its place the citation ''§1603.213'', effective July 5, 2024.

§ 1603.302 Filing an appeal.

(a) An appeal shall be filed within 30 days after the date of the appealable decision or certification for interlocutory review, unless the Commission, upon a showing of good cause, extends the time for filing an appeal for a period not to exceed an additional 30 days.

(b) An appeal shall be filed with the Director, Office of Federal Operations, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, P.O. Box 77960, Washington, DC 20013, by mail or personal delivery or facsimile.

[62 FR 17543, Apr. 10, 1997, as amended at 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.302 was amended by revising paragraph (b) and adding paragraph (c), effective July 5, 2024. For the convenience of the user, the added and revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 1603.302 Filing an appeal.

* * * * *

(b) An appeal shall be filed with the Director, Office of Federal Operations, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, by mail to P.O. Box 77960, Washington, DC 20013, by personal delivery or commercial delivery service, by digital transmission, or by facsimile to (202) 663–7022.

(c) The appellant shall furnish a copy of the appeal to the opposing party at the same time it is filed with the Commission. In or attached to the appeal to the Commission, the appellant must certify the date and method by which service was made on the opposing party.

§ 1603.303 Briefs on appeal.

(a) The appellant shall file a brief or other written statement within 30 days after the appeal is filed, unless the Commission otherwise directs.

(b) All other parties may file briefs or other written statements within 30 days of service of the appellant's brief or statement.

(c) Every brief or statement shall contain a statement of facts and a section setting forth the party's legal arguments. Any brief or statement in support of the appeal shall contain arguments or evidence that tend to establish that the dismissal, order or decision:

(1) Is not supported by substantial evidence;

(2) Contains an erroneous interpretation of law, regulation or material fact, or misapplication of established policy;

(3) Contains a prejudicial error of procedure; or

(4) Involves a substantial question of law or policy.

(d) Appellate briefs shall not exceed 50 pages in length.

(e) Filing and service of the appeal and appellate briefs shall be made in accordance with §1603.209.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.303 was amended by:

a. In paragraph (c) introductory text, in the second sentence, adding a comma after the word ''order'';

b. In paragraph (c)(2), adding a comma after the word ''regulation''; and

c. In paragraph (e), removing the words ''the appeal and'' and removing the citation ''§1603.209'' and adding in its place the citation ''§1603.302(b) and (c)''.

The amendments are effective July 5, 2024.

§1603.304 Commission decision.

(a) On behalf of the Commission, the Office of Federal Operations shall review the record and the appellate briefs submitted by all the parties. The Office of Federal Operations shall prepare a recommended decision for consideration by the Commission.

(b) When an administrative law judge certifies a matter for interlocutory review under §1603.213, the Commission may, in its discretion, issue a decision on the matter or send the matter back to the administrative law judge without decision.

(c) The Commission will not accept or consider new evidence on appeal unless the Commission, in its discretion, reopens the record on appeal.

(d) The decision of the Commission on appeal shall be its final order and shall be served on all parties.

(e) In the absence of a timely appeal under §1603.302, the decision of the administrative law judge under §1603.217 or a dismissal under §1603.107 shall become the final order of the Commission. A final order under this paragraph shall not have precedential significance.

§1603.305 Modification or withdrawal of Commission decision.

At any time, the Commission may modify or withdraw a decision for any reason provided that no petition for review in a United States Court of Appeals has been filed.

§1603.306 Judicial review.

Any party to a complaint who is aggrieved by a final decision under §1603.304 may obtain a review of such final decision under chapter 158 of title 28 of the United States Code by filing a petition for review with a United States Court of Appeals within 60 days after issuance of the final decision. Such petition for review should be filed in the judicial circuit in which the petitioner resides, or has its principal office, or in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 89 FR 47853, June 4, 2024, §1603.306 was amended by removing the comma after the word ''resides'', effective July 5, 2024.

PART 1604—GUIDELINES ON DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE OF SEX

Sec.

1604.1 General principles.
1604.2 Sex as a bona fide occupational qualification.
1604.3 Separate lines of progression and seniority systems.
1604.4 Discrimination against married women.
1604.5 Job opportunities advertising.
1604.6 Employment agencies.
1604.7 Pre-employment inquiries as to sex.
1604.8 Relationship of title VII to the Equal Pay Act.
1604.9 Fringe benefits.
1604.10 Employment policies relating to pregnancy and childbirth.
1604.11 Sexual harassment.
APPENDIX TO PART 1604—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE PREGNANCY DISCRIMINATION ACT, PUBLIC LAW 95–555, 92 STAT. 2076 (1978)

AUTHORITY: Sec. 713(b), 78 Stat. 265, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–12.

SOURCE: 37 FR 6836, April 5, 1972, unless otherwise noted.

§1604.1 General principles.

(a) References to ''employer'' or ''employers'' in this part 1604 state principles that are applicable not only to employers but also to labor organizations and to employment agencies insofar as their action or inaction may adversely affect employment opportunities.

(b) To the extent that the views expressed in prior Commission pronouncements are inconsistent with the views expressed herein, such prior views are hereby overruled.

(c) The Commission will continue to consider particular problems relating to sex discrimination on a case-by-case basis.

§ 1604.2 Sex as a bona fide occupational qualification.

(a) The commission believes that the bona fide occupational qualification exception as to sex should be interpreted narrowly. Label—''Men's jobs'' and ''Women's jobs''—tend to deny employment opportunities unnecessarily to one sex or the other.

(1) The Commission will find that the following situations do not warrant the application of the bona fide occupational qualification exception:

(i) The refusal to hire a woman because of her sex based on assumptions of the comparative employment characteristics of women in general. For example, the assumption that the turnover rate among women is higher than among men.

(ii) The refusal to hire an individual based on stereotyped characterizations of the sexes. Such stereotypes include, for example, that men are less capable of assembling intricate equipment: that women are less capable of aggressive salesmanship. The principle of nondiscrimination requires that individuals be considered on the basis of individual capacities and not on the basis of any characteristics generally attributed to the group.

(iii) The refusal to hire an individual because of the preferences of coworkers, the employer, clients or customers except as covered specifically in paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(2) Where it is necessary for the purpose of authenticity or genuineness, the Commission will consider sex to be a bona fide occupational qualification, e.g., an actor or actress.

(b) Effect of sex-oriented State employment legislation.

(1) Many States have enacted laws or promulgated administrative regulations with respect to the employment of females. Among these laws are those which prohibit or limit the employment of females, e.g., the employment of females in certain occupations, in jobs requiring the lifting or carrying of weights exceeding certain prescribed limits, during certain hours of the night, for more than a specified number of hours per day or per week, and for certain periods of time before and after childbirth. The Commission has found that such laws and regulations do not take into account the capacities, preferences, and abilities of individual females and, therefore, discriminate on the basis of sex. The Commission has concluded that such laws and regulations conflict with and are superseded by title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Accordingly, such laws will not be considered a defense to an otherwise established unlawful employment practice or as a basis for the application of the bona fide occupational qualification exception.

(2) The Commission has concluded that State laws and regulations which discriminate on the basis of sex with regard to the employment of minors are in conflict with and are superseded by title VII to the extent that such laws are more restrictive for one sex. Accordingly, restrictions on the employment of minors of one sex over and above those imposed on minors of the other sex will not be considered a defense to an otherwise established unlawful employment practice or as a basis for the application of the bona fide occupational qualification exception.

(3) A number of States require that minimum wage and premium pay for overtime be provided for female employees. An employer will be deemed to have engaged in an unlawful employment practice if:

(i) It refuses to hire or otherwise adversely affects the employment opportunities of female applicants or employees in order to avoid the payment of minimum wages or overtime pay required by State law; or

(ii) It does not provide the same benefits for male employees.

(4) As to other kinds of sex-oriented State employment laws, such as those requiring special rest and meal periods or physical facilities for women, provision of these benefits to one sex only

will be a violation of title VII. An employer will be deemed to have engaged in an unlawful employment practice if:

(i) It refuses to hire or otherwise adversely affects the employment opportunities of female applicants or employees in order to avoid the provision of such benefits; or

(ii) It does not provide the same benefits for male employees. If the employer can prove that business necessity precludes providing these benefits to both men and women, then the State law is in conflict with and superseded by title VII as to this employer. In this situation, the employer shall not provide such benefits to members of either sex.

(5) Some States require that separate restrooms be provided for employees of each sex. An employer will be deemed to have engaged in an unlawful employment practice if it refuses to hire or otherwise adversely affects the employment opportunities of applicants or employees in order to avoid the provision of such restrooms for persons of that sex.

§ 1604.3 Separate lines of progression and seniority systems.

(a) It is an unlawful employment practice to classify a job as ''male'' or ''female'' or to maintain separate lines of progression or separate seniority lists based on sex where this would adversely affect any employee unless sex is a bona fide occupational qualification for that job. Accordingly, employment practices are unlawful which arbitrarily classify jobs so that:

(1) A female is prohibited from applying for a job labeled ''male,'' or for a job in a ''male'' line of progression; and vice versa.

(2) A male scheduled for layoff is prohibited from displacing a less senior female on a ''female'' seniority list; and vice versa.

(b) A Seniority system or line of progression which distinguishes between ''light'' and ''heavy'' jobs constitutes an unlawful employment practice if it operates as a disguised form of classification by sex, or creates unreasonable obstacles to the advancement by members of either sex into jobs which members of that sex would reasonably be expected to perform.

§ 1604.4 Discrimination against married women.

(a) The Commission has determined that an employer's rule which forbids or restricts the employment of married women and which is not applicable to married men is a discrimination based on sex prohibited by title VII of the Civil Rights Act. It does not seem to us relevant that the rule is not directed against all females, but only against married females, for so long as sex is a factor in the application of the rule, such application involves a discrimination based on sex.

(b) It may be that under certain circumstances, such a rule could be justified within the meaning of section 703(e)(1) of title VII. We express no opinion on this question at this time except to point out that sex as a bona fide occupational qualification must be justified in terms of the peculiar requirements of the particular job and not on the basis of a general principle such as the desirability of spreading work.

§ 1604.5 Job opportunities advertising.

It is a violation of title VII for a help-wanted advertisement to indicate a preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination based on sex unless sex is a bona fide occupational qualification for the particular job involved. The placement of an advertisement in columns classified by publishers on the basis of sex, such as columns headed ''Male'' or ''Female,'' will be considered an expression of a preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination based on sex.

§ 1604.6 Employment agencies.

(a) Section 703(b) of the Civil Rights Act specifically states that it shall be unlawful for an employment agency to discriminate against any individual because of sex. The Commission has determined that private employment agencies which deal exclusively with one sex are engaged in an unlawful employment practice, except to the extent that such agencies limit their services to furnishing employees for particular jobs for which sex is a bona fide occupational qualification.

(b) An employment agency that receives a job order containing an unlawful sex specification will share responsibility with the employer placing the job order if the agency fills the order knowing that the sex specification is not based upon a bona fide occupational qualification. However, an employment agency will not be deemed to be in violation of the law, regardless of the determination as to the employer, if the agency does not have reason to believe that the employer's claim of bona fide occupations qualification is without substance and the agency makes and maintains a written record available to the Commission of each such job order. Such record shall include the name of the employer, the description of the job and the basis for the employer's claim of bona fide occupational qualification.

(c) It is the responsibility of employment agencies to keep informed of opinions and decisions of the Commission on sex discrimination.

§ 1604.7 Pre-employment inquiries as to sex.

A pre-employment inquiry may ask ''Male....., Female.....''; or ''Mr. Mrs. Miss,'' provided that the inquiry is made in good faith for a nondiscriminatory purpose. Any pre-employment inquiry in connection with prospective employment which expresses directly or indirectly any limitation, specification, or discrimination as to sex shall be unlawful unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification.

§ 1604.8 Relationship of title VII to the Equal Pay Act.

(a) The employee coverage of the prohibitions against discrimination based on sex contained in title VII is coextensive with that of the other prohibitions contained in title VII and is not limited by section 703(h) to those employees covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

(b) By virtue of section 703(h), a defense based on the Equal Pay Act may be raised in a proceeding under title VII.

(c) Where such a defense is raised the Commission will give appropriate consideration to the interpretations of the Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor, but will not be bound thereby.

§ 1604.9 Fringe benefits.

(a) ''Fringe benefits,'' as used herein, includes medical, hospital, accident, life insurance and retirement benefits; profit-sharing and bonus plans; leave; and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

(b) It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to discriminate between men and women with regard to fringe benefits.

(c) Where an employer conditions benefits available to employees and their spouses and families on whether the employee is the ''head of the household'' or ''principal wage earner'' in the family unit, the benefits tend to be available only to male employees and their families. Due to the fact that such conditioning discriminatorily affects the rights of women employees, and that ''head of household'' or ''principal wage earner'' status bears no relationship to job performance, benefits which are so conditioned will be found a prima facie violation of the prohibitions against sex discrimination contained in the act.

(d) It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to make available benefits for the wives and families of male employees where the same benefits are not made available for the husbands and families of female employees; or to make available benefits for the wives of male employees which are not made available for female employees; or to make available benefits to the husbands of female employees which are not made available for male employees. An example of such an unlawful employment practice is a situation in which wives of male employees receive maternity benefits while female employees receive no such benefits.

(e) It shall not be a defense under title VIII to a charge of sex discrimination in benefits that the cost of such benefits is greater with respect to one sex than the other.

(f) It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to have a pension or retirement plan which establishes different optional or compulsory retirement ages based on sex, or

which differentiates in benefits on the basis of sex. A statement of the General Counsel of September 13, 1968, providing for a phasing out of differentials with regard to optional retirement age for certain incumbent employees is hereby withdrawn.

§ 1604.10 Employment policies relating to pregnancy and childbirth.

(a) A written or unwritten employment policy or practice which excludes from employment applicants or employees because of pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions is in prima facie violation of title VII.

(b) Disabilities caused or contributed to by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, for all job-related purposes, shall be treated the same as disabilities caused or contributed to by other medical conditions, under any health or disability insurance or sick leave plan available in connection with employment. Written or unwritten employment policies and practices involving matters such as the commencement and duration of leave, the availability of extensions, the accrual of seniority and other benefits and privileges, reinstatement, and payment under any health or disability insurance or sick leave plan, formal or informal, shall be applied to disability due to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions on the same terms and conditions as they are applied to other disabilities. Health insurance benefits for abortion, except where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term or where medical complications have arisen from an abortion, are not required to be paid by an employer; nothing herein, however, precludes an employer from providing abortion benefits or otherwise affects bargaining agreements in regard to abortion.

(c) Where the termination of an employee who is temporarily disabled is caused by an employment policy under which insufficient or no leave is available, such a termination violates the Act if it has a disparate impact on employees of one sex and is not justified by business necessity.

(d)(1) Any fringe benefit program, or fund, or insurance program which is in effect on October 31, 1978, which does not treat women affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions the same as other persons not so affected but similar in their ability or inability to work, must be in compliance with the provisions of §1604.10(b) by April 29, 1979. In order to come into compliance with the provisions of 1604.10(b), there can be no reduction of benefits or compensation which were in effect on October 31, 1978, before October 31, 1979 or the expiration of a collective bargaining agreement in effect on October 31, 1978, whichever is later.

(2) Any fringe benefit program implemented after October 31, 1978, must comply with the provisions of §1604.10(b) upon implementation.

[44 FR 23805, Apr. 20, 1979]

§ 1604.11 Sexual harassment.

(a) Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of section 703 of title VII.[1] Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

(b) In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, the Commission will look at the record as a whole and at the totality of the circumstances, such as the nature of the sexual advances and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. The determination of the legality of a particular action will be made from the facts, on a case by case basis.

(c) [Reserved]

(d) With respect to conduct between fellow employees, an employer is responsible for acts of sexual harassment in the workplace where the employer

[1] The principles involved here continue to apply to race, color, religion or national origin.

(or its agents or supervisory employees) knows or should have known of the conduct, unless it can show that it took immediate and appropriate corrective action.

(e) An employer may also be responsible for the acts of non-employees, with respect to sexual harassment of employees in the workplace, where the employer (or its agents or supervisory employees) knows or should have known of the conduct and fails to take immediate and appropriate corrective action. In reviewing these cases the Commission will consider the extent of the employer's control and any other legal responsibility which the employer may have with respect to the conduct of such non-employees.

(f) Prevention is the best tool for the elimination of sexual harassment. An employer should take all steps necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring, such as affirmatively raising the subject, expressing strong disapproval, developing appropriate sanctions, informing employees of their right to raise and how to raise the issue of harassment under title VII, and developing methods to sensitize all concerned.

(g) Other related practices: Where employment opportunities or benefits are granted because of an individual's submission to the employer's sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, the employer may be held liable for unlawful sex discrimination against other persons who were qualified for but denied that employment opportunity or benefit.

APPENDIX A TO §1604.11—BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Commission has rescinded §1604.11(c) of the Guidelines on Sexual Harassment, which set forth the standard of employer liability for harassment by supervisors. That section is no longer valid, in light of the Supreme Court decisions in *Burlington Industries, Inc.* v. *Ellerth,* 524 U.S. 742 (1998), and *Faragher* v. *City of Boca Raton,* 524 U.S. 775 (1998). The Commission has issued a policy document that examines the Faragher and Ellerth decisions and provides detailed guidance on the issue of vicarious liability for harassment by supervisors. EEOC Enforcement Guidance: Vicarious Employer Liability for Unlawful Harassment by Supervisors (6/18/99), EEOC Compliance Manual (BNA), N:4075 [Binder 3]; also available through EEOC's web site, at *www.eeoc.gov.*, or by calling the EEOC Publications Distribution Center, at 1–800–669–3362 (voice), 1–800–800–3302 (TTY).

(Title VII, Pub. L. 88–352, 78 Stat. 253 (42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*))

[45 FR 74677, Nov. 10, 1980, as amended at 64 FR 58334, Oct. 29, 1999]

APPENDIX TO PART 1604—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE PREGNANCY DISCRIMINATION ACT, PUBLIC LAW 95–555, 92 STAT. 2076 (1978)

INTRODUCTION

On October 31, 1978, President Carter signed into law the *Pregnancy Discrimination Act* (Pub. L. 95–955). The Act is an amendment to title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits, among other things, discrimination in employment on the basis of sex. The *Pregnancy Discrimination Act* makes it clear that ''because of sex'' or ''on the basis of sex'', as used in title VII, includes ''because of or on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions.'' Therefore, title VII prohibits discrimination in employment against women affected by pregnancy or related conditions.

The basic principle of the Act is that women affected by pregnancy and related conditions must be treated the same as other applicants and employees on the basis of their ability or inability to work. A woman is therefore protected against such practices as being fired, or refused a job or promotion, merely because she is pregnant or has had an abortion. She usually cannot be forced to go on leave as long as she can still work. If other employees who take disability leave are entitled to get their jobs back when they are able to work again, so are women who have been unable to work because of pregnancy.

In the area of fringe benefits, such as disability benefits, sick leave and health insurance, the same principle applies. A woman unable to work for pregnancy-related reasons is entitled to disability benefits or sick leave on the same basis as employees unable to work for other medical reasons. Also, any health insurance provided must cover expenses for pregnancy-related conditions on the same basis as expenses for other medical conditions. However, health insurance for expenses arising from abortion is not required except where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term, or where medical complications have arisen from an abortion.

Some questions and answers about the *Pregnancy Discrimination Act* follow. Although the questions and answers often use only the term ''employer,'' the Act—and these questions and answers—apply also to

unions and other entities covered by title VII.

1. Q. What is the effective date of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act?

A. The Act became effective on October 31, 1978, except that with respect to fringe benefit programs in effect on that date, the Act will take effect 180 days thereafter, that is, April 29, 1979.

To the extent that title VII already required employers to treat persons affected by pregnancy-related conditions the same as persons affected by other medical conditions, the Act does not change employee rights arising prior to October 31, 1978, or April 29, 1979. Most employment practices relating to pregnancy, childbirth and related conditions—whether concerning fringe benefits or other practices—were already controlled by title VII prior to this Act. For example, title VII has always prohibited an employer from firing, or refusing to hire or promote, a woman because of pregnancy or related conditions, and from failing to accord a woman on pregnancy-related leave the same seniority retention and accrual accorded those on other disability leaves.

2. Q. If an employer had a sick leave policy in effect on October 31, 1978, by what date must the employer bring its policy into compliance with the Act?

A. With respect to payment of benefits, an employer has until April 29, 1979, to bring into compliance any fringe benefit or insurance program, including a sick leave policy, which was in effect on October 31, 1978. However, any such policy or program created after October 31, 1978, must be in compliance when created.

With respect to all aspects of sick leave policy other than payment of benefits, such as the terms governing retention and accrual of seniority, credit for vacation, and resumption of former job on return from sick leave, equality of treatment was required by title VII without the Amendment.

3. Q. Must an employer provide benefits for pregnancy-related conditions to an employee whose pregnancy begins prior to April 29, 1979, and continues beyond that date?

A. As of April 29, 1979, the effective date of the Act's requirements, an employer must provide the same benefits for pregnancy-related conditions as it provides for other conditions, regardless of when the pregnancy began. Thus, disability benefits must be paid for all absences on or after April 29, 1979, resulting from pregnancy-related temporary disabilities to the same extent as they are paid for absences resulting from other temporary disabilities. For example, if an employee gives birth before April 29, 1979, but is still unable to work on or after that date, she is entitled to the same disability benefits available to other employees. Similarily, medical insurance benefits must be paid for pregnancy-related expenses incurred on or after April 29, 1979.

If an employer requires an employee to be employed for a predetermined period prior to being eligible for insurance coverage, the period prior to April 29, 1979, during which a pregnant employee has been employed must be credited toward the eligibility waiting period on the same basis as for any other employee.

As to any programs instituted for the first time after October 31, 1978, coverage for pregnancy-related conditions must be provided in the same manner as for other medical conditions.

4. Q. Would the answer to the preceding question be the same if the employee became pregnant prior to October 31, 1978?

A. Yes.

5. Q. If, for pregnancy-related reasons, an employee is unable to perform the functions of her job, does the employer have to provide her an alternative job?

A. An employer is required to treat an employee temporarily unable to perform the functions of her job because of her pregnancy-related condition in the same manner as it treats other temporarily disabled employees, whether by providing modified tasks, alternative assignments, disability leaves, leaves without pay, etc. For example, a woman's primary job function may be the operation of a machine, and, incidental to that function, she may carry materials to and from the machine. If other employees temporarily unable to lift are relieved of these functions, pregnant employees also unable to lift must be temporarily relieved of the function.

6. Q. What procedures may an employer use to determine whether to place on leave as unable to work a pregnant employee who claims she is able to work or deny leave to a pregnant employee who claims that she is disabled from work?

A. An employer may not single out pregnancy-related conditions for special procedures for determining an employee's ability to work. However, an employer may use any procedure used to determine the ability of all employees to work. For example, if an employer requires its employees to submit a doctor's statement concerning their inability to work before granting leave or paying sick benefits, the employer may require employees affected by pregnancy-related conditions to submit such statement. Similarly, if an employer allows its employees to obtain doctor's statements from their personal physicians for absences due to other disabilities or return dates from other disabilities, it must accept doctor's statements from personal physicians for absences and return dates connected with pregnancy-related disabilities.

7. Q. Can an employer have a rule which prohibits an employee from returning to

work for a predetermined length of time after childbirth?

A. No.

8. Q. If an employee has been absent from work as a result of a pregnancy-related condition and recovers, may her employer require her to remain on leave until after her baby is born?

A. No. An employee must be permitted to work at all times during pregnancy when she is able to perform her job.

9. Q. Must an employer hold open the job of an employee who is absent on leave because she is temporarily disabled by pregnancy-related conditions?

A. Unless the employee on leave has informed the employer that she does not intend to return to work, her job must be held open for her return on the same basis as jobs are held open for employees on sick or disability leave for other reasons.

10. Q. May an employer's policy concerning the accrual and crediting of seniority during absences for medical conditions be different for employees affected by pregnancy-related conditions than for other employees?

A. No. An employer's seniority policy must be the same for employees absent for pregnancy-related reasons as for those absent for other medical reasons.

11. Q. For purposes of calculating such matters as vacations and pay increases, may an employer credit time spent on leave for pregnancy-related reasons differently than time spent on leave for other reasons?

A. No. An employer's policy with respect to crediting time for the purpose of calculating such matters as vacations and pay increases cannot treat employees on leave for pregnancy-related reasons less favorably than employees on leave for other reasons. For example, if employees on leave for medical reasons are credited with the time spent on leave when computing entitlement to vacation or pay raises, an employee on leave for pregnancy-related disability is entitled to the same kind of time credit.

12. Q. Must an employer hire a woman who is medically unable, because of a pregnancy-related condition, to perform a necessary function of a job?

A. An employer cannot refuse to hire a women because of her pregnancy-related condition so long as she is able to perform the major functions necessary to the job. Nor can an employer refuse to hire her because of its preferences against pregnant workers or the preferences of co-workers, clients, or customers.

13. Q. May an employer limit disability benefits for pregnancy-related conditions to married employees?

A. No.

14. Q. If an employer has an all female workforce or job classification, must benefits be provided for pregnancy-related conditions?

A. Yes. If benefits are provided for other conditions, they must also be provided for pregnancy-related conditions.

15. Q. For what length of time must an employer who provides income maintenance benefits for temporary disabilities provide such benefits for pregnancy-related disabilities?

A. Benefits should be provided for as long as the employee is unable to work for medical reasons unless some other limitation is set for all other temporary disabilities, in which case pregnancy-related disabilities should be treated the same as other temporary disabilities.

16. Q. Must an employer who provides benefits for long-term or permanent disabilities provide such benefits for pregnancy-related conditions?

A. Yes. Benefits for long-term or permanent disabilities resulting from pregnancy-related conditions must be provided to the same extent that such benefits are provided for other conditions which result in long-term or permanent disability.

17. Q. If an employer provides benefits to employees on leave, such as installment purchase disability insurance, payment of premiums for health, life or other insurance, continued payments into pension, saving or profit sharing plans, must the same benefits be provided for those on leave for pregnancy-related conditions?

A. Yes, the employer must provide the same benefits for those on leave for pregnancy-related conditions as for those on leave for other reasons.

18. Q. Can an employee who is absent due to a pregnancy-related disability be required to exhaust vacation benefits before receiving sick leave pay or disability benefits?

A. No. If employees who are absent because of other disabling causes receive sick leave pay or disability benefits without any requirement that they first exhaust vacation benefits, the employer cannot impose this requirement on an employee absent for a pregnancy-related cause.

18 (A). Q. Must an employer grant leave to a female employee for chidcare purposes after she is medically able to return to work following leave necessitated by pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions?

A. While leave for childcare purposes is not covered by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, ordinary title VII principles would require that leave for childcare purposes be granted on the same basis as leave which is granted to employees for other non-medical reasons. For example, if an employer allows its employees to take leave without pay or accrued annual leave for travel or education which is not job related, the same type of leave must be granted to those who wish to remain on leave for infant care, even though they are medically able to return to work.

19. Q. If State law requires an employer to provide disability insurance for a specified period before and after childbirth, does compliance with the State law fulfill the employer's obligation under the Pregnancy Discrimination Act?

A. Not necessarily. It is an employer's obligation to treat employees temporarily disabled by pregnancy in the same manner as employees affected by other temporary disabilities. Therefore, any restrictions imposed by State law on benefits for pregnancy-related disabilities, but not for other disabilities, do not excuse the employer from treating the individuals in both groups of employees the same. If, for example, a State law requires an employer to pay a maximum of 26 weeks benefits for disabilities other than pregnancy-related ones but only six weeks for pregnancy-related disabilities, the employer must provide benefits for the additional weeks to an employee disabled by pregnancy-related conditions, up to the maximum provided other disabled employees.

20. Q. If a State or local government provides its own employees income maintenance benefits for disabilities, may it provide different benefits for disabilities arising from pregnancy-related conditions than for disabilities arising from other conditions?

A. No. State and local governments, as employers, are subject to the Pregnancy Discrimination Act in the same way as private employers and must bring their employment practices and programs into compliance with the Act, including disability and health insurance programs.

21. Q. Must an employer provide health insurance coverage for the medical expenses of pregnancy-related conditions of the spouses of male employees? Of the dependents of all employees?

A. Where an employer provides no coverage for dependents, the employer is not required to institute such coverage. However, if an employer's insurance program covers the medical expenses of spouses of female employees, then it must equally cover the medical expenses of spouses of male employees, including those arising from pregnancy-related conditions.

But the insurance does not have to cover the pregnancy-related conditions of other dependents as long as it excludes the pregnancy-related conditions of the dependents of male and female employees equally.

22. Q. Must an employer provide the same level of health insurance coverage for the pregnancy-related medical conditions of the spouses of male employees as it provides for its female employees?

A. No. It is not necessary to provide the same level of coverage for the pregnancy-related medical conditions of spouses of male employees as for female employees. However, where the employer provides coverage for the medical conditions of the spouses of its employees, then the level of coverage for pregnancy-related medical conditions of the spouses of male employees must be the same as the level of coverage for all other medical conditions of the spouses of female employees. For example, if the employer covers employees for 100 percent of reasonable and customary expenses sustained for a medical condition, but only covers dependent spouses for 50 percent of reasonable and customary expenses for their medical conditions, the pregnancy-related expenses of the male employee's spouse must be covered at the 50 percent level.

23. Q. May an employer offer optional dependent coverage which excludes pregnancy-related medical conditions or offers less coverage for pregnancy-related medical conditions where the total premium for the optional coverage is paid by the employee?

A. No. Pregnancy-related medical conditions must be treated the same as other medical conditions under any health or disability insurance or sick leave plan *available in connection with employment,* regardless of who pays the premiums.

24. Q. Where an employer provides its employees a choice among several health insurance plans, must coverage for pregnancy-related conditions be offered in all of the plans?

A. Yes. Each of the plans must cover pregnancy-related conditions. For example, an employee with a single coverage policy cannot be forced to purchase a more expensive family coverage policy in order to receive coverage for her own pregnancy-related condition.

25. Q. On what basis should an employee be reimbursed for medical expenses arising from pregnancy, childbirth or related conditions?

A. Pregnancy-related expenses should be reimbursed in the same manner as are expenses incurred for other medical conditions. Therefore, whether a plan reimburses the employees on a fixed basis, or a percentage of reasonable and customary charge basis, the same basis should be used for reimbursement of expenses incurred for pregnancy-related conditions. Furthermore, if medical costs for pregnancy-related conditions increase, reevaluation of the reimbursement level should be conducted in the same manner as are cost reevaluations of increases for other medical conditions.

Coverage provided by a health insurance program for other conditions must be provided for pregnancy-related conditions. For example, if a plan provides major medical coverage, pregnancy-related conditions must be so covered. Similarily, if a plan covers the cost of a private room for other conditions, the plan must cover the cost of a private room for pregnancy-related conditions. Finally, where a health insurance plan covers office visits to physicians, pre-natal and

post-natal visits must be included in such coverage.

26. Q. May an employer limit payment of costs for pregnancy-related medical conditions to a specified dollar amount set forth in an insurance policy, collective bargaining agreement or other statement of benefits to which an employee is entitled?

A. The amounts payable for the costs incurred for pregnancy-related conditions can be limited only to the same extent as are costs for other conditions. Maximum recoverable dollar amounts may be specified for pregnancy-related conditions if such amounts are similarly specified for other conditions, and so long as the specified amounts in all instances cover the same proportion of actual costs. If, in addition to the scheduled amount for other procedures, additional costs are paid for, either directly or indirectly, by the employer, such additional payments must also be paid for pregnancy-related procedures.

27. Q. May an employer impose a different deductible for payment of costs for pregnancy-related medical conditions than for costs of other medical conditions?

A. No. Neither an additional deductible, an increase in the usual deductible, nor a larger deductible can be imposed for coverage for pregnancy-related medical costs, whether as a condition for inclusion of pregnancy-related costs in the policy or for payment of the costs when incurred. Thus, if pregnancy-related costs are the first incurred under the policy, the employee is required to pay only the same deductible as would otherwise be required had other medical costs been the first incurred. Once this deductible has been paid, no additional deductible can be required for other medical procedures. If the usual deductible has already been paid for other medical procedures, no additional deductible can be required when pregnancy-related costs are later incurred.

28. Q. If a health insurance plan excludes the payment of benefits for any conditions existing at the time the insured's coverage becomes effective (pre-existing condition clause), can benefits be denied for medical costs arising from a pregnancy existing at the time the coverage became effective?

A. Yes. However, such benefits cannot be denied unless the pre-existing condition clause also excludes benefits for other pre-existing conditions in the same way.

29. Q. If an employer's insurance plan provides benefits after the insured's employment has ended (i.e. extended benefits) for costs connected with pregnancy and delivery where conception occurred while the insured was working for the employer, but not for the costs of any other medical condition which began prior to termination of employment, may an employer (a) continue to pay these extended benefits for pregnancy-related medical conditions but not for other medical conditions, or (b) terminate these benefits for pregnancy-related conditions?

A. Where a health insurance plan currently provides extended benefits for other medical conditions on a less favorable basis than for pregnancy-related medical conditions, extended benefits must be provided for other medical conditions on the same basis as for pregnancy-related medical conditions. Therefore, an employer can neither continue to provide less benefits for other medical conditions nor reduce benefits currently paid for pregnancy-related medical conditions.

30. Q. Where an employer's health insurance plan currently requires total disability as a prerequisite for payment of extended benefits for other medical conditions but not for pregnancy-related costs, may the employer now require total disability for payment of benefits for pregnancy-related medical conditions as well?

A. Since extended benefits cannot be reduced in order to come into compliance with the Act, a more stringent prerequisite for payment of extended benefits for pregnancy-related medical conditions, such as a requirement for total disability, cannot be imposed. Thus, in this instance, in order to comply with the Act, the employer must treat other medical conditions as pregnancy-related conditions are treated.

31. Q. Can the added cost of bringing benefit plans into compliance with the Act be apportioned between the employer and employee?

A. The added cost, if any, can be apportioned between the employer and employee in the same proportion that the cost of the fringe benefit plan was apportioned on October 31, 1978, if that apportionment was nondiscriminatory. If the costs were not apportioned on October 31, 1978, they may not be apportioned in order to come into compliance with the Act. However, in no circumstance may male or female employees be required to pay unequal apportionments on the basis of sex or pregnancy.

32. Q. In order to come into compliance with the Act, may an employer reduce benefits or compensation?

A. In order to come into compliance with the Act, benefits or compensation which an employer was paying on October 31, 1978 cannot be reduced before October 31, 1979 or before the expiration of a collective bargaining agreement in effect on October 31, 1978, whichever is later.

Where an employer has not been in compliance with the Act by the times specified in the Act, and attempts to reduce benefits, or compensation, the employer may be required to remedy its practices in accord with ordinary title VII remedial principles.

33. Q. Can an employer self-insure benefits for pregnancy-related conditions if it does not self-insure benefits for other medical conditions?

A. Yes, so long as the benefits are the same. In measuring whether benefits are the same, factors other than the dollar coverage paid should be considered. Such factors include the range of choice of physicians and hospitals, and the processing and promptness of payment of claims.

34. Q. Can an employer discharge, refuse to hire or otherwise discriminate against a woman because she has had an abortion?

A. No. An employer cannot discriminate in its employment practices against a woman who has had an abortion.

35. Q. Is an employer required to provide fringe benefits for abortions if fringe benefits are provided for other medical conditions?

A. All fringe benefits other than health insurance, such as sick leave, which are provided for other medical conditions, must be provided for abortions. Health insurance, however, need be provided for abortions only where the life of the woman would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term or where medical complications arise from an abortion.

36. Q. If complications arise during the course of an abortion, as for instance excessive hemorrhaging, must an employer's health insurance plan cover the additional cost due to the complications of the abortion?

A. Yes. The plan is required to pay those additional costs attributable to the complications of the abortion. However, the employer is not required to pay for the abortion itself, except where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term.

37. Q. May an employer elect to provide insurance coverage for abortions?

A. Yes. The Act specifically provides that an employer is not precluded from providing benefits for abortions whether directly or through a collective bargaining agreement, but if an employer decides to cover the costs of abortion, the employer must do so in the same manner and to the same degree as it covers other medical conditions.

[44 FR 23805, Apr. 20, 1979]

PART 1605—GUIDELINES ON DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE OF RELIGION

Sec.

1605.1 ''Religious'' nature of a practice or belief.

1605.2 Reasonable accommodation without undue hardship as required by section 701(j) of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

1605.3 Selection practices.

APPENDIX A TO §§ 1605.2 AND 1605.3 OF PART 1605—BACKGROUND INFORMATION

AUTHORITY: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*

SOURCE: 45 FR 72612, Oct. 31, 1980, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1605.1 "Religious" nature of a practice or belief.

In most cases whether or not a practice or belief is religious is not at issue. However, in those cases in which the issue does exist, the Commission will define religious practices to include moral or ethical beliefs as to what is right and wrong which are sincerely held with the strength of traditional religious views. This standard was developed in *United States* v. *Seeger*, 380 U.S. 163 (1965) and *Welsh* v. *United States*, 398 U.S. 333 (1970). The Commission has consistently applied this standard in its decisions.[1] The fact that no religious group espouses such beliefs or the fact that the religious group to which the individual professes to belong may not accept such belief will not determine whether the belief is a religious belief of the employee or prospective employee. The phrase ''religious practice'' as used in these Guidelines includes both religious observances and practices, as stated in section 701(j), 42 U.S.C. 2000e(j).

§ 1605.2 Reasonable accommodation without undue hardship as required by section 701(j) of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

(a) *Purpose of this section.* This section clarifies the obligation imposed by title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, (sections 701(j), 703 and 717) to accommodate the religious practices of employees and prospective employees. This section does not address other obligations under title VII not to discriminate on grounds of religion, nor other provisions of title VII. This section is not intended to limit any additional obligations to accommodate religious practices which may exist pursuant to constitutional, or other statutory provisions; neither is it intended to provide guidance for statutes which require accommodation on bases other than religion such as section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of

[1] See CD 76–104 (1976), CCH ¶6500; CD 71–2620 (1971), CCH ¶6283; CD 71–779 (1970), CCH ¶6180.

1973. The legal principles which have been developed with respect to discrimination prohibited by title VII on the bases of race, color, sex, and national origin also apply to religious discrimination in all circumstances other than where an accommodation is required.

(b) *Duty to accommodate.* (1) Section 701(j) makes it an unlawful employment practice under section 703(a)(1) for an employer to fail to reasonably accommodate the religious practices of an employee or prospective employee, unless the employer demonstrates that accommodation would result in undue hardship on the conduct of its business.[2]

(2) Section 701(j) in conjunction with section 703(c), imposes an obligation on a labor organization to reasonably accommodate the religious practices of an employee or prospective employee, unless the labor organization demonstrates that accommodation would result in undue hardship.

(3) Section 1605.2 is primarily directed to obligations of employers or labor organizations, which are the entities covered by title VII that will most often be required to make an accommodation. However, the principles of §1605.2 also apply when an accommodation can be required of other entities covered by title VII, such as employment agencies (section 703(b)) or joint labor-management committees controlling appreciceship or other training or retraining (section 703(d)). (See, for example, §1605.3(a) ''Scheduling of Tests or Other Selection Procedures.'')

(c) *Reasonable accommodation.* (1) After an employee or prospective employee notifies the employer or labor organization of his or her need for a religious accommodation, the employer or labor organization has an obligation to reasonably accommodate the individual's religious practices. A refusal to accommodate is justified only when an employer or labor organization can demonstrate that an undue hardship would in fact result from each available alternative method of accommodation. A mere assumption that many more people, with the same religious practices as the person being accommodated, may also need accommodation is not evidence of undue hardship.

(2) When there is more than one method of accommodation available which would not cause undue hardship, the Commission will determine whether the accommodation offered is reasonable by examining:

(i) The alternatives for accommodation considered by the employer or labor organization; and

(ii) The alternatives for accommodation, if any, actually offered to the individual requiring accommodation. Some alternatives for accommodating religious practices might disadvantage the individual with respect to his or her employment opportunites, such as compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. Therefore, when there is more than one means of accommodation which would not cause undue hardship, the employer or labor organization must offer the alternative which least disadvantages the individual with respect to his or her employment opportunities.

(d) *Alternatives for accommodating religious practices.* (1) Employees and prospective employees most frequently request an accommodation because their religious practices conflict with their work schedules. The following subsections are some means of accommodating the conflict between work schedules and religious practices which the Commission believes that employers and labor organizations should consider as part of the obligation to accommodate and which the Commission will consider in investigating a charge. These are not intended to be all-inclusive. There are often other alternatives which would reasonably accommodate an individual's religious practices when they conflict with a work schedule. There are also employment practices besides work scheduling which may conflict with religious practices and cause an individual to request an accommodation. See, for example, the Commission's finding number (3) from its Hearings on Religious Discrimination, in appendix A to §§1605.2 and 1605.3. The principles expressed in these Guidelines apply as well to such requests for accommodation.

[2] See *Trans World Airlines, Inc.* v. *Hardison,* 432 U.S. 63, 74 (1977).

(i) Voluntary Substitutes and ''Swaps''.

Reasonable accommodation without undue hardship is generally possible where a voluntary substitute with substantially similar qualifications is available. One means of substitution is the voluntary swap. In a number of cases, the securing of a substitute has been left entirely up to the individual seeking the accommodation. The Commission believes that the obligation to accommodate requires that employers and labor organizations facilitate the securing of a voluntary substitute with substantially similar qualifications. Some means of doing this which employers and labor organizations should consider are: to publicize policies regarding accommodation and voluntary substitution; to promote an atmosphere in which such substitutions are favorably regarded; to provide a central file, bulletin board or other means for matching voluntary substitutes with positions for which substitutes are needed.

(ii) Flexible Scheduling.

One means of providing reasonable accommodation for the religious practices of employees or prospective employees which employers and labor organizations should consider is the creation of a flexible work schedule for individuals requesting accommodation.

The following list is an example of areas in which flexibility might be introduced: flexible arrival and departure times; floating or optional holidays; flexible work breaks; use of lunch time in exchange for early departure; staggered work hours; and permitting an employee to make up time lost due to the observance of religious practices.[3]

(iii) Lateral Transfer and Change of Job Assignments.

When an employee cannot be accommodated either as to his or her entire job or an assignment within the job, employers and labor organizations should consider whether or not it is possible to change the job assignment or give the employee a lateral transfer.

(2) Payment of Dues to a Labor Organization.

Some collective bargaining agreements include a provision that each employee must join the labor organization or pay the labor organization a sum equivalent to dues. When an employee's religious practices to not permit compliance with such a provision, the labor organization should accommodate the employee by not requiring the employee to join the organization and by permitting him or her to donate a sum equivalent to dues to a charitable organization.

(e) *Undue hardship.* (1) Cost. An employer may assert undue hardship to justify a refusal to accommodate an employee's need to be absent from his or her scheduled duty hours if the employer can demonstrate that the accommodation would require ''more than a *de minimis* cost''.[4] The Commission will determine what constitutes ''more than a *de minimis* cost'' with due regard given to the identifiable cost in relation to the size and operating cost of the employer, and the number of individuals who will in fact need a particular accommodation. In general, the Commission interprets this phrase as it was used in the *Hardison* decision to mean that costs similar to the regular payment of premium wages of substitutes, which was at issue in *Hardison*, would constitute undue hardship. However, the Commission will presume that the infrequent payment of premium wages for a substitute or the payment of premium wages while a more permanent accommodation is being sought are costs which an employer can be required to bear as a means of providing a reasonable accommodation. Further, the Commission will presume that generally, the payment of administrative costs necessary for providing the accommodation will not constitute more than a *de minimis* cost. Administrative costs, for example, include those costs involved in rearranging schedules and recording substitutions for payroll purposes.

(2) Seniority Rights. Undue hardship would also be shown where a variance from a bona fide seniority system is necessary in order to accommodate an

[3] On September 29, 1978, Congress enacted such a provision for the accommodation of Federal employees' religious practices. See Pub. L. 95–390, 5 U.S.C. 5550a ''Compensatory Time Off for Religious Observances.''

[4] *Hardison, supra,* 432 U.S. at 84.

employee's religious practices when doing so would deny another employee his or her job or shift preference guaranteed by that system. *Hardison, supra*, 432 U.S. at 80. Arrangements for voluntary substitutes and swaps (see paragraph (d)(1)(i) of this section) do not constitute an undue hardship to the extent the arrangements do not violate a bona fide seniority system. Nothing in the Statute or these Guidelines precludes an employer and a union from including arrangements for voluntary substitutes and swaps as part of a collective bargaining agreement.

§ 1605.3 Selection practices.

(a) *Scheduling of tests or other selection procedures.* When a test or other selection procedure is scheduled at a time when an employee or prospective employee cannot attend because of his or her religious practices, the user of the test should be aware that the principles enunciated in these guidelines apply and that it has an obligation to accommodate such employee or prospective employee unless undue hardship would result.

(b) *Inquiries which determine an applicant's availability to work during an employer's scheduled working hours.* (1) The duty to accommodate pertains to prospective employees as well as current employees. Consequently, an employer may not permit an applicant's need for a religious accommodation to affect in any way its decision whether to hire the applicant unless it can demonstrate that it cannot reasonably accommodate the applicant's religious practices without undue hardship.

(2) As a result of the oral and written testimony submitted at the Commission's Hearings on Religious Discrimination, discussions with representatives of organizations interested in the issue of religious discrimination, and the comments received from the public on these Guidelines as proposed, the Commission has concluded that the use of pre-selection inquiries which determine an applicant's availability has an exclusionary effect on the employment opportunities of persons with certain religious practices. The use of such inquiries will, therefore, be considered to violate title VII unless the employer can show that it:

(i) Did not have an exclusionary effect on its employees or prospective employees needing an accommodation for the same religious practices; or

(ii) Was otherwise justified by business necessity.

Employers who believe they have a legitimate interest in knowing the availability of their applicants prior to selection must consider procedures which would serve this interest and which would have a lesser exclusionary effect on persons whose religious practices need accommodation. An example of such a procedure is for the employer to state the normal work hours for the job and, after making it clear to the applicant that he or she is not required to indicate the need for any absences for religious practices during the scheduled work hours, ask the applicant whether he or she is otherwise available to work those hours. Then, after a position is offered, but before the applicant is hired, the employer can inquire into the need for a religious accommodation and determine, according to the principles of these Guidelines, whether an accommodation is possible. This type of inquiry would provide an employer with information concerning the availability of most of its applicants, while deferring until after a position is offered the identification of the usually small number of applicants who require an accommodation.

(3) The Commission will infer that the need for an accommodation discriminatorily influenced a decision to reject an applicant when: (i) prior to an offer of employment the employer makes an inquiry into an applicant's availability without having a business necessity justification; and (ii) after the employer has determined the applicant's need for an accommodation, the employer rejects a qualified applicant. The burden is then on the employer to demonstrate that factors other than the need for an accommodation were the reason for rejecting the qualified applicant, or that a reasonable accommodation without undue hardship was not possible.

APPENDIX A TO §§ 1605.2 AND 1605.3—BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 1966, the Commission adopted guidelines on religious discrimination which stated that an employer had an obligation to accommodate the religious practices of its employees or prospective employees unless to do so would create a ''serious inconvenience to the conduct of the business''. 29 CFR 1605.1(a)(2), 31 FR 3870 (1966).

In 1967, the Commission revised these guidelines to state that an employer had an obligation to reasonably accommodate the religious practices of its employees or prospective employees, unless the employer could prove that to do so would create an ''undue hardship''. 29 CFR 1605.1(b)(c), 32 FR 10298.

In 1972, Congress amended title VII to incorporate the obligation to accommodate expressed in the Commission's 1967 Guidelines by adding section 701(j).

In 1977, the United States Supreme Court issued its decision in the case of *Trans World Airlines, Inc.* v. *Hardison,* 432 U.S. 63 (1977). *Hardison* was brought under section 703(a)(1) because it involved facts occurring before the enactment of section 701(j). The Court applied the Commission's 1967 Guidelines, but indicated that the result would be the same under section 701(j). It stated that Trans World Airlines had made reasonable efforts to accommodate the religious needs of its employee, Hardison. The Court held that to require Trans World Airlines to make further attempts at accommodations—by unilaterally violating a seniority provision of the collective bargaining agreement, paying premium wages on a regular basis to another employee to replace Hardison, or creating a serious shortage of necessary employees in another department in order to replace Hardison—would create an undue hardship on the conduct of Trans World Airlines' business, and would therefore, exceed the duty to accommodate Hardison.

In 1978, the Commission conducted public hearings on religious discrimination in New York City, Milwaukee, and Los Angeles in order to respond to the concerns raised by *Hardison*. Approximately 150 witnesses testified or submitted written statements.[5] The witnesses included employers, employees, representatives of religious and labor organizations and representatives of Federal, State and local governments.

The Commission found from the hearings that:

(1) There is widespread confusion concerning the extent of accommodation under the *Hardison* decision.

(2) The religious practices of some individuals and some groups of individuals are not being accommodated.

(3) Some of those practices which are not being accommodated are:

—Observance of a Sabbath or religious holidays;

—Need for prayer break during working hours;

—Practice of following certain dietary requirements;

—Practice of not working during a mourning period for a deceased relative;

—Prohibition against medical examinations;

—Prohibition against membership in labor and other organizations; and

—Practices concerning dress and other personal grooming habits.

(4) Many of the employers who testified had developed alternative employment practices which accommodate the religious practices of employees and prospective employees and which meet the employer's business needs.

(5) Little evidence was submitted by employers which showed actual attempts to accommodate religious practices with resultant unfavorable consequences to the employer's business. Employers appeared to have substantial anticipatory concerns but no, or very little, actual experience with the problems they theorized would emerge by providing reasonable accommodation for religious practices.

Based on these findings, the Commission is revising its Guidelines to clarify the obligation imposed by section 701(j) to accommodate the religious practices of employees and prospective employees.

[45 FR 72612, Oct. 31, 1980, as amended at 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009]

[5] The transcript of the Commission's Hearings on Religious Discrimination can be examined by the public at: The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 131 M Street, NE., Washington, DC 20507.

PART 1606—GUIDELINES ON DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE OF NATIONAL ORIGIN

Sec.

1606.1 Definition of national origin discrimination.
1606.2 Scope of title VII protection.
1606.3 The national security exception.
1606.4 The bona fide occupational qualification exception.
1606.5 Citizenship requirements.
1606.6 Selection procedures.
1606.7 Speak-English-only rules.
1606.8 Harassment.

AUTHORITY: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*

SOURCE: 45 FR 85635, Dec. 29, 1980, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1606.1 Definition of national origin discrimination.

The Commission defines national origin discrimination broadly as including, but not limited to, the denial of equal employment opportunity because of an individual's, or his or her ancestor's, place of origin; or because an individual has the physical, cultural or linguistic characteristics of a national origin group. The Commission will examine with particular concern charges alleging that individuals within the jurisdiction of the Commission have been denied equal employment opportunity for reasons which are grounded in national origin considerations, such as (a) marriage to or association with persons of a national origin group; (b) membership in, or association with an organization identified with or seeking to promote the interests of national origin groups; (c) attendance or participation in schools, churches, temples or mosques, generally used by persons of a national origin group; and (d) because an individual's name or spouse's name is associated with a national origin group. In examining these charges for unlawful national origin discrimination, the Commission will apply general title VII principles, such as disparate treatment and adverse impact.

§ 1606.2 Scope of title VII protection.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, protects individuals against employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. The title VII principles of disparate treatment and adverse impact equally apply to national origin discrimination. These Guidelines apply to all entities covered by title VII (collectively referred to as ''employer'').

§ 1606.3 The national security exception.

It is not an unlawful employment practice to deny employment opportunities to any individual who does not fulfill the national security requirements stated in section 703(g) of title VII.[1]

§ 1606.4 The bona fide occupational qualification exception.

The exception stated in section 703(e) of title VII, that national origin may be a bona fide occupational qualification, shall be strictly construed.

§ 1606.5 Citizenship requirements.

(a) In those circumstances, where citizenship requirements have the purpose or effect of discriminating against an individual on the basis of national origin, they are prohibited by title VII.[2]

(b) Some State laws prohibit the employment of non-citizens. Where these laws are in conflict with title VII, they are superseded under section 708 of the title.

§ 1606.6 Selection procedures.

(a)(1) In investigating an employer's selection procedures (including those identified below) for adverse impact on the basis of national origin, the Commission will apply the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (UGESP), 29 CFR part 1607. Employers and other users of selection procedures should refer to the UGESP for guidance on matters, such as adverse impact, validation and recordkeeping requirements for national origin groups.

(2) Because height or weight requirements tend to exclude individuals on the basis of national origin,[3] the user is expected to evaluate these selection procedures for adverse impact, regardless of whether the total selection process has an adverse impact based on

[1] See also, 5 U.S.C. 7532, for the authority of the head of a Federal agency or department to suspend or remove an employee on grounds of national security.

[2] See *Espinoza* v. *Farah Mfg. Co., Inc.*, 414 U.S. 86, 92 (1973). See also, E.O. 11935, 5 CFR 7.4; and 31 U.S.C. 699(b), for citizenship requirements in certain Federal employment.

[3] See CD 71–1529 (1971), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6231, 3 FEP Cases 952; CD 71–1418 (1971), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6223, 3 FEP Cases 580; CD 74–25 (1973), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6400, 10 FEP Cases 260. *Davis* v. *County of Los Angeles*, 566 F. 2d 1334, 1341–42 (9th Cir., 1977) vacated and remanded as moot on other grounds, 440 U.S. 625 (1979). See also, *Dothard* v. *Rawlinson*, 433 U.S. 321 (1977).

national origin. Therefore, height or weight requirements are identified here, as they are in the UGESP,[4] as exceptions to the ''bottom line'' concept.

(b) The Commission has found that the use of the following selection procedures may be discriminatory on the basis of national origin. Therefore, it will carefully investigate charges involving these selection procedures for both disparate treatment and adverse impact on the basis of national origin. However, the Commission does not consider these to be exceptions to the ''bottom line'' concept:

(1) Fluency-in-English requirements, such as denying employment opportunities because of an individual's foreign accent,[5] or inability to communicate well in English.[6]

(2) Training or education requirements which deny employment opportunities to an individual because of his or her foreign training or education, or which require an individual to be foreign trained or educated.

§ 1606.7 Speak-English-only rules.

(a) *When applied at all times.* A rule requiring employees to speak only English at all times in the workplace is a burdensome term and condition of employment. The primary language of an individual is often an essential national origin characteristic. Prohibiting employees at all times, in the workplace, from speaking their primary language or the language they speak most comfortably, disadvantages an individual's employment opportunities on the basis of national origin. It may also create an atmosphere of inferiority, isolation and intimidation based on national origin which could result in a discriminatory working environment.[7] Therefore, the Commission will presume that such a rule violates title VII and will closely scrutinize it.

(b) *When applied only at certain times.* An employer may have a rule requiring that employees speak only in English at certain times where the employer can show that the rule is justified by business necessity.

(c) *Notice of the rule.* It is common for individuals whose primary language is not English to inadvertently change from speaking English to speaking their primary language. Therefore, if an employer believes it has a business necessity for a speak-English-only rule at certain times, the employer should inform its employees of the general circumstances when speaking only in English is required and of the consequences of violating the rule. If an employer fails to effectively notify its employees of the rule and makes an adverse employment decision against an individual based on a violation of the rule, the Commission will consider the employer's application of the rule as evidence of discrimination on the basis of national origin.

§ 1606.8 Harassment.

(a) The Commission has consistently held that harassment on the basis of national origin is a violation of title VII. An employer has an affirmative duty to maintain a working environment free of harassment on the basis of national origin.[8]

(b) Ethnic slurs and other verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual's national origin constitute harassment when this conduct:

(1) Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment;

(2) Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or

(3) Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

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[4] See section 4C(2) of the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures,* 29 CFR 1607.4C(2).

[5] See CD AL68–1–155E (1969), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6008, 1 FEP Cases 921.

[6] See CD YAU9–048 (1969), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6054, 2 FEP Cases 78.

[7] See CD 71–446 (1970), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6173, 2 FEP Cases, 1127; CD 72–0281 (1971), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6293.

[8] See CD CL68–12–431 EU (1969), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6085, 2 FEP Cases 295; CD 72–0621 (1971), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6311, 4 FEP Cases 312; CD 72–1561 (1972), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6354, 4 FEP Cases 852; CD 74–05 (1973), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6387, 6 FEP Cases 834; CD 76–41 (1975), CCH EEOC Decisions ¶6632. See also, Amendment to *Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Sex*, §1604.11(a) n. 1, 45 FR 7476 sy 74677 (November 10, 1980).

(c) [Reserved]

(d) With respect to conduct between fellow employees, an employer is responsible for acts of harassment in the workplace on the basis of national origin, where the employer, its agents or supervisory employees, knows or should have known of the conduct, unless the employer can show that it took immediate and appropriate corrective action.

(e) An employer may also be responsible for the acts of non-employees with respect to harassment of employees in the workplace on the basis of national origin, where the employer, its agents or supervisory employees, knows or should have known of the conduct and fails to take immediate and appropriate corrective action. In reviewing these cases, the Commission will consider the extent of the employer's control and any other legal responsibility which the employer may have with respect to the conduct of such non-employees.

APPENDIX A TO §1606.8—BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Commission has rescinded §1606.8(c) of the Guidelines on National Origin Harassment, which set forth the standard of employer liability for harassment by supervisors. That section is no longer valid, in light of the Supreme Court decisions in *Burlington Industries, Inc.* v. *Ellerth,* 524 U.S. 742 (1998), and *Faragher* v. *City of Boca Raton,* 524 U.S. 775 (1998). The Commission has issued a policy document that examines the Faragher and Ellerth decisions and provides detailed guidance on the issue of vicarious liability for harassment by supervisors. EEOC Enforcement Guidance: Vicarious Employer Liability for Unlawful Harassment by Supervisors (6/18/99), EEOC Compliance Manual (BNA), N:4075 [Binder 3]; also available through EEOC's web site, at *www.eeoc.gov.*, or by calling the EEOC Publications Distribution Center, at 1–800–669–3362 (voice), 1–800–800–3302 (TTY).

[45 FR 85635, Dec. 29, 1980, as amended at 64 FR 58334, Oct. 29, 1999]

PART 1607—UNIFORM GUIDELINES ON EMPLOYEE SELECTION PROCEDURES (1978)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

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DEFINITIONS

1607.16 Definitions.

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1607.17 Policy statement on affirmative action (see section 13B).
1607.18 Citations.

AUTHORITY: Secs. 709 and 713, Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 265) as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 (Pub. L. 92–261); 42 U.S.C. 2000e–8, 2000e–12.

SOURCE: 43 FR 38295, 38312, Aug. 25, 1978, unless otherwise noted.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

§ 1607.1 Statement of purpose.

A. *Need for uniformity—Issuing agencies.* The Federal government's need for a uniform set of principles on the question of the use of tests and other selection procedures has long been recognized. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Civil Service Commission, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Justice jointly have adopted these uniform guidelines to meet that need, and to apply the same principles to the Federal Government as are applied to other employers.

B. *Purpose of guidelines.* These guidelines incorporate a single set of principles which are designed to assist employers, labor organizations, employment agencies, and licensing and certification boards to comply with requirements of Federal law prohibiting employment practices which discriminate on grounds of race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. They are designed to provide a framework for determining the proper use of tests and other selection procedures. These guidelines do not require a user to conduct validity studies of selection procedures where no adverse impact results. However, all users are encouraged to use selection procedures which are valid, especially users operating under merit principles.

C. *Relation to prior guidelines.* These guidelines are based upon and supersede previously issued guidelines on employee selection procedures. These guidelines have been built upon court decisions, the previously issued guidelines of the agencies, and the practical experience of the agencies, as well as the standards of the psychological profession. These guidelines are intended to be consistent with existing law.

§ 1607.2 Scope.

A. *Application of guidelines.* These guidelines will be applied by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in the enforcement of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 (hereinafter ''title VII''); by the Department of Labor, and the contract compliance agencies until the transfer of authority contemplated by the President's Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1978, in the administration and enforcement of Executive Order 11246, as amended by Executive Order 11375 (hereinafter ''Executive Order 11246''); by the Civil Service Commission and other Federal agencies subject to section 717 of title VII; by the Civil Service Commission in exercising its responsibilities toward State and local governments under section 208(b)(1) of the Intergovernmental-Personnel Act; by the Department of Justice in exercising its responsibilities under Federal law; by the Office of Revenue Sharing of the Department of the Treasury under the State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972, as amended; and by any other Federal agency which adopts them.

B. *Employment decisions.* These guidelines apply to tests and other selection procedures which are used as a basis for any employment decision. Employment decisions include but are not limited to hiring, promotion, demotion, membership (for example, in a labor organization), referral, retention, and licensing and certification, to the extent that licensing and certification may be covered by Federal equal employment opportunity law. Other selection decisions, such as selection for training or transfer, may also be considered employment decisions if they lead to any of the decisions listed above.

C. *Selection procedures.* These guidelines apply only to selection procedures which are used as a basis for making employment decisions. For example, the use of recruiting procedures designed to attract members of a particular race, sex, or ethnic group, which were previously denied employment opportunities or which are currently underutilized, may be necessary to bring an employer into compliance with Federal law, and is frequently an essential element of any effective affirmative action program; but recruitment practices are not considered by these guidelines to be selection procedures. Similarly, these guidelines do not pertain to the question of the lawfulness of a seniority system within the meaning of section 703(h), Executive Order 11246 or other provisions of Federal law or regulation, except to the extent that such systems utilize selection procedures to determine qualifications or abilities to perform the job. Nothing in these guidelines is intended or should be interpreted as discouraging the use of a selection procedure for the purpose of determining qualifications or for the purpose of selection on the basis of relative qualifications, if the selection procedure had been validated in accord with these guidelines for each such purpose for which it is to be used.

D. *Limitations.* These guidelines apply only to persons subject to title VII, Executive Order 11246, or other equal employment opportunity requirements of

Federal law. These guidelines do not apply to responsibilities under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended, not to discriminate on the basis of age, or under sections 501, 503, and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, not to discriminate on the basis of disability.

E. *Indian preference not affected.* These guidelines do not restrict any obligation imposed or right granted by Federal law to users to extend a preference in employment to Indians living on or near an Indian reservation in connection with employment opportunities on or near an Indian reservation.

[43 FR 38295, 38312, Aug. 25, 1978, as amended at 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009]

§ 1607.3 Discrimination defined: Relationship between use of selection procedures and discrimination.

A. *Procedure having adverse impact constitutes discrimination unless justified.* The use of any selection procedure which has an adverse impact on the hiring, promotion, or other employment or membership opportunities of members of any race, sex, or ethnic group will be considered to be discriminatory and inconsistent with these guidelines, unless the procedure has been validated in accordance with these guidelines, or the provisions of section 6 below are satisfied.

B. *Consideration of suitable alternative selection procedures.* Where two or more selection procedures are available which serve the user's legitimate interest in efficient and trustworthy workmanship, and which are substantially equally valid for a given purpose, the user should use the procedure which has been demonstrated to have the lesser adverse impact. Accordingly, whenever a validity study is called for by these guidelines, the user should include, as a part of the validity study, an investigation of suitable alternative selection procedures and suitable alternative methods of using the selection procedure which have as little adverse impact as possible, to determine the appropriateness of using or validating them in accord with these guidelines. If a user has made a reasonable effort to become aware of such alternative procedures and validity has been demonstrated in accord with these guidelines, the use of the test or other selection procedure may continue until such time as it should reasonably be reviewed for currency. Whenever the user is shown an alternative selection procedure with evidence of less adverse impact and substantial evidence of validity for the same job in similar circumstances, the user should investigate it to determine the appropriateness of using or validating it in accord with these guidelines. This subsection is not intended to preclude the combination of procedures into a significantly more valid procedure, if the use of such a combination has been shown to be in compliance with the guidelines.

§ 1607.4 Information on impact.

A. *Records concerning impact.* Each user should maintain and have available for inspection records or other information which will disclose the impact which its tests and other selection procedures have upon employment opportunities of persons by identifiable race, sex, or ethnic group as set forth in paragraph B of this section, in order to determine compliance with these guidelines. Where there are large numbers of applicants and procedures are administered frequently, such information may be retained on a sample basis, provided that the sample is appropriate in terms of the applicant population and adequate in size.

B. *Applicable race, sex, and ethnic groups for recordkeeping.* The records called for by this section are to be maintained by sex, and the following races and ethnic groups: Blacks (Negroes), American Indians (including Alaskan Natives), Asians (including Pacific Islanders), Hispanic (including persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish origin or culture regardless of race), whites (Caucasians) other than Hispanic, and totals. The race, sex, and ethnic classifications called for by this section are consistent with the Equal Employment Opportunity Standard Form 100, Employer Information Report EEO–1 series of reports. The user should adopt safeguards to insure that the records required by this

paragraph are used for appropriate purposes such as determining adverse impact, or (where required) for developing and monitoring affirmative action programs, and that such records are not used improperly. See sections 4E and 17(4), below.

C. *Evaluation of selection rates. The ''bottom line.''* If the information called for by sections 4A and B above shows that the total selection process for a job has an adverse impact, the individual components of the selection process should be evaluated for adverse impact. If this information shows that the total selection process does not have an adverse impact, the Federal enforcement agencies, in the exercise of their administrative and prosecutorial discretion, in usual circumstances, will not expect a user to evaluate the individual components for adverse impact, or to validate such individual components, and will not take enforcement action based upon adverse impact of any component of that process, including the separate parts of a multipart selection procedure or any separate procedure that is used as an alternative method of selection. However, in the following circumstances the Federal enforcement agencies will expect a user to evaluate the individual components for adverse impact and may, where appropriate, take enforcement action with respect to the individual components:

(1) Where the selection procedure is a significant factor in the continuation of patterns of assignments of incumbent employees caused by prior discriminatory employment practices, (2) where the weight of court decisions or administrative interpretations hold that a specific procedure (such as height or weight requirements or no-arrest records) is not job related in the same or similar circumstances. In unusual circumstances, other than those listed in (1) and (2) of this paragraph, the Federal enforcement agencies may request a user to evaluate the individual components for adverse impact and may, where appropriate, take enforcement action with respect to the individual component.

D. *Adverse impact and the ''four-fifths rule.''* A selection rate for any race, sex, or ethnic group which is less than four-fifths (⅘) (or eighty percent) of the rate for the group with the highest rate will generally be regarded by the Federal enforcement agencies as evidence of adverse impact, while a greater than four-fifths rate will generally not be regarded by Federal enforcement agencies as evidence of adverse impact. Smaller differences in selection rate may nevertheless constitute adverse impact, where they are significant in both statistical and practical terms or where a user's actions have discouraged applicants disproportionately on grounds of race, sex, or ethnic group. Greater differences in selection rate may not constitute adverse impact where the differences are based on small numbers and are not statistically significant, or where special recruiting or other programs cause the pool of minority or female candidates to be atypical of the normal pool of applicants from that group. Where the user's evidence concerning the impact of a selection procedure indicates adverse impact but is based upon numbers which are too small to be reliable, evidence concerning the impact of the procedure over a longer period of time and/or evidence concerning the impact which the selection procedure had when used in the same manner in similar circumstances elsewhere may be considered in determining adverse impact. Where the user has not maintained data on adverse impact as required by the documentation section of applicable guidelines, the Federal enforcement agencies may draw an inference of adverse impact of the selection process from the failure of the user to maintain such data, if the user has an underutilization of a group in the job category, as compared to the group's representation in the relevant labor market or, in the case of jobs filled from within, the applicable work force.

E. *Consideration of user's equal employment opportunity posture.* In carrying out their obligations, the Federal enforcement agencies will consider the general posture of the user with respect to equal employment opportunity for the job or group of jobs in question. Where a user has adopted an affirmative action program, the Federal enforcement agencies will consider the provisions of that program, including

the goals and timetables which the user has adopted and the progress which the user has made in carrying out that program and in meeting the goals and timetables. While such affirmative action programs may in design and execution be race, color, sex, or ethnic conscious, selection procedures under such programs should be based upon the ability or relative ability to do the work.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0017)

(Pub. L. 96–511, 94 Stat. 2812 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*))

[43 FR 38295, 38312, Aug. 25, 1978, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981]

§ 1607.5 General standards for validity studies.

A. *Acceptable types of validity studies.* For the purposes of satisfying these guidelines, users may rely upon criterion-related validity studies, content validity studies or construct validity studies, in accordance with the standards set forth in the technical standards of these guidelines, section 14 below. New strategies for showing the validity of selection procedures will be evaluated as they become accepted by the psychological profession.

B. *Criterion-related, content, and construct validity.* Evidence of the validity of a test or other selection procedure by a criterion-related validity study should consist of empirical data demonstrating that the selection procedure is predictive of or significantly correlated with important elements of job performance. See section 14B below. Evidence of the validity of a test or other selection procedure by a content validity study should consist of data showing that the content of the selection procedure is representative of important aspects of performance on the job for which the candidates are to be evaluated. See 14C below. Evidence of the validity of a test or other selection procedure through a construct validity study should consist of data showing that the procedure measures the degree to which candidates have identifiable characteristics which have been determined to be important in successful performance in the job for which the candidates are to be evaluated. See section 14D below.

C. *Guidelines are consistent with professional standards.* The provisions of these guidelines relating to validation of selection procedures are intended to be consistent with generally accepted professional standards for evaluating standardized tests and other selection procedures, such as those described in the Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests prepared by a joint committee of the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (American Psychological Association, Washington, DC, 1974) (hereinafter ''A.P.A. Standards'') and standard textbooks and journals in the field of personnel selection.

D. *Need for documentation of validity.* For any selection procedure which is part of a selection process which has an adverse impact and which selection procedure has an adverse impact, each user should maintain and have available such documentation as is described in section 15 below.

E. *Accuracy and standardization.* Validity studies should be carried out under conditions which assure insofar as possible the adequacy and accuracy of the research and the report. Selection procedures should be administered and scored under standardized conditions.

F. *Caution against selection on basis of knowledges, skills, or ability learned in brief orientation period.* In general, users should avoid making employment decisions on the basis of measures of knowledges, skills, or abilities which are normally learned in a brief orientation period, and which have an adverse impact.

G. *Method of use of selection procedures.* The evidence of both the validity and utility of a selection procedure should support the method the user chooses for operational use of the procedure, if that method of use has a greater adverse impact than another method of use. Evidence which may be sufficient to support the use of a selection procedure on a pass/fail (screening) basis may be insufficient to support the use of the same procedure on a ranking basis under these guidelines.

Thus, if a user decides to use a selection procedure on a ranking basis, and that method of use has a greater adverse impact than use on an appropriate pass/fail basis (see section 5H below), the user should have sufficient evidence of validity and utility to support the use on a ranking basis. See sections 3B, 14B (5) and (6), and 14C (8) and (9).

H. *Cutoff scores.* Where cutoff scores are used, they should normally be set so as to be reasonable and consistent with normal expectations of acceptable proficiency within the work force. Where applicants are ranked on the basis of properly validated selection procedures and those applicants scoring below a higher cutoff score than appropriate in light of such expectations have little or no chance of being selected for employment, the higher cutoff score may be appropriate, but the degree of adverse impact should be considered.

I. *Use of selection procedures for higher level jobs.* If job progression structures are so established that employees will probably, within a reasonable period of time and in a majority of cases, progress to a higher level, it may be considered that the applicants are being evaluated for a job or jobs at the higher level. However, where job progression is not so nearly automatic, or the time span is such that higher level jobs or employees' potential may be expected to change in significant ways, it should be considered that applicants are being evaluated for a job at or near the entry level. A ''reasonable period of time'' will vary for different jobs and employment situations but will seldom be more than 5 years. Use of selection procedures to evaluate applicants for a higher level job would not be appropriate:

(1) If the majority of those remaining employed do not progress to the higher level job;

(2) If there is a reason to doubt that the higher level job will continue to require essentially similar skills during the progression period; or

(3) If the selection procedures measure knowledges, skills, or abilities required for advancement which would be expected to develop principally from the training or experience on the job.

J. *Interim use of selection procedures.* Users may continue the use of a selection procedure which is not at the moment fully supported by the required evidence of validity, provided: (1) The user has available substantial evidence of validity, and (2) the user has in progress, when technically feasible, a study which is designed to produce the additional evidence required by these guidelines within a reasonable time. If such a study is not technically feasible, see section 6B. If the study does not demonstrate validity, this provision of these guidelines for interim use shall not constitute a defense in any action, nor shall it relieve the user of any obligations arising under Federal law.

K. *Review of validity studies for currency.* Whenever validity has been shown in accord with these guidelines for the use of a particular selection procedure for a job or group of jobs, additional studies need not be performed until such time as the validity study is subject to review as provided in section 3B above. There are no absolutes in the area of determining the currency of a validity study. All circumstances concerning the study, including the validation strategy used, and changes in the relevant labor market and the job should be considered in the determination of when a validity study is outdated.

§ 1607.6 Use of selection procedures which have not been validated.

A. *Use of alternate selection procedures to eliminate adverse impact.* A user may choose to utilize alternative selection procedures in order to eliminate adverse impact or as part of an affirmative action program. See section 13 below. Such alternative procedures should eliminate the adverse impact in the total selection process, should be lawful and should be as job related as possible.

B. *Where validity studies cannot or need not be performed.* There are circumstances in which a user cannot or need not utilize the validation techniques contemplated by these guidelines. In such circumstances, the user should utilize selection procedures which are as job related as possible and which will minimize or eliminate adverse impact, as set forth below.

(1) *Where informal or unscored procedures are used.* When an informal or unscored selection procedure which has an adverse impact is utilized, the user should eliminate the adverse impact, or modify the procedure to one which is a formal, scored or quantified measure or combination of measures and then validate the procedure in accord with these guidelines, or otherwise justify continued use of the procedure in accord with Federal law.

(2) *Where formal and scored procedures are used.* When a formal and scored selection procedure is used which has an adverse impact, the validation techniques contemplated by these guidelines usually should be followed if technically feasible. Where the user cannot or need not follow the validation techniques anticipated by these guidelines, the user should either modify the procedure to eliminate adverse impact or otherwise justify continued use of the procedure in accord with Federal law.

§ 1607.7 Use of other validity studies.

A. *Validity studies not conducted by the user.* Users may, under certain circumstances, support the use of selection procedures by validity studies conducted by other users or conducted by test publishers or distributors and described in test manuals. While publishers of selection procedures have a professional obligation to provide evidence of validity which meets generally accepted professional standards (see section 5C above), users are cautioned that they are responsible for compliance with these guidelines. Accordingly, users seeking to obtain selection procedures from publishers and distributors should be careful to determine that, in the event the user becomes subject to the validity requirements of these guidelines, the necessary information to support validity has been determined and will be made available to the user.

B. *Use of criterion-related validity evidence from other sources.* Criterion-related validity studies conducted by one test user, or described in test manuals and the professional literature, will be considered acceptable for use by another user when the following requirements are met:

(1) *Validity evidence.* Evidence from the available studies meeting the standards of section 14B below clearly demonstrates that the selection procedure is valid;

(2) *Job similarity.* The incumbents in the user's job and the incumbents in the job or group of jobs on which the validity study was conducted perform substantially the same major work behaviors, as shown by appropriate job analyses both on the job or group of jobs on which the validity study was performed and on the job for which the selection procedure is to be used; and

(3) *Fairness evidence.* The studies include a study of test fairness for each race, sex, and ethnic group which constitutes a significant factor in the borrowing user's relevant labor market for the job or jobs in question. If the studies under consideration satisfy paragraphs (1) and (2) of this paragraph B.,¼ above but do not contain an investigation of test fairness, and it is not technically feasible for the borrowing user to conduct an internal study of test fairness, the borrowing user may utilize the study until studies conducted elsewhere meeting the requirements of these guidelines show test unfairness, or until such time as it becomes technically feasible to conduct an internal study of test fairness and the results of that study can be acted upon. Users obtaining selection procedures from publishers should consider, as one factor in the decision to purchase a particular selection procedure, the availability of evidence concerning test fairness.

C. *Validity evidence from multiunit study.* if validity evidence from a study covering more than one unit within an organization statisfies the requirements of section 14B below, evidence of validity specific to each unit will not be required unless there are variables which are likely to affect validity significantly.

D. *Other significant variables.* If there are variables in the other studies which are likely to affect validity significantly, the user may not rely upon such studies, but will be expected either to conduct an internal validity study or to comply with section 6 above.

§ 1607.8 Cooperative studies.

A. *Encouragement of cooperative studies.* The agencies issuing these guidelines encourage employers, labor organizations, and employment agencies to cooperate in research, development, search for lawful alternatives, and validity studies in order to achieve procedures which are consistent with these guidelines.

B. *Standards for use of cooperative studies.* If validity evidence from a cooperative study satisfies the requirements of section 14 below, evidence of validity specific to each user will not be required unless there are variables in the user's situation which are likely to affect validity significantly.

§ 1607.9 No assumption of validity.

A. *Unacceptable substitutes for evidence of validity.* Under no circumstances will the general reputation of a test or other selection procedures, its author or its publisher, or casual reports of its validity be accepted in lieu of evidence of validity. Specifically ruled out are: assumptions of validity based on a procedure's name or descriptive labels; all forms of promotional literature; data bearing on the frequency of a procedure's usage; testimonial statements and credentials of sellers, users, or consultants; and other nonempirical or anecdotal accounts of selection practices or selection outcomes.

B. *Encouragement of professional supervision.* Professional supervision of selection activities is encouraged but is not a substitute for documented evidence of validity. The enforcement agencies will take into account the fact that a thorough job analysis was conducted and that careful development and use of a selection procedure in accordance with professional standards enhance the probability that the selection procedure is valid for the job.

§ 1607.10 Employment agencies and employment services.

A. *Where selection procedures are devised by agency.* An employment agency, including private employment agencies and State employment agencies, which agrees to a request by an employer or labor organization to device and utilize a selection procedure should follow the standards in these guidelines for determining adverse impact. If adverse impact exists the agency should comply with these guidelines. An employment agency is not relieved of its obligation herein because the user did not request such validation or has requested the use of some lesser standard of validation than is provided in these guidelines. The use of an employment agency does not relieve an employer or labor organization or other user of its responsibilities under Federal law to provide equal employment opportunity or its obligations as a user under these guidelines.

B. *Where selection procedures are devised elsewhere.* Where an employment agency or service is requested to administer a selection procedure which has been devised elsewhere and to make referrals pursuant to the results, the employment agency or service should maintain and have available evidence of the impact of the selection and referral procedures which it administers. If adverse impact results the agency or service should comply with these guidelines. If the agency or service seeks to comply with these guidelines by reliance upon validity studies or other data in the possession of the employer, it should obtain and have available such information.

§ 1607.11 Disparate treatment.

The principles of disparate or unequal treatment must be distinguished from the concepts of validation. A selection procedure—even though validated against job performance in accordance with these guidelines—cannot be imposed upon members of a race, sex, or ethnic group where other employees, applicants, or members have not been subjected to that standard. Disparate treatment occurs where members of a race, sex, or ethnic group have been denied the same employment, promotion, membership, or other employment opportunities as have been available to other employees or applicants. Those employees or applicants who have been denied equal treatment, because of prior discriminatory practices or policies, must at least be afforded the same opportunities as had existed for other employees or applicants during the period of discrimination. Thus, the persons who were in

the class of persons discriminated against during the period the user followed the discriminatory practices should be allowed the opportunity to qualify under less stringent selection procedures previously followed, unless the user demonstrates that the increased standards are required by business necessity. This section does not prohibit a user who has not previously followed merit standards from adopting merit standards which are in compliance with these guidelines; nor does it preclude a user who has previously used invalid or unvalidated selection procedures from developing and using procedures which are in accord with these guidelines.

§ 1607.12 Retesting of applicants.

Users should provide a reasonable opportunity for retesting and reconsideration. Where examinations are administered periodically with public notice, such reasonable opportunity exists, unless persons who have previously been tested are precluded from retesting. The user may however take reasonable steps to preserve the security of its procedures.

§ 1607.13 Affirmative action.

A. *Affirmative action obligations.* The use of selection procedures which have been validated pursuant to these guidelines does not relieve users of any obligations they may have to undertake affirmative action to assure equal employment opportunity. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to preclude the use of lawful selection procedures which assist in remedying the effects of prior discriminatory practices, or the achievement of affirmative action objectives.

B. *Encouragement of voluntary affirmative action programs.* These guidelines are also intended to encourage the adoption and implementation of voluntary affirmative action programs by users who have no obligation under Federal law to adopt them; but are not intended to impose any new obligations in that regard. The agencies issuing and endorsing these guidelines endorse for all private employers and reaffirm for all governmental employers the Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinating Council's ''Policy Statement on Affirmative Action Programs for State and Local Government Agencies'' (41 FR 38814, September 13, 1976). That policy statement is attached hereto as appendix, section 17.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

§ 1607.14 Technical standards for validity studies.

The following minimum standards, as applicable, should be met in conducting a validity study. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to preclude the development and use of other professionally acceptable techniques with respect to validation of selection procedures. Where it is not technically feasible for a user to conduct a validity study, the user has the obligation otherwise to comply with these guidelines. See sections 6 and 7 above.

A. *Validity studies should be based on review of information about the job.* Any validity study should be based upon a review of information about the job for which the selection procedure is to be used. The review should include a job analysis except as provided in section 14B(3) below with respect to criterion-related validity. Any method of job analysis may be used if it provides the information required for the specific validation strategy used.

B. *Technical standards for criterion-related validity studies*—(1) *Technical feasibility.* Users choosing to validate a selection procedure by a criterion-related validity strategy should determine whether it is technically feasible (as defined in section 16) to conduct such a study in the particular employment context. The determination of the number of persons necessary to permit the conduct of a meaningful criterion-related study should be made by the user on the basis of all relevant information concerning the selection procedure, the potential sample and the employment situation. Where appropriate, jobs with substantially the same major work behaviors may be grouped together for validity studies, in order to obtain an adequate sample. These guidelines do not require a user to hire or promote persons for the purpose of making it possible to conduct a criterion-related study.

(2) *Analysis of the job.* There should be a review of job information to determine measures of work behavior(s) or performance that are relevant to the job or group of jobs in question. These measures or criteria are relevant to the extent that they represent critical or important job duties, work behaviors or work outcomes as developed from the review of job information. The possibility of bias should be considered both in selection of the criterion measures and their application. In view of the possibility of bias in subjective evaluations, supervisory rating techniques and instructions to raters should be carefully developed. All criterion measures and the methods for gathering data need to be examined for freedom from factors which would unfairly alter scores of members of any group. The relevance of criteria and their freedom from bias are of particular concern when there are significant differences in measures of job performance for different groups.

(3) *Criterion measures.* Proper safeguards should be taken to insure that scores on selection procedures do not enter into any judgments of employee adequacy that are to be used as criterion measures. Whatever criteria are used should represent important or critical work behavior(s) or work outcomes. Certain criteria may be used without a full job analysis if the user can show the importance of the criteria to the particular employment context. These criteria include but are not limited to production rate, error rate, tardiness, absenteeism, and length of service. A standardized rating of overall work performance may be used where a study of the job shows that it is an appropriate criterion. Where performance in training is used as a criterion, success in training should be properly measured and the relevance of the training should be shown either through a comparsion of the content of the training program with the critical or important work behavior(s) of the job(s), or through a demonstration of the relationship between measures of performance in training and measures of job performance. Measures of relative success in training include but are not limited to instructor evaluations, performance samples, or tests. Criterion measures consisting of paper and pencil tests will be closely reviewed for job relevance.

(4) *Representativeness of the sample.* Whether the study is predictive or concurrent, the sample subjects should insofar as feasible be representative of the candidates normally available in the relevant labor market for the job or group of jobs in question, and should insofar as feasible include the races, sexes, and ethnic groups normally available in the relevant job market. In determining the representativeness of the sample in a concurrent validity study, the user should take into account the extent to which the specific knowledges or skills which are the primary focus of the test are those which employees learn on the job.

Where samples are combined or compared, attention should be given to see that such samples are comparable in terms of the actual job they perform, the length of time on the job where time on the job is likely to affect performance, and other relevant factors likely to affect validity differences; or that these factors are included in the design of the study and their effects identified.

(5) *Statistical relationships.* The degree of relationship between selection procedure scores and criterion measures should be examined and computed, using professionally acceptable statistical procedures. Generally, a selection procedure is considered related to the criterion, for the purposes of these guidelines, when the relationship between performance on the procedure and performance on the criterion measure is statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance, which means that it is sufficiently high as to have a probability of no more than one (1) in twenty (20) to have occurred by chance. Absence of a statistically significant relationship between a selection procedure and job performance should not necessarily discourage other investigations of the validity of that selection procedure.

(6) *Operational use of selection procedures.* Users should evaluate each selection procedure to assure that it is appropriate for operational use, including establishment of cutoff scores or rank ordering. Generally, if other factors

reman the same, the greater the magnitude of the relationship (e.g., correlation coefficent) between performance on a selection procedure and one or more criteria of performance on the job, and the greater the importance and number of aspects of job performance covered by the criteria, the more likely it is that the procedure will be appropriate for use. Reliance upon a selection procedure which is significantly related to a criterion measure, but which is based upon a study involving a large number of subjects and has a low correlation coefficient will be subject to close review if it has a large adverse impact. Sole reliance upon a single selection instrument which is related to only one of many job duties or aspects of job performance will also be subject to close review. The appropriateness of a selection procedure is best evaluated in each particular situation and there are no minimum correlation coefficients applicable to all employment situations. In determining whether a selection procedure is appropriate for operational use the following considerations should also be taken into account: The degree of adverse impact of the procedure, the availability of other selection procedures of greater or substantially equal validity.

(7) *Overstatement of validity findings.* Users should avoid reliance upon techniques which tend to overestimate validity findings as a result of capitalization on chance unless an appropriate safeguard is taken. Reliance upon a few selection procedures or criteria of successful job performance when many selection procedures or criteria of performance have been studied, or the use of optimal statistical weights for selection procedures computed in one sample, are techniques which tend to inflate validity estimates as a result of chance. Use of a large sample is one safeguard: cross-validation is another.

(8) *Fairness.* This section generally calls for studies of unfairness where technically feasible. The concept of fairness or unfairness of selection procedures is a developing concept. In addition, fairness studies generally require substantial numbers of employees in the job or group of jobs being studied. For these reasons, the Federal enforcement agencies recognize that the obligation to conduct studies of fairness imposed by the guidelines generally will be upon users or groups of users with a large number of persons in a job class, or test developers; and that small users utilizing their own selection procedures will generally not be obligated to conduct such studies because it will be technically infeasible for them to do so.

(a) *Unfairness defined.* When members of one race, sex, or ethnic group characteristically obtain lower scores on a selection procedure than members of another group, and the differences in scores are not reflected in differences in a measure of job performance, use of the selection procedure may unfairly deny opportunities to members of the group that obtains the lower scores.

(b) *Investigation of fairness.* Where a selection procedure results in an adverse impact on a race, sex, or ethnic group identified in accordance with the classifications set forth in section 4 above and that group is a significant factor in the relevant labor market, the user generally should investigate the possible existence of unfairness for that group if it is technically feasible to do so. The greater the severity of the adverse impact on a group, the greater the need to investigate the possible existence of unfairness. Where the weight of evidence from other studies shows that the selection procedure predicts fairly for the group in question and for the same or similar jobs, such evidence may be relied on in connection with the selection procedure at issue.

(c) *General considerations in fairness investigations.* Users conducting a study of fairness should review the A.P.A. Standards regarding investigation of possible bias in testing. An investigation of fairness of a selection procedure depends on both evidence of validity and the manner in which the selection procedure is to be used in a particular employment context. Fairness of a selection procedure cannot necessarily be specified in advance without investigating these factors. Investigation of fairness of a selection procedure in samples where the range of scores on selection procedures or criterion measures is severely restricted for any subgroup sample (as compared to other

subgroup samples) may produce misleading evidence of unfairness. That factor should accordingly be taken into account in conducting such studies and before reliance is placed on the results.

(d) *When unfairness is shown.* If unfairness is demonstrated through a showing that members of a particular group perform better or poorer on the job than their scores on the selection procedure would indicate through comparison with how members of other groups perform, the user may either revise or replace the selection instrument in accordance with these guidelines, or may continue to use the selection instrument operationally with appropriate revisions in its use to assure compatibility between the probability of successful job performance and the probability of being selected.

(e) *Technical feasibility of fairness studies.* In addition to the general conditions needed for technical feasibility for the conduct of a criterion-related study (see section 16, below) an investigation of fairness requires the following:

(i) An adequate sample of persons in each group available for the study to achieve findings of statistical significance. Guidelines do not require a user to hire or promote persons on the basis of group classifications for the purpose of making it possible to conduct a study of fairness; but the user has the obligation otherwise to comply with these guidelines.

(ii) The samples for each group should be comparable in terms of the actual job they perform, length of time on the job where time on the job is likely to affect performance, and other relevant factors likely to affect validity differences; or such factors should be included in the design of the study and their effects identified.

(f) *Continued use of selection procedures when fairness studies not feasible.* If a study of fairness should otherwise be performed, but is not technically feasible, a selection procedure may be used which has otherwise met the validity standards of these guidelines, unless the technical infeasibility resulted from discriminatory employment practices which are demonstrated by facts other than past failure to conform with requirements for validation of selection procedures. However, when it becomes technically feasible for the user to perform a study of fairness and such a study is otherwise called for, the user should conduct the study of fairness.

C. *Technical standards for content validity studies*—(1) *Appropriateness of content validity studies.* Users choosing to validate a selection procedure by a content validity strategy should determine whether it is appropriate to conduct such a study in the particular employment context. A selection procedure can be supported by a content validity strategy to the extent that it is a representative sample of the content of the job. Selection procedures which purport to measure knowledges, skills, or abilities may in certain circumstances be justified by content validity, although they may not be representative samples, if the knowledge, skill, or ability measured by the selection procedure can be operationally defined as provided in section 14C(4) below, and if that knowledge, skill, or ability is a necessary prerequisite to successful job performance.

A selection procedure based upon inferences about mental processes cannot be supported solely or primarily on the basis of content validity. Thus, a content strategy is not appropriate for demonstrating the validity of selection procedures which purport to measure traits or constructs, such as intelligence, aptitude, personality, commonsense, judgment, leadership, and spatial ability. Content validity is also not an appropriate strategy when the selection procedure involves knowledges, skills, or abilities which an employee will be expected to learn on the job.

(2) *Job analysis for content validity.* There should be a job analysis which includes an analysis of the important work behavior(s) required for successful performance and their relative importance and, if the behavior results in work product(s), an analysis of the work product(s). Any job analysis should focus on the work behavior(s) and the tasks associated with them. If work behavior(s) are not observable, the job analysis should identify and analyze those aspects of the behavior(s) that can be observed and the observed work products. The work behavior(s)

selected for measurement should be critical work behavior(s) and/or important work behavior(s) constituting most of the job.

(3) *Development of selection procedures.* A selection procedure designed to measure the work behavior may be developed specifically from the job and job analysis in question, or may have been previously developed by the user, or by other users or by a test publisher.

(4) *Standards for demonstrating content validity.* To demonstrate the content validity of a selection procedure, a user should show that the behavior(s) demonstrated in the selection procedure are a representative sample of the behavior(s) of the job in question or that the selection procedure provides a representative sample of the work product of the job. In the case of a selection procedure measuring a knowledge, skill, or ability, the knowledge, skill, or ability being measured should be operationally defined. In the case of a selection procedure measuring a knowledge, the knowledge being measured should be operationally defined as that body of learned information which is used in and is a necessary prerequisite for observable aspects of work behavior of the job. In the case of skills or abilities, the skill or ability being measured should be operationally defined in terms of observable aspects of work behavior of the job. For any selection procedure measuring a knowledge, skill, or ability the user should show that (a) the selection procedure measures and is a representative sample of that knowledge, skill, or ability; and (b) that knowledge, skill, or ability is used in and is a necessary prerequisite to performance of critical or important work behavior(s). In addition, to be content valid, a selection procedure measuring a skill or ability should either closely approximate an observable work behavior, or its product should closely approximate an observable work product. If a test purports to sample a work behavior or to provide a sample of a work product, the manner and setting of the selection procedure and its level and complexity should closely approximate the work situation. The closer the content and the context of the selection procedure are to work samples or work behaviors, the stronger is the basis for showing content validity. As the content of the selection procedure less resembles a work behavior, or the setting and manner of the administration of the selection procedure less resemble the work situation, or the result less resembles a work product, the less likely the selection procedure is to be content valid, and the greater the need for other evidence of validity.

(5) *Reliability.* The reliability of selection procedures justified on the basis of content validity should be a matter of concern to the user. Whenever it is feasible, appropriate statistical estimates should be made of the reliability of the selection procedure.

(6) *Prior training or experience.* A requirement for or evaluation of specific prior training or experience based on content validity, including a specification of level or amount of training or experience, should be justified on the basis of the relationship between the content of the training or experience and the content of the job for which the training or experience is to be required or evaluated. The critical consideration is the resemblance between the specific behaviors, products, knowledges, skills, or abilities in the experience or training and the specific behaviors, products, knowledges, skills, or abilities required on the job, whether or not there is close resemblance between the experience or training as a whole and the job as a whole.

(7) *Content validity of training success.* Where a measure of success in a training program is used as a selection procedure and the content of a training program is justified on the basis of content validity, the use should be justified on the relationship between the content of the training program and the content of the job.

(8) *Operational use.* A selection procedure which is supported on the basis of content validity may be used for a job if it represents a critical work behavior (i.e., a behavior which is necessary for performance of the job) or work behaviors which constitute most of the important parts of the job.

(9) *Ranking based on content validity studies.* If a user can show, by a job analysis or otherwise, that a higher

score on a content valid selection procedure is likely to result in better job performance, the results may be used to rank persons who score above minimum levels. Where a selection procedure supported solely or primarily by content validity is used to rank job candidates, the selection procedure should measure those aspects of performance which differentiate among levels of job performance.

D. *Technical standards for construct validity studies*—(1) *Appropriateness of construct validity studies.* Construct validity is a more complex strategy than either criterion-related or content validity. Construct validation is a relatively new and developing procedure in the employment field, and there is at present a lack of substantial literature extending the concept to employment practices. The user should be aware that the effort to obtain sufficient empirical support for construct validity is both an extensive and arduous effort involving a series of research studies, which include criterion related validity studies and which may include content validity studies. Users choosing to justify use of a selection procedure by this strategy should therefore take particular care to assure that the validity study meets the standards set forth below.

(2) *Job analysis for construct validity studies.* There should be a job analysis. This job analysis should show the work behavior(s) required for successful performance of the job, or the groups of jobs being studied, the critical or important work behavior(s) in the job or group of jobs being studied, and an identification of the construct(s) believed to underlie successful performance of these critical or important work behaviors in the job or jobs in question. Each construct should be named and defined, so as to distinguish it from other constructs. If a group of jobs is being studied the jobs should have in common one or more critical or important work behav- iors at a comparable level of complexity.

(3) *Relationship to the job.* A selection procedure should then be identified or developed which measures the construct identified in accord with subparagraph (2) above. The user should show by empirical evidence that the selection procedure is validly related to the construct and that the construct is validly related to the performance of critical or important work behavior(s). The relationship between the construct as measured by the selection procedure and the related work behavior(s) should be supported by empirical evidence from one or more criterion-related studies involving the job or jobs in question which satisfy the provisions of section 14B above.

(4) *Use of construct validity study without new criterion-related evidence*—(a) *Standards for use.* Until such time as professional literature provides more guidance on the use of construct validity in employment situations, the Federal agencies will accept a claim of construct validity without a criterion-related study which satisfies section 14B above only when the selection procedure has been used elsewhere in a situation in which a criterion-related study has been conducted and the use of a criterion-related validity study in this context meets the standards for transportability of criterion-related validity studies as set forth above in section 7. However, if a study pertains to a number of jobs having common critical or important work behaviors at a comparable level of complexity, and the evidence satisfies subparagraphs 14B (2) and (3) above for those jobs with criterion-related validity evidence for those jobs, the selection procedure may be used for all the jobs to which the study pertains. If construct validity is to be generalized to other jobs or groups of jobs not in the group studied, the Federal enforcement agencies will expect at a minimum additional empirical research evidence meeting the standards of subparagraphs section 14B (2) and (3) above for the additional jobs or groups of jobs.

(b) *Determination of common work behaviors.* In determining whether two or more jobs have one or more work behavior(s) in common, the user should compare the observed work behavior(s) in each of the jobs and should compare the observed work product(s) in each of the jobs. If neither the observed work behavior(s) in each of the jobs nor the observed work product(s) in each of the jobs are the same, the Federal enforcement agencies will presume that the

work behavior(s) in each job are different. If the work behaviors are not observable, then evidence of similarity of work products and any other relevant research evidence will be considered in determining whether the work behavior(s) in the two jobs are the same.

DOCUMENTATION OF IMPACT AND VALIDITY EVIDENCE

§ 1607.15 Documentation of impact and validity evidence.

A. *Required information.* Users of selection procedures other than those users complying with section 15A(1) below should maintain and have available for each job information on adverse impact of the selection process for that job and, where it is determined a selection process has an adverse impact, evidence of validity as set forth below.

(1) *Simplified recordkeeping for users with less than 100 employees.* In order to minimize recordkeeping burdens on employers who employ one hundred (100) or fewer employees, and other users not required to file EEO–1, *et seq.*, reports, such users may satisfy the requirements of this section 15 if they maintain and have available records showing, for each year:

(a) The number of persons hired, promoted, and terminated for each job, by sex, and where appropriate by race and national origin;

(b) The number of applicants for hire and promotion by sex and where appropriate by race and national origin; and

(c) The selection procedures utilized (either standardized or not standardized).

These records should be maintained for each race or national origin group (see section 4 above) constituting more than two percent (2%) of the labor force in the relevant labor area. However, it is not necessary to maintain records by race and/or national origin (see §4 above) if one race or national origin group in the relevant labor area constitutes more than ninety-eight percent (98%) of the labor force in the area. If the user has reason to believe that a selection procedure has an adverse impact, the user should maintain any available evidence of validity for that procedure (see sections 7A and 8).

(2) *Information on impact*—(a) *Collection of information on impact.* Users of selection procedures other than those complying with section 15A(1) above should maintain and have available for each job records or other information showing whether the total selection process for that job has an adverse impact on any of the groups for which records are called for by sections 4B above. Adverse impact determinations should be made at least annually for each such group which constitutes at least 2 percent of the labor force in the relevant labor area or 2 percent of the applicable workforce. Where a total selection process for a job has an adverse impact, the user should maintain and have available records or other information showing which components have an adverse impact. Where the total selection process for a job does not have an adverse impact, information need not be maintained for individual components except in circumstances set forth in subsection 15A(2)(b) below. If the determination of adverse impact is made using a procedure other than the ''four-fifths rule,'' as defined in the first sentence of section 4D above, a justification, consistent with section 4D above, for the procedure used to determine adverse impact should be available.

(b) *When adverse impact has been eliminated in the total selection process.* Whenever the total selection process for a particular job has had an adverse impact, as defined in section 4 above, in any year, but no longer has an adverse impact, the user should maintain and have available the information on individual components of the selection process required in the preceding paragraph for the period in which there was adverse impact. In addition, the user should continue to collect such information for at least two (2) years after the adverse impact has been eliminated.

(c) *When data insufficient to determine impact.* Where there has been an insufficient number of selections to determine whether there is an adverse impact of the total selection process for a particular job, the user should continue to collect, maintain and have

available the information on individual components of the selection process required in section 15(A)(2)(a) above until the information is sufficient to determine that the overall selection process does not have an adverse impact as defined in section 4 above, or until the job has changed substantially.

(3) *Documentation of validity evidence*—(a) *Types of evidence.* Where a total selection process has an adverse impact (see section 4 above) the user should maintain and have available for each component of that process which has an adverse impact, one or more of the following types of documentation evidence:

(i) Documentation evidence showing criterion-related validity of the selection procedure (see section 15B, below).

(ii) Documentation evidence showing content validity of the selection procedure (see section 15C, below).

(iii) Documentation evidence showing construct validity of the selection procedure (see section 15D, below).

(iv) Documentation evidence from other studies showing validity of the selection procedure in the user's facility (see section 15E, below).

(v) Documentation evidence showing why a validity study cannot or need not be performed and why continued use of the procedure is consistent with Federal law.

(b) *Form of report.* This evidence should be compiled in a reasonably complete and organized manner to permit direct evaluation of the validity of the selection procedure. Previously written employer or consultant reports of validity, or reports describing validity studies completed before the issuance of these guidelines are acceptable if they are complete in regard to the documentation requirements contained in this section, or if they satisfied requirements of guidelines which were in effect when the validity study was completed. If they are not complete, the required additional documentation should be appended. If necessary information is not available the report of the validity study may still be used as documentation, but its adequacy will be evaluated in terms of compliance with the requirements of these guidelines.

(c) *Completeness.* In the event that evidence of validity is reviewed by an enforcement agency, the validation reports completed after the effective date of these guidelines are expected to contain the information set forth below. Evidence denoted by use of the word ''(Essential)'' is considered critical. If information denoted essential is not included, the report will be considered incomplete unless the user affirmatively demonstrates either its unavailability due to circumstances beyond the user's control or special circumstances of the user's study which make the information irrelevant. Evidence not so denoted is desirable but its absence will not be a basis for considering a report incomplete. The user should maintain and have available the information called for under the heading ''Source Data'' in sections 15B(11) and 15D(11). While it is a necessary part of the study, it need not be submitted with the report. All statistical results should be organized and presented in tabular or graphic form to the extent feasible.

B. *Criterion-related validity studies.* Reports of criterion-related validity for a selection procedure should include the following information:

(1) *User(s), location(s), and date(s) of study.* Dates and location(s) of the job analysis or review of job information, the date(s) and location(s) of the administration of the selection procedures and collection of criterion data, and the time between collection of data on selection procedures and criterion measures should be provided (Essential). If the study was conducted at several locations, the address of each location, including city and State, should be shown.

(2) *Problem and setting.* An explicit definition of the purpose(s) of the study and the circumstances in which the study was conducted should be provided. A description of existing selection procedures and cutoff scores, if any, should be provided.

(3) *Job anlysis or review of job information.* A description of the procedure used to analyze the job or group of jobs, or to review the job information should be provided (Essential). Where a review of job information results in criteria which may be used without a

full job analysis (see section 14B(3)), the basis for the selection of these criteria should be reported (Essential). Where a job analysis is required a complete description of the work behavior(s) or work outcome(s), and measures of their criticality or importance should be provided (Essential). The report should describe the basis on which the behavior(s) or outcome(s) were determined to be critical or important, such as the proportion of time spent on the respective behaviors, their level of difficulty, their frequency of performance, the consequences of error, or other appropriate factors (Essential). Where two or more jobs are grouped for a validity study, the information called for in this subsection should be provided for each of the jobs, and the justification for the grouping (see section 14B(1)) should be provided (Essential).

(4) *Job titles and codes.* It is desirable to provide the user's job title(s) for the job(s) in question and the corresponding job title(s) and code(s) from U.S. Employment Service's Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

(5) *Criterion measures.* The bases for the selection of the criterion measures should be provided, together with references to the evidence considered in making the selection of criterion measures (essential). A full description of all criteria on which data were collected and means by which they were observed, recorded, evaluated, and quantified, should be provided (essential). If rating techniques are used as criterion measures, the appraisal form(s) and instructions to the rater(s) should be included as part of the validation evidence, or should be explicitly described and available (essential). All steps taken to insure that criterion measures are free from factors which would unfairly alter the scores of members of any group should be described (essential).

(6) *Sample description.* A description of how the research sample was identified and selected should be included (essential). The race, sex, and ethnic composition of the sample, including those groups set forth in section 4A above, should be described (essential). This description should include the size of each subgroup (essential). A description of how the research sample compares with the relevant labor market or work force, the method by which the relevant labor market or work force was defined, and a discussion of the likely effects on validity of differences between the sample and the relevant labor market or work force, are also desirable. Descriptions of educational levels, length of service, and age are also desirable.

(7) *Description of selection procedures.* Any measure, combination of measures, or procedure studied should be completely and explicitly described or attached (essential). If commercially available selection procedures are studied, they should be described by title, form, and publisher (essential). Reports of reliability estimates and how they were established are desirable.

(8) *Techniques and results.* Methods used in analyzing data should be described (essential). Measures of central tendency (e.g., means) and measures of dispersion (e.g., standard deviations and ranges) for all selection procedures and all criteria should be reported for each race, sex, and ethnic group which constitutes a significant factor in the relevant labor market (essential). The magnitude and direction of all relationships between selection procedures and criterion measures investigated should be reported for each relevant race, sex, and ethnic group and for the total group (essential). Where groups are too small to obtain reliable evidence of the magnitude of the relationship, need not be reported separately. Statements regarding the statistical significance of results should be made (essential). Any statistical adjustments, such as for less then perfect reliability or for restriction of score range in the selection procedure or criterion should be described and explained; and uncorrected correlation coefficients should also be shown (essential). Where the statistical technique categorizes continuous data, such as biserial correlation and the phi coefficient, the categories and the bases on which they were determined should be described and explained (essential). Studies of test fairness should be included where called for by the requirements of section 14B(8) (essential). These studies should include the

rationale by which a selection procedure was determined to be fair to the group(s) in question. Where test fairness or unfairness has been demonstrated on the basis of other studies, a bibliography of the relevant studies should be included (essential). If the bibliography includes unpublished studies, copies of these studies, or adequate abstracts or summaries, should be attached (essential). Where revisions have been made in a selection procedure to assure compatability between successful job performance and the probability of being selected, the studies underlying such revisions should be included (essential). All statistical results should be organized and presented by relevant race, sex, and ethnic group (essential).

(9) *Alternative procedures investigated.* The selection procedures investigated and available evidence of their impact should be identified (essential). The scope, method, and findings of the investigation, and the conclusions reached in light of the findings, should be fully described (essential).

(10) *Uses and applications.* The methods considered for use of the selection procedure (e.g., as a screening device with a cutoff score, for grouping or ranking, or combined with other procedures in a battery) and available evidence of their impact should be described (essential). This description should include the rationale for choosing the method for operational use, and the evidence of the validity and utility of the procedure as it is to be used (essential). The purpose for which the procedure is to be used (e.g., hiring, transfer, promotion) should be described (essential). If weights are assigned to different parts of the selection procedure, these weights and the validity of the weighted composite should be reported (essential). If the selection procedure is used with a cutoff score, the user should describe the way in which normal expectations of proficiency within the work force were determined and the way in which the cutoff score was determined (essential).

(11) *Source data.* Each user should maintain records showing all pertinent information about individual sample members and raters where they are used, in studies involving the validation of selection procedures. These records should be made available upon request of a compliance agency. In the case of individual sample members these data should include scores on the selection procedure(s), scores on criterion measures, age, sex, race, or ethnic group status, and experience on the specific job on which the validation study was conducted, and may also include such things as education, training, and prior job experience, but should not include names and social security numbers. Records should be maintained which show the ratings given to each sample member by each rater.

(12) *Contact person.* The name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person who may be contacted for further information about the validity study should be provided (essential).

(13) *Accuracy and completeness.* The report should describe the steps taken to assure the accuracy and completeness of the collection, analysis, and report of data and results.

C. *Content validity studies.* Reports of content validity for a selection procedure should include the following information:

(1) *User(s), location(s) and date(s) of study.* Dates and location(s) of the job analysis should be shown (essential).

(2) *Problem and setting.* An explicit definition of the purpose(s) of the study and the circumstances in which the study was conducted should be provided. A description of existing selection procedures and cutoff scores, if any, should be provided.

(3) *Job analysis—Content of the job.* A description of the method used to analyze the job should be provided (essential). The work behavior(s), the associated tasks, and, if the behavior results in a work product, the work products should be completely described (essential). Measures of criticality and/or importance of the work behavior(s) and the method of determining these measures should be provided (essential). Where the job analysis also identified the knowledges, skills, and abilities used in work behavior(s), an operational definition for each knowledge in terms of a body of learned information and for each skill and ability in

terms of observable behaviors and outcomes, and the relationship between each knowledge, skill, or ability and each work behavior, as well as the method used to determine this relationship, should be provided (essential). The work situation should be described, including the setting in which work behavior(s) are performed, and where appropriate, the manner in which knowledges, skills, or abilities are used, and the complexity and difficulty of the knowledge, skill, or ability as used in the work behavior(s).

(4) *Selection procedure and its content.* Selection procedures, including those constructed by or for the user, specific training requirements, composites of selection procedures, and any other procedure supported by content validity, should be completely and explicitly described or attached (essential). If commercially available selection procedures are used, they should be described by title, form, and publisher (essential). The behaviors measured or sampled by the selection procedure should be explicitly described (essential). Where the selection procedure purports to measure a knowledge, skill, or ability, evidence that the selection procedure measures and is a representative sample of the knowledge, skill, or ability should be provided (essential).

(5) *Relationship between the selection procedure and the job.* The evidence demonstrating that the selection procedure is a representative work sample, a representative sample of the work behavior(s), or a representative sample of a knowledge, skill, or ability as used as a part of a work behavior and necessary for that behavior should be provided (essential). The user should identify the work behavior(s) which each item or part of the selection procedure is intended to sample or measure (essential). Where the selection procedure purports to sample a work behavior or to provide a sample of a work product, a comparison should be provided of the manner, setting, and the level of complexity of the selection procedure with those of the work situation (essential). If any steps were taken to reduce adverse impact on a race, sex, or ethnic group in the content of the procedure or in its administration, these steps should be described. Establishment of time limits, if any, and how these limits are related to the speed with which duties must be performed on the job, should be explained. Measures of central tend- ency (e.g., means) and measures of dispersion (e.g., standard deviations) and estimates of realibility should be reported for all selection procedures if available. Such reports should be made for relevant race, sex, and ethnic subgroups, at least on a statistically reliable sample basis.

(6) *Alternative procedures investigated.* The alternative selection procedures investigated and available evidence of their impact should be identified (essential). The scope, method, and findings of the investigation, and the conclusions reached in light of the findings, should be fully described (essential).

(7) *Uses and applications.* The methods considered for use of the selection procedure (e.g., as a screening device with a cutoff score, for grouping or ranking, or combined with other procedures in a battery) and available evidence of their impact should be described (essential). This description should include the rationale for choosing the method for operational use, and the evidence of the validity and utility of the procedure as it is to be used (essential). The purpose for which the procedure is to be used (e.g., hiring, transfer, promotion) should be described (essential). If the selection procedure is used with a cutoff score, the user should describe the way in which normal expectations of proficiency within the work force were determined and the way in which the cutoff score was determined (essential). In addition, if the selection procedure is to be used for ranking, the user should specify the evidence showing that a higher score on the selection procedure is likely to result in better job performance.

(8) *Contact person.* The name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person who may be contacted for further information about the validity study should be provided (essential).

(9) *Accuracy and completeness.* The report should describe the steps taken to assure the accuracy and completeness of the collection, analysis, and report of data and results.

D. *Construct validity studies.* Reports of construct validity for a selection procedure should include the following information:

(1) *User(s), location(s), and date(s) of study.* Date(s) and location(s) of the job analysis and the gathering of other evidence called for by these guidelines should be provided (essential).

(2) *Problem and setting.* An explicit definition of the purpose(s) of the study and the circumstances in which the study was conducted should be provided. A description of existing selection procedures and cutoff scores, if any, should be provided.

(3) *Construct definition.* A clear definition of the construct(s) which are believed to underlie successful performance of the critical or important work behavior(s) should be provided (essential). This definition should include the levels of construct performance relevant to the job(s) for which the selection procedure is to be used (essential). There should be a summary of the position of the construct in the psychological literature, or in the absence of such a position, a description of the way in which the definition and measurement of the construct was developed and the psychological theory underlying it (essential). Any quantitative data which identify or define the job constructs, such as factor analyses, should be provided (essential).

(4) *Job analysis.* A description of the method used to analyze the job should be provided (essential). A complete description of the work behavior(s) and, to the extent appropriate, work outcomes and measures of their criticality and/or importance should be provided (essential). The report should also describe the basis on which the behavior(s) or outcomes were determined to be important, such as their level of difficulty, their frequency of performance, the consequences of error or other appropriate factors (essential). Where jobs are grouped or compared for the purposes of generalizing validity evidence, the work behavior(s) and work product(s) for each of the jobs should be described, and conclusions concerning the similarity of the jobs in terms of observable work behaviors or work products should be made (essential).

(5) *Job titles and codes.* It is desirable to provide the selection procedure user's job title(s) for the job(s) in question and the corresponding job title(s) and code(s) from the United States Employment Service's dictionary of occupational titles.

(6) *Selection procedure.* The selection procedure used as a measure of the construct should be completely and explicitly described or attached (essential). If commercially available selection procedures are used, they should be identified by title, form and publisher (essential). The research evidence of the relationship between the selection procedure and the construct, such as factor structure, should be included (essential). Measures of central tendency, variability and reliability of the selection procedure should be provided (essential). Whenever feasible, these measures should be provided separately for each relevant race, sex and ethnic group.

(7) *Relationship to job performance.* The criterion-related study(ies) and other empirical evidence of the relationship between the construct measured by the selection procedure and the related work behavior(s) for the job or jobs in question should be provided (essential). Documentation of the criterion-related study(ies) should satisfy the provisions of section 15B above or section 15E(1) below, except for studies conducted prior to the effective date of these guidelines (essential). Where a study pertains to a group of jobs, and, on the basis of the study, validity is asserted for a job in the group, the observed work behaviors and the observed work products for each of the jobs should be described (essential). Any other evidence used in determining whether the work behavior(s) in each of the jobs is the same should be fully described (essential).

(8) *Alternative procedures investigated.* The alternative selection procedures investigated and available evidence of their impact should be identified (essential). The scope, method, and findings of the investigation, and the conclusions reached in light of the findings should be fully described (essential).

(9) *Uses and applications.* The methods considered for use of the selection procedure (e.g., as a screening device with

a cutoff score, for grouping or ranking, or combined with other procedures in a battery) and available evidence of their impact should be described (essential). This description should include the rationale for choosing the method for operational use, and the evidence of the validity and utility of the procedure as it is to be used (essential). The purpose for which the procedure is to be used (e.g., hiring, transfer, promotion) should be described (essential). If weights are assigned to different parts of the selection procedure, these weights and the validity of the weighted composite should be reported (essential). If the selection procedure is used with a cutoff score, the user should describe the way in which normal expectations of proficiency within the work force were determined and the way in which the cutoff score was determined (essential).

(10) *Accuracy and completeness.* The report should describe the steps taken to assure the accuracy and completeness of the collection, analysis, and report of data and results.

(11) *Source data.* Each user should maintain records showing all pertinent information relating to its study of construct validity.

(12) *Contact person.* The name, mailing address, and telephone number of the individual who may be contacted for further information about the validity study should be provided (essential).

E. *Evidence of validity from other studies.* When validity of a selection procedure is supported by studies not done by the user, the evidence from the original study or studies should be compiled in a manner similar to that required in the appropriate section of this section 15 above. In addition, the following evidence should be supplied:

(1) *Evidence from criterion-related validity studies*—a. *Job information.* A description of the important job behavior(s) of the user's job and the basis on which the behaviors were determined to be important should be provided (essential). A full description of the basis for determining that these important work behaviors are the same as those of the job in the original study (or studies) should be provided (essential).

b. *Relevance of criteria.* A full description of the basis on which the criteria used in the original studies are determined to be relevant for the user should be provided (essential).

c. *Other variables.* The similarity of important applicant pool or sample characteristics reported in the original studies to those of the user should be described (essential). A description of the comparison between the race, sex and ethnic composition of the user's relevant labor market and the sample in the original validity studies should be provided (essential).

d. *Use of the selection procedure.* A full description should be provided showing that the use to be made of the selection procedure is consistent with the findings of the original validity studies (essential).

e. *Bibliography.* A bibliography of reports of validity of the selection procedure for the job or jobs in question should be provided (essential). Where any of the studies included an investigation of test fairness, the results of this investigation should be provided (essential). Copies of reports published in journals that are not commonly available should be described in detail or attached (essential). Where a user is relying upon unpublished studies, a reasonable effort should be made to obtain these studies. If these unpublished studies are the sole source of validity evidence they should be described in detail or attached (essential). If these studies are not available, the name and address of the source, an adequate abstract or summary of the validity study and data, and a contact person in the source organization should be provided (essential).

(2) *Evidence from content validity studies.* See section 14C(3) and section 15C above.

(3) *Evidence from construct validity studies.* See sections 14D(2) and 15D above.

F. *Evidence of validity from cooperative studies.* Where a selection procedure has been validated through a cooperative study, evidence that the study satisfies the requirements of sections 7, 8 and 15E should be provided (essential).

G. *Selection for higher level job.* If a selection procedure is used to evaluate candidates for jobs at a higher level

than those for which they will initially be employed, the validity evidence should satisfy the documentation provisions of this section 15 for the higher level job or jobs, and in addition, the user should provide: (1) a description of the job progression structure, formal or informal; (2) the data showing how many employees progress to the higher level job and the length of time needed to make this progression; and (3) an identification of any anticipated changes in the higher level job. In addition, if the test measures a knowledge, skill or ability, the user should provide evidence that the knowledge, skill or ability is required for the higher level job and the basis for the conclusion that the knowledge, skill or ability is not expected to develop from the training or experience on the job.

H. *Interim use of selection procedures.* If a selection procedure is being used on an interim basis because the procedure is not fully supported by the required evidence of validity, the user should maintain and have available (1) substantial evidence of validity for the procedure, and (2) a report showing the date on which the study to gather the additional evidence commenced, the estimated completion date of the study, and a description of the data to be collected (essential).

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0017)

(Pub. L. 96–511, 94 Stat. 2812 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*))

[43 FR 38295, 38312, Aug. 25, 1978, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981]

DEFINITIONS

§ 1607.16 Definitions.

The following definitions shall apply throughout these guidelines:

A. *Ability.* A present competence to perform an observable behavior or a behavior which results in an observable product.

B. *Adverse impact.* A substantially different rate of selection in hiring, promotion, or other employment decision which works to the disadvantage of members of a race, sex, or ethnic group. See section 4 of these guidelines.

C. *Compliance with these guidelines.* Use of a selection procedure is in compliance with these guidelines if such use has been validated in accord with these guidelines (as defined below), or if such use does not result in adverse impact on any race, sex, or ethnic group (see section 4, above), or, in unusual circumstances, if use of the procedure is otherwise justified in accord with Federal law. See section 6B, above.

D. *Content validity.* Demonstrated by data showing that the content of a selection procedure is representative of important aspects of performance on the job. See section 5B and section 14C.

E. *Construct validity.* Demonstrated by data showing that the selection procedure measures the degree to which candidates have identifiable characteristics which have been determined to be important for successful job performance. See section 5B and section 14D.

F. *Criterion-related validity.* Demonstrated by empirical data showing that the selection procedure is predictive of or significantly correlated with important elements of work behavior. See sections 5B and 14B.

G. *Employer.* Any employer subject to the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, including State or local governments and any Federal agency subject to the provisions of section 717 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and any Federal contractor or subcontractor or federally assisted construction contractor or subcontactor covered by Executive Order 11246, as amended.

H. *Employment agency.* Any employment agency subject to the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

I. *Enforcement action.* For the purposes of section 4 a proceeding by a Federal enforcement agency such as a lawsuit or an administrative proceeding leading to debarment from or withholding, suspension, or termination of Federal Government contracts or the suspension or withholding of Federal Government funds; but not a finding of reasonable cause or a conciliation process or the issuance of right to sue letters under title VII or under Executive Order 11246 where such finding, conciliation, or issuance of notice of right to sue is based upon an individual complaint.

J. *Enforcement agency*. Any agency of the executive branch of the Federal Government which adopts these guidelines for purposes of the enforcement of the equal employment opportunity laws or which has responsibility for securing compliance with them.

K. *Job analysis*. A detailed statement of work behaviors and other information relevant to the job.

L. *Job description*. A general statement of job duties and responsibilities.

M. *Knowledge*. A body of information applied directly to the performance of a function.

N. *Labor organization*. Any labor organization subject to the provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and any committee subject thereto controlling apprenticeship or other training.

O. *Observable*. Able to be seen, heard, or otherwise perceived by a person other than the person performing the action.

P. *Race, sex, or ethnic group*. Any group of persons identifiable on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Q. *Selection procedure*. Any measure, combination of measures, or procedure used as a basis for any employment decision. Selection procedures include the full range of assessment techniques from traditional paper and pencil tests, performance tests, training programs, or probationary periods and physical, educational, and work experience requirements through informal or casual interviews and unscored application forms.

R. *Selection rate*. The proportion of applicants or candidates who are hired, promoted, or otherwise selected.

S. *Should*. The term ''should'' as used in these guidelines is intended to connote action which is necessary to achieve compliance with the guidelines, while recognizing that there are circumstances where alternative courses of action are open to users.

T. *Skill*. A present, observable competence to perform a learned psychomoter act.

U. *Technical feasibility*. The existence of conditions permitting the conduct of meaningful criterion-related validity studies. These conditions include: (1) An adequate sample of persons available for the study to achieve findings of statistical significance; (2) having or being able to obtain a sufficient range of scores on the selection procedure and job performance measures to produce validity results which can be expected to be representative of the results if the ranges normally expected were utilized; and (3) having or being able to devise unbiased, reliable and relevant measures of job performance or other criteria of employee adequacy. See section 14B(2). With respect to investigation of possible unfairness, the same considerations are applicable to each group for which the study is made. See section 14B(8).

V. *Unfairness of selection procedure*. A condition in which members of one race, sex, or ethnic group characteristically obtain lower scores on a selection procedure than members of another group, and the differences are not reflected in differences in measures of job performance. See section 14B(7).

W. *User*. Any employer, labor organization, employment agency, or licensing or certification board, to the extent it may be covered by Federal equal employment opportunity law, which uses a selection procedure as a basis for any employment decision. Whenever an employer, labor organization, or employment agency is required by law to restrict recruitment for any occupation to those applicants who have met licensing or certification requirements, the licensing or certifying authority to the extent it may be covered by Federal equal employment opportunity law will be considered the user with respect to those licensing or certification requirements. Whenever a State employment agency or service does no more than administer or monitor a procedure as permitted by Department of Labor regulations, and does so without making referrals or taking any other action on the basis of the results, the State employment agency will not be deemed to be a user.

X. *Validated in accord with these guidelines or properly validated*. A demonstration that one or more validity study or studies meeting the standards of these guidelines has been conducted, including investigation and, where appropriate, use of suitable alternative selection procedures as contemplated by

section 3B, and has produced evidence of validity sufficient to warrant use of the procedure for the intended purpose under the standards of these guidelines.

Y. *Work behavior*. An activity performed to achieve the objectives of the job. Work behaviors involve observable (physical) components and unobservable (mental) components. A work behavior consists of the performance of one or more tasks. Knowledges, skills, and abilities are not behaviors, although they may be applied in work behaviors.

APPENDIX

§ 1607.17 Policy statement on affirmative action (see section 13B).

The Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinating Council was established by act of Congress in 1972, and charged with responsibility for developing and implementing agreements and policies designed, among other things, to eliminate conflict and inconsistency among the agencies of the Federal Government responsible for administering Federal law prohibiting discrimination on grounds of race, color, sex, religion, and national origin. This statement is issued as an initial response to the requests of a number of State and local officials for clarification of the Government's policies concerning the role of affirmative action in the overall equal employment opportunity program. While the Coordinating Council's adoption of this statement expresses only the views of the signatory agencies concerning this important subject, the principles set forth below should serve as policy guidance for other Federal agencies as well.

(1) Equal employment opportunity is the law of the land. In the public sector of our society this means that all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin shall have equal access to positions in the public service limited only by their ability to do the job. There is ample evidence in all sectors of our society that such equal access frequently has been denied to members of certain groups because of their sex, racial, or ethnic characteristics. The remedy for such past and present discrimination is twofold.

On the one hand, vigorous enforcement of the laws against discrimination is essential. But equally, and perhaps even more important are affirmative, voluntary efforts on the part of public employers to assure that positions in the public service are genuinely and equally accessible to qualified persons, without regard to their sex, racial, or ethnic characteristics. Without such efforts equal employment opportunity is no more than a wish. The importance of voluntary affirmative action on the part of employers is underscored by title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246, and related laws and regulations—all of which emphasize voluntary action to achieve equal employment opportunity.

As with most management objectives, a systematic plan based on sound organizational analysis and problem identification is crucial to the accomplishment of affirmative action objectives. For this reason, the Council urges all State and local governments to develop and implement results oriented affirmative action plans which deal with the problems so identified.

The following paragraphs are intended to assist State and local governments by illustrating the kinds of analyses and activities which may be appropriate for a public employer's voluntary affirmative action plan. This statement does not address remedies imposed after a finding of unlawful discrimination.

(2) Voluntary affirmative action to assure equal employment opportunity is appropriate at any stage of the employment process. The first step in the construction of any affirmative action plan should be an analysis of the employer's work force to determine whether precentages of sex, race, or ethnic groups in individual job classifications are substantially similar to the precentages of those groups available in the relevant job market who possess the basic job-related qualifications.

When substantial disparities are found through such analyses, each element of the overall selection process should be examined to determine which elements operate to exclude persons on the basis of sex, race, or ethnic group.

Such elements include, but are not limited to, recruitment, testing, ranking certification, interview, recommendations for selection, hiring, promotion, etc. The examination of each element of the selection process should at a minimum include a determination of its validity in predicting job performance.

(3) When an employer has reason to believe that its selection procedures have the exclusionary effect described in paragraph 2 above, it should initiate affirmative steps to remedy the situation. Such steps, which in design and execution may be race, color, sex, or ethnic ''conscious,'' include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) The establishment of a long-term goal, and short-range, interim goals and timetables for the specific job classifications, all of which should take into account the availability of basically qualified persons in the relevant job market;

(b) A recruitment program designed to attract qualified members of the group in question;

(c) A systematic effort to organize work and redesign jobs in ways that provide opportunities for persons lacking ''journeyman'' level knowledge or skills to enter and, with appropriate training, to progress in a career field;

(d) Revamping selection instruments or procedures which have not yet been validated in order to reduce or eliminate exclusionary effects on particular groups in particular job classifications;

(e) The initiation of measures designed to assure that members of the affected group who are qualified to perform the job are included within the pool of persons from which the selecting official makes the selection;

(f) A systematic effort to provide career advancement training, both classroom and on-the-job, to employees locked into dead end jobs; and

(g) The establishment of a system for regularly monitoring the effectiveness of the particular affirmative action program, and procedures for making timely adjustments in this program where effectiveness is not demonstrated.

(4) The goal of any affirmative action plan should be achievement of genuine equal employment opportunity for all qualified persons. Selection under such plans should be based upon the ability of the applicant(s) to do the work. Such plans should not require the selection of the unqualified, or the unneeded, nor should they require the selection of persons on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. Moreover, while the Council believes that this statement should serve to assist State and local employers, as well as Federal agencies, it recognizes that affirmative action cannot be viewed as a standardized program which must be accomplished in the same way at all times in all places.

Accordingly, the Council has not attempted to set forth here either the minimum or maximum voluntary steps that employers may take to deal with their respective situations. Rather, the Council recognizes that under applicable authorities, State and local employers have flexibility to formulate affirmative action plans that are best suited to their particular situations. In this manner, the Council believes that affirmative action programs will best serve the goal of equal employment opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,

Harold R. Tyler, Jr.,
Deputy Attorney General and Chairman of the Equal Employment Coordinating Council.

Michael H. Moskow,
Under Secretary of Labor.

Ethel Bent Walsh,
Acting Chairman, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Robert E. Hampton,
Chairman, Civil Service Commission.

Arthur E. Flemming,
Chairman, Commission on Civil Rights.

Because of its equal employment opportunity responsibilities under the State and Local Government Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972 (the revenue sharing act), the Department of Treasury was invited to participate in the formulation of this policy statement; and it concurs and joins in the adoption of this policy statement.

Done this 26th day of August 1976.

Richard Albrecht,
General Counsel,
Department of the Treasury.

§ 1607.18 Citations.

The official title of these guidelines is ''Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978)''. The Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978) are intended to establish a uniform Federal position in the area of prohibiting discrimination in employment practices on grounds of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. These guidelines have been adopted by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Department of Labor, the Department of Justice, and the Civil Service Commission.

The official citation is:

Section __, Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedure (1978); 43 FR __ (August 25, 1978).

The short form citation is:

Section __, U.G.E.S.P. (1978); 43 FR __ (August 25, 1978).

When the guidelines are cited in connection with the activities of one of the issuing agencies, a specific citation to the regulations of that agency can be added at the end of the above citation. The specific additional citations are as follows:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
29 CFR part 1607
Department of Labor
Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
41 CFR part 60–3
Department of Justice
28 CFR 50.14
Civil Service Commission
5 CFR 300.103(c)

Normally when citing these guidelines, the section number immediately preceding the title of the guidelines will be from these guidelines series 1–18. If a section number from the codification for an individual agency is needed it can also be added at the end of the agency citation. For example, section 6A of these guidelines could be cited for EEOC as follows:

Section 6A, Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978); 43 FR __, (August 25, 1978); 29 CFR part 1607, section 6A.

PART 1608—AFFIRMATIVE ACTION APPROPRIATE UNDER TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, AS AMENDED

Sec.

1608.1 Statement of purpose.
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1608.8 Adherence to court order.
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1608.10 Standard of review.
1608.11 Limitations on the application of these guidelines.
1608.12 Equal employment opportunity plans adopted pursuant to section 717 of title VII.

AUTHORITY: Sec. 713 the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–12, 78 Stat. 265.

SOURCE: 44 FR 4422, Jan. 19, 1979, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1608.1 Statement of purpose.

(a) *Need for Guidelines.* Since the passage of title VII in 1964, many employers, labor organizations, and other persons subject to title VII have changed their employment practices and systems to improve employment opportunities for minorities and women, and this must continue. These changes have been undertaken either on the initiative of the employer, labor organization, or other person subject to title VII, or as a result of conciliation efforts under title VII, action under Executive Order 11246, as amended, or under other Federal, State, or local laws, or litigation. Many decisions taken pursuant to affirmative action plans or programs have been race, sex, or national origin conscious in order to achieve the Congressional purpose of providing equal employment opportunity. Occasionally, these actions have been challenged as inconsistent with title VII, because they took into account race, sex, or national origin.

This is the so-called ''reverse discrimination'' claim. In such a situation, both the affirmative action undertaken to improve the conditions of minorities and women, and the objection to that action, are based upon the principles of title VII. Any uncertainty as to the meaning and application of title VII in such situations threatens the accomplishment of the clear Congressional intent to encourage voluntary affirmative action. The Commission believes that by the enactment of title VII Congress did not intend to expose those who comply with the Act to charges that they are violating the very statute they are seeking to implement. Such a result would immobilize or reduce the efforts of many who would otherwise take action to improve the opportunities of minorities and women without litigation, thus frustrating the Congressional intent to encourage voluntary action and increasing the prospect of title VII litigation. The Commission believes that it is now necessary to clarify and harmonize the principles of title VII in order to achieve these Congressional objectives and protect those employers, labor organizations, and other persons who comply with the principles of title VII.

(b) *Purposes of title VII.* Congress enacted title VII in order to improve the economic and social conditions of minorities and women by providing equality of opportunity in the work place. These conditions were part of a larger pattern of restriction, exclusion, discrimination, segregation, and inferior treatment of minorities and women in many areas of life.[2] The Legislative Histories of title VII, the Equal Pay Act, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 contain extensive analyses of the higher unemployment rate, the lesser occupational status, and the consequent lower income levels of minorities and women.[3] The purpose of Executive Order No. 11246, as amended, is similar to the purpose of title VII. In response to these economic and social conditions, Congress, by passage of title VII, established a national policy against discrimination in employment on grounds of race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. In addition, Congress strongly encouraged employers, labor organizations, and other persons subject to title VII (hereinafter referred to as ''persons,'' see section 701(a) of the Act) to act on a voluntary basis to modify employment practices and systems which constituted barriers to equal employment opportunity, without awaiting litigation or formal government action. Conference, conciliation, and persuasion were the primary processes adopted by Congress in 1964, and reaffirmed in 1972, to achieve these objectives, with enforcement action through the courts or agencies as a supporting procedure where voluntary action did not take place and conciliation failed. See section 706 of title VII.

(c) *Interpretation in furtherance of legislative purpose.* The principle of nondiscrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, and the principle that each person subject to title VII should take voluntary action to correct the effects of past discrimination and to prevent present and future discrimination without awaiting litigation, are mutually consistent and interdependent methods of addressing social and economic conditions which precipitated the enactment of title VII. Voluntary

[2] Congress has also addressed these conditions in other laws, including the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Pub. L. 88–38, 77 Stat. 56 (1963), as amended; the other titles of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Pub. L. 88–352, 78 Stat. 241 (1964), as amended; the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Pub. L. 89–110, 79 Stat. 437 (1965), as amended; the Fair Housing Act of 1968, Pub. L. 90–284, title VII, 82 Stat. 73, 81 (1968), as amended; the Educational Opportunity Act (title IX), Pub. L. 92–318, 86 Stat. 373 (1972), as amended; and the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, Pub. L. 92–261, 86 Stat. 103 (1972), as amended.

[3] Equal Pay Act of 1963: S. Rep. No. 176, 88th Cong., 1st Sess., 1–2 (1963). Civil Rights Act of 1964: H.R. Rep. No. 914, pt. 2, 88th Cong., 1st Sess. (1971). Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972: H.R. Rep. No. 92–238, 92d Cong., 1st Sess. (1971); S. Rep. No. 92–415, 92d Cong., 1st Sess. (1971). See also, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, *Equal Employment Opportunity Report—1975, Job Patterns for Women in Private Industry* (1977); Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, *Minorities and Women in State and Local Government—1975* (1977); United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Social Indicators of Equality for Minorities and Women* (1978).

affirmative action to improve opportunities for minorities and women must be encouraged and protected in order to carry out the Congressional intent embodied in title VII.[4] Affirmative action under these principles means those actions appropriate to overcome the effects of past or present practices, policies, or other barriers to equal employment opportunity. Such voluntary affirmative action cannot be measured by the standard of whether it would have been required had there been litigation, for this standard would undermine the legislative purpose of first encouraging voluntary action without litigation. Rather, persons subject to title VII must be allowed flexibility in modifying employment systems and practices to comport with the purposes of title VII. Correspondingly, title VII must be construed to permit such voluntary action, and those taking such action should be afforded the protection against title VII liability which the Commission is authorized to provide under section 713(b)(1).

(d) *Guidelines interpret title VII and authorize use of section 713(b)(1).* These Guidelines describe the circumstances in which persons subject to title VII may take or agree upon action to improve employment opportunities of minorities and women, and describe the kinds of actions they may take which are consistent with title VII. These Guidelines constitute the Commission's interpretation of title VII and will be applied in the processing of claims of discrimination which involve voluntary affirmative action plans and programs. In addition, these Guidelines state the circumstances under which the Commission will recognize that a person subject to title VII is entitled to assert that actions were taken ''in good faith, in conformity with, and in reliance upon a written interpretation or opinion of the Commission,'' including reliance upon the interpretation and opinion contained in these Guidelines, and thereby invoke the protection of section 713(b)(1) of title VII.

(e) *Review of existing plans recommended.* Only affirmative action plans or programs adopted in good faith, in conformity with, and in reliance upon these Guidelines can receive the full protection of these Guidelines, including the section 713(b)(1) defense. See §1608.10. Therefore, persons subject to title VII who have existing affirmative action plans, programs, or agreements are encouraged to review them in light of these Guidelines, to modify them to the extent necessary to comply with these Guidelines, and to readopt or reaffirm them.

§1608.2 Written interpretation and opinion.

These Guidelines constitute ''a written interpretation and opinion'' of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as that term is used in section 713(b)(1) of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–12(b)(1), and §1601.33 of the Procedural Regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (29 CFR 1601.30; 42 FR 55,394 (October 14, 1977)). Section 713(b)(1) provides:

> In any action or proceeding based on any alleged unlawful employment practice, no person shall be subject to any liability or punishment for or on account of (1) the commission by such person of an unlawful employment practice if he pleads and proves that the act or omission complained of was in good faith, in conformity with, and in reliance on any written interpretation or opinion of the Commission * * *. Such a defense, if established, shall be a bar to the action or proceeding, notwithstanding that * * * after such act or omission, such interpretation or opinion is modified or rescinded or is determined by judicial authority to be invalid or of no legal effect * * *.

The applicability of these Guidelines is subject to the limitations on use set forth in §1608.11.

§1608.3 Circumstances under which voluntary affirmative action is appropriate.

(a) *Adverse effect.* Title VII prohibits practices, procedures, or policies which have an adverse impact unless they are

[4] Affirmative action often improves opportunities for all members of the workforce, as where affirmative action includes the posting of notices of job vacancies. Similarly, the integration of previously segregated jobs means that all workers will be provided opportunities to enter jobs previously restricted. See, e.g., *EEOC* v. *AT&T,* 419 F. Supp. 1022 (E.D.Pa. 1976), *aff'd,* 556 F. 2d 167 (3rd Cir. 1977), *cert. denied,* 98 S.Ct. 3145 (1978).

justified by business necessity. In addition, title VII proscribes practices which ''tend to deprive'' persons of equal employment opportunities. Employers, labor organizations and other persons subject to title VII may take affirmative action based on an analysis which reveals facts constituting actual or potential adverse impact, if such adverse impact is likely to result from existing or contemplated practices.

(b) *Effects of prior discriminatory practices.* Employers, labor organizations, or other persons subject to title VII may also take affirmative action to correct the effects of prior discriminatory practices. The effects of prior discriminatory practices can be initially identified by a comparison between the employer's work force, or a part thereof, and an appropriate segment of the labor force.

(c) *Limited labor pool.* Because of historic restrictions by employers, labor organizations, and others, there are circumstances in which the available pool, particularly of qualified minorities and women, for employment or promotional opportunities is artificially limited. Employers, labor organizations, and other persons subject to title VII may, and are encouraged to take affirmative action in such circumstances, including, but not limited to, the following:

(1) Training plans and programs, including on-the-job training, which emphasize providing minorities and women with the opportunity, skill, and expericence necessary to perform the functions of skilled trades, crafts, or professions;

(2) Extensive and focused recruiting activity;

(3) Elimination of the adverse impact caused by unvalidated selection criteria (see sections 3 and 6, Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978), 43 FR 30290; 38297; 38299 (August 25, 1978));

(4) Modification through collective bargaining where a labor organization represents employees, or unilaterally where one does not, of promotion and layoff procedures.

§ 1608.4 Establishing affirmative action plans.

An affirmative action plan or program under this section shall contain three elements: a reasonable self analysis; a reasonable basis for concluding action is appropriate; and reasonable action.

(a) *Reasonable self analysis.* The objective of a self analysis is to determine whether employment practices do, or tend to, exclude, disadvantage, restrict, or result in adverse impact or disparate treatment of previously excluded or restricted groups or leave uncorrected the effects of prior discrimination, and if so, to attempt to determine why. There is no mandatory method of conducting a self analysis. The employer may utilize techniques used in order to comply with Executive Order 11246, as amended, and its implementing regulations, including 41 CFR part 60–2 (known as Revised Order 4), or related orders issued by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs or its authorized agencies, or may use an analysis similar to that required under other Federal, State, or local laws or regulations prohibiting employment discrimination. In conducting a self analysis, the employer, labor organization, or other person subject to title VII should be concerned with the effect on its employment practices of circumstances which may be the result of discrimination by other persons or institutions. See *Griggs* v. *Duke Power Co.*, 401 U.S. 424 (1971).

(b) *Reasonable basis.* If the self analysis shows that one or more employment practices:

(1) Have or tend to have an adverse effect on employment opportunities of members of previously excluded groups, or groups whose employment or promotional opportunities have been artificially limited,

(2) Leave uncorrected the effects of prior discrimination, or

(3) Result in disparate treatment, the person making the self analysis has a reasonable basis for concluding that action is appropriate.

It is not necessary that the self analysis establish a violation of title VII. This reasonable basis exists without any admission or formal finding that the person has violated title VII, and

without regard to whether there exists arguable defenses to a title VII action.

(c) *Reasonable action.* The action taken pursuant to an affirmative action plan or program must be reasonable in relation to the problems disclosed by the self analysis. Such reasonable action may include goals and timetables or other appropriate employment tools which recognize the race, sex, or national origin of applicants or employees. It may include the adoption of practices which will eliminate the actual or potential adverse impact, disparate treatment, or effect or past discrimination by providing opportunities for members of groups which have been excluded, regardless of whether the persons benefited were themselves the victims of prior policies or procedures which produced the adverse impact or disparate treatment or which perpetuated past discrimination.

(1) *Illustrations of appropriate affirmative action.* Affirmative action plans or programs may include, but are not limited to, those described in the Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinating Council ''Policy Statement on Affirmative Action Programs for State and Local Government Agencies,'' 41 FR 38814 (September 13, 1976), reaffirmed and extended to all persons subject to Federal equal employment opportunity laws and orders, in the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978) 43 FR 38290; 38300 (Aug. 25, 1978). That statement reads, in relevant part:

> When an employer has reason to believe that its selection procedures have * * * exclusionary effect * * *, it should initiate affirmative steps to remedy the situation. Such steps, which in design and execution may be race, color, sex or ethnic 'conscious,' include, but are not limited to, the following:
>
> The establishment of a long term goal and short range, interim goals and timetables for the specific job classifications, all of which should take into account the availability of basically qualified persons in the relevant job market;
>
> A recruitment program designed to attract qualified members of the group in question;
>
> A systematic effort to organize work and re-design jobs in ways that provide opportunities for persons lacking 'journeyman' level knowledge or skills to enter and, with appropriate training, to progress in a career field;
>
> Revamping selection instruments or procedures which have not yet been validated in order to reduce or eliminate exclusionary effects on particular groups in particular job classifications;
>
> The initiation of measures designed to assure that members of the affected group who are qualified to perform the job are included within the pool of persons from which the selecting official makes the selection;
>
> A systematic effort to provide career advancement training, both classroom and on-the-job, to employees locked into dead end jobs; and
>
> The establishment of a system for regularly monitoring the effectiveness of the particular affirmative action program, and procedures for making timely adjustments in this program where effectiveness is not demonstrated.

(2) *Standards of reasonable action.* In considering the reasonableness of a particular affirmative action plan or program, the Commission will generally apply the following standards:

(i) The plan should be tailored to solve the problems which were identified in the self analysis, see §1608.4(a), supra, and to ensure that employment systems operate fairly in the future, while avoiding unnecessary restrictions on opportunities for the workforce as a whole. The race, sex, and national origin conscious provisions of the plan or program should be maintained only so long as is necessary to achieve these objectives.

(ii) Goals and timetables should be reasonably related to such considerations as the effects of past discrimination, the need for prompt elimination of adverse impact or disparate treatment, the availability of basically qualified or qualifiable applicants, and the number of employment opportunities expected to be available.

(d) *Written or unwritten plans or programs*—(1) *Written plans required for 713(b)(1) protection.* The protection of section 713(b) of title VII will be accorded by the Commission to a person subject to title VII only if the self analysis and the affirmative action plan are dated and in writing, and the plan otherwise meets the requirements of section 713(b)(1). The Commission will not require that there be any written statement concluding that a title VII violation exists.

(2) *Reasonable cause determinations.* Where an affirmative action plan or program is alleged to violate title VII, or is asserted as a defense to a charge

of discrimination, the Commission will investigate the charge in accordance with its usual procedures and pursuant to the standards set forth in these Guidelines, whether or not the analysis and plan are in writing. However, the absence of a written self analysis and a written affirmative action plan or program may make it more difficult to provide credible evidence that the analysis was conducted, and that action was taken pursuant to a plan or program based on the analysis. Therefore, the Commission recommends that such analyses and plans be in writing.

§ 1608.5 Affirmative action compliance programs under Executive Order No. 11246, as amended.

Under title VII, affirmative action compliance programs adopted pursuant to Executive Order 11246, as amended, and its implementing regulations, including 41 CFR part 60–2 (Revised Order 4), will be considered by the Commission in light of the similar purposes of title VII and the Executive Order, and the Commission's responsibility under Executive Order 12067 to avoid potential conflict among Federal equal employment opportunity programs. Accordingly, the Commission will process title VII complaints involving such affirmative action compliance programs under this section.

(a) *Procedures for review of Affirmative Action Compliance Programs.* If adherence to an affirmative action compliance program adopted pursuant to Executive Order 11246, as amended, and its implementing regulations, is the basis of a complaint filed under title VII, or is alleged to be the justification for an action which is challenged under title VII, the Commission will investigate to determine whether the affirmative action compliance program was adopted by a person subject to the Order and pursuant to the Order, and whether adherence to the program was the basis of the complaint or the justification.

(1) *Programs previously approved.* If the Commission makes the determination described in paragraph (a) of this section and also finds that the affirmative action program has been approved by an appropriate official of the Department of Labor or its authorized agencies, or is part of a conciliation or settlement agreement or an order of an administrative agency, whether entered by consent or after contested proceedings brought to enforce Executive Order 11246, as amended, the Commission will issue a determination of no reasonable cause.

(2) *Program not previously approved.* If the Commission makes the determination described in paragraph (a), of this section but the program has not been approved by an appropriate official of the Department of Labor or its authorized agencies, the Commission will: (i) Follow the procedure in §1608.10(a) and review the program, or (ii) refer the plan to the Department of Labor for a determination of whether it is to be approved under Executive Order 11246, as amended, and its implementing regulations. If, the Commission finds that the program does conform to these Guidelines, or the Department of Labor approves the affirmative action compliance program, the Commission will issue a determination of no reasonable cause under §1608.10(a).

(b) *Reliance on these guidelines.* In addition, if the affirmative action compliance program has been adopted in good faith reliance on these Guidelines, the provisions of section 713(b)(1) of title VII and of §1608.10(b), of this part, may be asserted by the contractor.

§ 1608.6 Affirmative action plans which are part of Commission conciliation or settlement agreements.

(a) *Procedures for review of plans.* If adherence to a conciliation or settlement agreement executed under title VII and approved by a responsible official of the EEOC is the basis of a complaint filed under title VII, or is alleged to be the justification for an action challenged under title VII, the Commission will investigate to determine:

(1) Whether the conciliation agreement or settlement agreement was approved by a responsible official of the EEOC, and

(2) Whether adherence to the agreement was the basis for the complaint or justification.

If the Commission so finds, it will make a determination of no reasonable cause under §1608.10(a) and will advise

the respondent of its right under section 713(b)(1) of title VII to rely on the conciliation agreement.

(b) *Reliance on these guidelines.* In addition, if the affirmative action plan or program has been adopted in good faith reliance on these Guidelines, the provisions of section 713(b)(1) of title VII and of §1608.10(b), of this part, may be asserted by the respondent.

§1608.7 Affirmative action plans or programs under State or local law.

Affirmative action plans or programs executed by agreement with State or local government agencies, or by order of State or local government agencies, whether entered by consent or after contested proceedings, under statutes or ordinances described in title VII, will be reviewed by the Commission in light of the similar purposes of title VII and such statutes and ordinances. Accordingly, the Commission will process title VII complaints involving such affirmative action plans or programs under this section.

(a) *Procedures for review of plans or programs.* If adherence to an affirmative action plan or program executed pursuant to a State statute or local ordinance described in title VII is the basis of a complaint filed under title VII or is alleged to be the justification for an action which is challenged under Title VII, the Commission will investigate to determine:

(1) Whether the affirmative action plan or program was executed by an employer, labor organization, or person subject to the statute or ordinance,

(2) Whether the agreement was approved by an appropriate official of the State or local government, and

(3) Whether adherence to the plan or program was the basis of the complaint or justification.

(1) *Previously approved plans or programs.* If the Commission finds the facts described in paragraph (a) of this section, the Commission will, in accordance with the ''substantial weight'' provisions of section 706 of the Act, find no reasonable cause where appropriate.

(2) *Plans or programs not previously approved.* If the plan or program has not been approved by an appropriate official of the State or local government, the Commission will follow the procedure of §1608.10 of these Guidelines. If the Commission finds that the plan or program does conform to these Guidelines, the Commission will make a determination of no reasonable cause as set forth in §1608.10(a).

(b) *Reliance on these guidelines.* In addition, if the affirmative action plan or program has been adopted in good faith reliance on these Guidelines, the provisions of section 713(b)(1) and §1608.10(b), of this part, may be asserted by the respondent.

§1608.8 Adherence to court order.

Parties are entitled to rely on orders of courts of competent jurisdiction. If adherence to an Order of a United States District Court or other court of competent jurisdiction, whether entered by consent or after contested litigation, in a case brought to enforce a Federal, State, or local equal employment opportunity law or regulation, is the basis of a complaint filed under title VII or is alleged to be the justification for an action which is challenged under title VII, the Commission will investigate to determine:

(a) Whether such an Order exists and

(b) Whether adherence to the affirmative action plan which is part of the Order was the basis of the complaint or justification.

If the Commission so finds, it will issue a determination of no reasonable cause. The Commission interprets title VII to mean that actions taken pursuant to the direction of a Court Order cannot give rise to liability under title VII.

§1608.9 Reliance on directions of other government agencies.

When a charge challenges an affirmative action plan or program, or when such a plan or program is raised as justification for an employment decision, and when the plan or program was developed pursuant to the requirements of a Federal or State law or regulation which in part seeks to ensure equal employment opportunity, the Commission will process the charge in accordance with §1608.10(a). Other agencies with equal employment opportunity responsibilities may apply the principles of

these Guidelines in the exercise of their authority.

§ 1608.10 Standard of review.

(a) *Affirmative action plans or programs not specifically relying on these guidelines.* If, during the investigation of a charge of discrimination filed with the Commission, a respondent asserts that the action complained of was taken pursuant to an in accordance with a plan or program of the type described in these Guidelines, the Commission will determine whether the assertion is true, and if so, whether such a plan or program conforms to the requirements of these guidelines. If the Commission so finds, it will issue a determination of no reasonable cause and, where appropriate, will state that the determination constitutes a written interpretation or opinion of the Commission under section 713(b)(1). This interpretation may be relied upon by the respondent and asserted as a defense in the event that new charges involving similar facts and circumstances are thereafter filed against the respondent, which are based on actions taken pursuant to the affirmative action plan or program. If the Commission does not so find, it will proceed with the investigation in the usual manner.

(b) *Reliance on these guidelines.* If a respondent asserts that the action taken was pursuant to and in accordance with a plan or program which was adopted or implemented in good faith, in conformity with, and in reliance upon these Guidelines, and the self analysis and plan are in writing, the Commission will determine whether such assertion is true. If the Commission so finds, it will so state in the determination of no reasonable cause and will advise the respondent that:

(1) The Commission has found that the respondent is entitled to the protection of section 713(b)(1) of title VII; and

(2) That the determination is itself an additional written interpretation or opinion of the Commission pursuant to section 713(b)(1).

§ 1608.11 Limitations on the application of these guidelines.

(a) *No determination of adequacy of plan or program.* These Guidelines are applicable only with respect to the circumstances described in §1608.1(d), of this part. They do not apply to, and the section 713(b)(1) defense is not available for the purpose of, determining the adequacy of an affirmative action plan or program to eliminate discrimination. Whether an employer who takes such affirmative action has done enough to remedy such discrimination will remain a question of fact in each case.

(b) *Guidelines inapplicable in absence of affirmative action.* Where an affirmative action plan or program does not exist, or where the plan or program is not the basis of the action complained of, these Guidelines are inapplicable.

(c) *Currency of plan or program.* Under section 713(b)(1), persons may rely on the plan or program only during the time when it is current. Currency is related to such factors as progress in correcting the conditions disclosed by the self analysis. The currency of the plan or program is a question of fact to be determined on a case by case basis. Programs developed under Executive Order 11246, as amended, will be deemed current in accordance with Department of Labor regulations at 41 CFR chapter 60, or successor orders or regulations.

§ 1608.12 Equal employment opportunity plans adopted pursuant to section 717 of title VII.

If adherence to an Equal Employment Opportunity Plan, adopted pursuant to section 717 of title VII, and approved by an appropriate official of the U.S. Civil Service Commission, is the basis of a complaint filed under title VII, or is alleged to be the justification for an action under title VII, these Guidelines will apply in a manner similar to that set forth in §1608.5. The Commission will issue regulations setting forth the procedure for processing such complaints.

PART 1610—AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS

Subpart A—Production or Disclosure Under 5 U.S.C. 552

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 2000e–12(a), 5 U.S.C. 552 as amended by Pub. L. 93–502, Pub. L. 99–570, and Pub. L. 105–231; for §1610.15, nonsearch or copy portions are issued under 31 U.S.C. 9701.

Subpart A—Production or Disclosure Under 5 U.S.C. 552

§ 1610.1 Definitions.

(a) *Title VII* refers to title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by Public Law 92–261, 42 U.S.C. (Supp. II) 2000e *et seq*.

(b) *Commission* refers to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

(c) *Freedom of Information Act* refers to 5 U.S.C. 552 (Pub. L. 90–23 as amended by Pub. L. 93–502).

(d) *Attestation* refers to the authentication of copies of Commission documents by an affidavit or unsworn declaration from the records custodian without the Commission Seal.

(e) *Certification* refers to the authentication of copies of Commission documents by an affidavit or unsworn declaration from the records custodian under the Commission Seal.

(f) *Agency record* includes any information maintained for an agency by an entity under Government contract, for the purposes of records management.

(g) *FOIA Public Liaison* means an agency official who is responsible for assisting in reducing delays, increasing transparency and understanding of the status of requests, and assisting in the resolution of disputes.

[40 FR 8171, Feb. 26, 1975, as amended at 52 FR 13830, Apr. 27, 1987; 70 FR 57511, Oct. 3, 2005; 78 FR 36650, June 19, 2013; 81 FR 95870, Dec. 29, 2016]

§ 1610.2 Statutory requirements.

(a) This subpart contains the rules that the Commission will follow in processing requests for records under the Freedom of Information Act (''FOIA''), 5 U.S.C. 552. These rules should be read in conjunction with the text of the FOIA and the Uniform Freedom of Information Fee Schedule and Guidelines published by the Office of Management and Budget (''OMB Guidelines''). Requests made by individuals for records about themselves under the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a, are processed in accordance with the Commission's Privacy Act regulations as well as under this subpart. The Commission should administer the FOIA with a presumption of openness.

(b) As referenced in this subpart, ''component'' means each separate office within the Commission that is responsible for processing FOIA requests. The rules described in this regulation that apply to the Commission also apply to its components.

[82 FR 45181, Sept. 28, 2017]

§ 1610.3 Purpose and scope.

(a) This subpart contains the regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission implementing 5 U.S.C. 552. The regulations of this subpart provide information concerning the procedures by which records may be obtained from all organizational units within the Commission. Official records of the Commission made available pursuant to the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552 shall be furnished to members of the public only as prescribed by this subpart. Officers and employees of

the Commission may continue to furnish to the public, informally and without compliance with the procedures prescribed herein, information and records which prior to the enactment of 5 U.S.C. 552 were furnished customarily in the regular performance of their duties.

(b) Nothing in this subpart shall be construed to entitle any person, as of right, to any service or to the disclosure of any record to which such person is not entitled under the FOIA.

[81 FR 95871, Dec. 29, 2016]

§ 1610.4 Public reference facilities and current index.

(a) Records that the FOIA requires the Commission to make available for public inspection in an electronic format may be accessed through the Commission's Web site. The Commission is responsible for determining which of its records must be made publicly available, for identifying additional records of interest to the public that are appropriate for public disclosure, and for posting and indexing such records. The Commission must ensure that its Web site of posted records and indices is reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis. The Commission has a FOIA Requester Service Center or FOIA Public Liaison who can assist individuals in locating records particular to the Commission. Contact information is located at *https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/foia/index.cfm*. A list of agency FOIA Public Liaisons is available at *http://www.foia.gov/report-makerequest.html*.

(b) The Commission offices designated in § 1610.4(c) shall maintain and make available for public inspection and copying a copy of:

(1) The Commission's notices and regulatory amendments which are not yet published in the Code of Federal Regulations;

(2) The Commission's annual reports;

(3) The Commission's Compliance Manual;

(4) Blank forms relating to the Commission's procedures as they affect the public;

(5) The Commission's Orders (agency directives);

(6) ''CCH Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Decisions'' (1973 and 1983);

(7) Commission awarded contracts; and

(8) Copies of all records, regardless of form or format, that because of the nature of their subject matter—

(i) The Commission determines have become, or are likely to become, the subject of subsequent requests for substantially the same records; or

(ii) That have been requested 3 or more times.

(c) The Commission's District Offices with public reading areas are:

Atlanta District Office, Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center, 100 Alabama Street SW., Suite 4R30, Atlanta, GA 30303 (includes the Savannah Local Office).

Birmingham District Office, Ridge Park Place, 1130 22nd Street South, Suite 2000, Birmingham, AL 35205–2397 (includes the Jackson Area Office and the Mobile Local Office).

Charlotte District Office, 129 West Trade Street, Suite 400, Charlotte, NC 28202 (includes the Raleigh Area Office, the Greensboro Local Office, the Greenville Local Office, the Norfolk Local Office, and the Richmond Local Office).

Chicago District Office, 500 West Madison Street, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60661 (includes the Milwaukee Area Office and the Minneapolis Area Office).

Dallas District Office, 207 S. Houston Street, 3rd Floor, Dallas, TX 75202–4726 (includes the San Antonio Field Office and the El Paso Area Office).

Houston District Office, Mickey Leland Building, 1919 Smith Street, 6th Floor, Houston, TX 77002 (includes the New Orleans Field Office).

Indianapolis District Office, 101 West Ohio Street, Suite 1900, Indianapolis, IN 46204–4203 (includes the Detroit Field Office, the Cincinnati Area Office, and the Louisville Area Office).

Los Angeles District Office, Roybal Federal Building, 255 East Temple Street, 4th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012 (includes the Fresno Local Office, the Honolulu Local Office, the Las Vegas Local Office, and the San Diego Local Office).

Memphis District Office, 1407 Union Avenue, 9th Floor, Memphis, TN 38104 (includes the Little Rock Area Office, and the Nashville Area Office).

Miami District Office, Miami Tower, 100 SE 2nd Street, Suite 1500, Miami, FL 33131 (includes the Tampa Field Office, and the San Juan Local Office).

New York District Office, 33 Whitehall Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10004 (includes the Boston Area Office, the Newark Area Office, and the Buffalo Local Office).

Philadelphia District Office, 801 Market Street, Suite 1300, Philadelphia, PA 19107–3127 (includes the Baltimore Field Office, the Cleveland Field Office, and the Pittsburgh Area Office).

Phoenix District Office, 3300 N. Central Avenue, Suite 690, Phoenix, AZ 85012–2504 (includes the Denver Field Office, and the Albuquerque Area Office).

San Francisco District Office, 450 Golden Gate Avenue, 5 West, P.O. Box 36025, San Francisco, CA 94102–3661 (includes the Seattle Field Office, the Oakland Local Office, and the San Jose Local Office).

St. Louis District Office, Robert A. Young Federal Building, 1222 Spruce Street, Room 8100, St. Louis, MO 63103 (includes the Kansas City Area Office, and the Oklahoma City Area Office).

[78 FR 36650, June 19, 2013, as amended at 81 FR 95871, Dec. 29, 2016]

§ 1610.5 Request for records.

(a) *General information.* (1) To make a request for records, a requester should write directly to the Commission's FOIA office that maintains the records sought. A request will receive the quickest possible response if it is addressed to the Commission FOIA office that maintains the records sought. Information concerning the Commission's FOIA offices is listed at: *https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/foia/index.cfm* and any additional requirements for submitting a request to the agency are listed at paragraphs (b) and (d) of this section. The Commission's Web site contains instructions for submitting FOIA requests and other resources to assist requesters in determining where to send their requests.

(2) Where a request for records pertains to another individual, a requester may receive greater access by submitting either a notarized authorization signed by that individual or a declaration made in compliance with the requirements set forth in 28 U.S.C. 1746 by that individual authorizing disclosure of the records to the requester, or by submitting proof that the individual is deceased (for example, a copy of a death certificate or an obituary). As an exercise of administrative discretion, the Commission can require a requester to supply additional information if necessary in order to verify that a particular individual has consented to disclosure.

(b) *Description of records sought.* Requesters must describe the records sought in sufficient detail to enable Commission personnel to locate them with a reasonable amount of effort. To the extent possible, requesters should include specific information that may help the Commission identify the requested records, such as the date, title or name, author, recipient, subject matter of the record, case number, file designation, or reference number. Before submitting their requests, requesters may contact the Commission's District Office FOIA contact or FOIA Public Liaison to discuss the records they seek and to receive assistance in describing the records. If after receiving a request the Commission determines that it does not reasonably describe the records sought, the Commission must inform the requester what additional information is needed or why the request is otherwise insufficient. Requesters who are attempting to reformulate or modify such a request may discuss their request with the Commission's FOIA contact or FOIA Public Liaison. If a request does not reasonably describe the records sought, the agency's response to the request may be delayed.

(1) A written request for inspection or copying of a record of the Commission may be presented in person, by mail, by fax, by email at *FOIA@eeoc.gov*, online at *https://publicportalfoiapal.eeoc.gov/palMain.aspx*, or through the Commission employee designated in §1610.7.

(2) A request must be clearly and prominently identified as a request for information under the ''Freedom of Information Act.'' If submitted by mail, or otherwise submitted under any cover, the envelope or other cover must be similarly identified.

(3) A respondent must always provide a copy of the ''Filed'' stamped court complaint when requesting a copy of a charge file. The charging party must provide a copy of the ''Filed'' stamped court complaint when requesting a copy of the charge file if the Notice of Right to Sue has expired as of the date of the charging party's request.

(4) Each request must contain information which reasonably describes the records sought and, when known, should contain date, title or name, author, recipient, subject matter of the record, case number, file designation, or reference number and location for the records requested in order to permit the records to be promptly located.

(c) *Format.* Requests may specify the preferred form or format (including electronic formats) for the records the requester seeks. The Commission will accommodate the request if the records are readily reproducible in that form or format.

(d) *Requester information.* Requesters must provide contact information, such as their phone number, email address, and/or mailing address, to assist the agency in communicating with them and providing released records.

[82 FR 45181, Sept. 28, 2017]

§ 1610.6 [Reserved]

§ 1610.7 Where to make request; form.

(a) *In general.* The Commission or component that first receives a request for a record and maintains that record is responsible for responding to the request. In determining which records are responsive to a request, the Commission ordinarily will include only records in its possession as of the date that it begins its search. If any other date is used, the Commission must inform the requester of that date. A record that is excluded from the requirements of the FOIA pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(c), is not considered responsive to a request. Requests for the following types of records, however, should be submitted to the District Director for the pertinent district, field, area, or local office, at the district office address listed in §1610.4(c) or, in the case of the Washington Field Office, shall be submitted to the Field Office Director at 131 M Street NE., Fourth Floor, Washington, DC 20507:

(1) Information about current or former employees of an office;

(2) Existing non-confidential statistical data related to the case processing of an office;

(3) Agreements between the Commission and State or local fair employment agencies operating within the jurisdiction of an office; or

(4) Materials in office investigative files related to charges under: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*); the Equal Pay Act (29 U.S.C. 206(d)); the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (29 U.S.C. 621 *et seq.*); the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*); the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 2000ff *et seq.*); or the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (42 U.S.C. 2000gg *et seq.*).

(b) *Request for other records.* A request for any record which does not fall within the ambit of paragraph (a) of this section, or a request for any record the location of which is unknown to the person making the request, shall be submitted in writing to the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, by mail to 131 M Street NE., Suite 5NW02E, Washington, DC 20507, by fax to (202) 827–7545, by email to *FOIA@eeoc.gov*, or by Internet to *https://publicportalfoiapal.eeoc.gov/palMain.aspx*.

(c) *Authority to grant or deny requests.* The Commission has granted this authority to the Legal Counsel. The Legal Counsel is authorized to grant or to deny any requests for records that are maintained by the Commission.

(d) *Re-routing of misdirected requests.* Where the Commission determines that a request was misdirected within the agency, the receiving component's FOIA office must route the request to the FOIA office of the proper component(s) within the Commission.

(e) *Consultation, referral, and coordination.* When reviewing records located by the Commission in response to a request, the Commission will determine whether another agency of the Federal Government is better able to determine whether the record is exempt from disclosure under the FOIA. As to any such record, the Commission must proceed in one of the following ways:

(1) *Consultation.* When records originated with the Commission, but contain within them information of interest to another agency or other Federal Government office, the Commission will typically consult with that other

entity prior to making a release determination.

(2) *Referral.* (i) When the Commission believes that a different agency or component is best able to determine whether to disclose the record, the Commission typically will refer the responsibility for responding to the request regarding that record to that agency. Ordinarily, the agency that originated the record is presumed to be the best agency to make the disclosure determination. However, if the Commission is processing the request and the originating agency agrees that the Commission is in the best position to respond regarding the record, then the record may be handled as a consultation.

(ii) Whenever the Commission refers any part of the responsibility for responding to a request to another agency, it must document the referral, maintain a copy of the record that it refers, and notify the requester of the referral, informing the requester of the name(s) of the agency to which the record was referred, including that agency's FOIA contact information.

(3) *Coordination.* The standard referral procedure is not appropriate where disclosure of the identity of the agency to which the referral would be made could harm an interest protected by an applicable exemption, such as the exemptions that protect personal privacy or national security interests. For example, if a non-law enforcement agency responding to a request for records on a living third party locates within its files records originating with a law enforcement agency, and if the existence of that law enforcement interest in the third party was not publicly known, then to disclose that law enforcement interest could cause an unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of the third party. Similarly, if the Commission locates within its files material originating with an Intelligence Community agency and the involvement of that agency in the matter is classified and not publicly acknowledged, then to disclose or give attribution to the involvement of that Intelligence Community agency could cause national security harms. In such instances, in order to avoid harm to an interest protected by an applicable exemption, the Commission will coordinate with the originating agency to seek its views on the disclosability of the record. The release determination for the record that is the subject of the coordination will then be conveyed to the requester by the Commission.

(e) *Classified information.* On receipt of any request involving information that is marked classified, the Commission must determine whether the information is currently and properly classified in accordance with applicable classification rules. Whenever a request involves a record containing information that has been marked as classified or may be appropriate for classification by another agency under any applicable executive order concerning the classification of records, the Commission must refer the responsibility for responding to the request regarding that information to the agency that classified the information, or that should consider the information for classification. Whenever an agency's record contains information that has been derivatively classified (for example, when it contains information classified by another agency), the Commission must refer the responsibility for responding to that portion of the request to the agency that classified the underlying information.

(f) *Timing of responses to consultations and referrals.* All consultations and referrals received by the Commission will be handled according to the date that the referring agency received the perfected FOIA request.

(g) *Agreements regarding consultations and referrals.* The Commission may establish agreements with other agencies to eliminate the need for consultations or referrals with respect to particular types of records.

[81 FR 95872, Dec. 29, 2016, as amended at 87 FR 14799, Mar. 16, 2022; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1610.8 Authority to determine.

The Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, the District Director, or the District Director's designee, when receiving a request pursuant to these regulations, shall grant or deny such request. That decision shall be final,

subject only to administrative review as provided in §1610.11 of this subpart.

[78 FR 36651, June 19, 2013]

§1610.9 Responses: Timing.

(a) *In general.* The Commission ordinarily will respond to requests according to their order of receipt. The various ways in which to submit a request to, or check on the status of a request with, EEOC are listed at: *https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/foia/index.cfm.* The information located at *www.foia.gov/report-makerequest.html* contains a list of all agencies and components that are designated to accept requests. In instances involving misdirected requests that are re-routed pursuant to §1610.7(d), the response time will commence on the date that the request is received by the proper component office that is designated to receive requests, but in any event not later than 10 working days after the request is first received by the component office that is designated by these regulations to receive requests.

(b) *Multitrack processing.* The Commission designates a specific track for requests that are granted expedited processing, in accordance with the standards set forth in paragraph (f) of this section. The Commission also designates additional processing tracks that distinguish between simple and more complex requests based on the estimated amount of work or time needed to process the request. Among the factors considered are the number of records requested, the number of pages involved in processing the request and the need for consultations or referrals. The Commission must advise requesters of the track into which their request falls and, when appropriate, will offer the requesters an opportunity to narrow or modify their request so that it can be placed in a different processing track.

(c) *Acknowledgment.* The Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, the District Director, or the District Director's designee shall, within 10 days from receipt of a request, notify the requester in writing of the date the Commission received the request, the expected date of issuance of the determination, the individualized FOIA tracking number assigned to the request, and the telephone number or Internet site where requesters may inquire about the status of their request.

(d) *Unusual circumstances.* Whenever the Commission cannot meet the statutory time limit for processing a request because of ''unusual circumstances,'' as defined in the FOIA, and the Commission extends the time limit on that basis, the Commission must, before expiration of the 20-day period to respond, notify the requester in writing of the unusual circumstances involved and of the date by which the agency estimates processing of the request will be completed. Where the extension exceeds 10 working days, the agency must, as described by the FOIA, provide the requester with an opportunity to modify the request or arrange an alternative time period for processing the original or modified request. The Commission must make available its designated FOIA contact or its FOIA Public Liaison for this purpose. The contact information for the EEOC FOIA Public Liaison is located at: *https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/foia/index.cfm.* A list of agency FOIA Public Liaisons is available at: *http://www.foia.gov/report-makerequest.html.* The Commission must also alert requesters to the availability of the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to provide dispute resolution services.

(e) *Aggregating requests.* To satisfy unusual circumstances under the FOIA, the Commission may aggregate requests in cases where it reasonably appears that multiple requests, submitted either by a requester or by a group of requesters acting in concert, constitute a single request that would otherwise involve unusual circumstances. The Commission cannot aggregate multiple requests that involve unrelated matters.

(f) *Expedited processing.* (1) The Commission must process requests and appeals on an expedited basis whenever it is determined that they involve:

(i) Circumstances in which the lack of expedited processing could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual; or

(ii) An urgency to inform the public about an actual or alleged Federal Government activity, if made by a person

who is primarily engaged in disseminating information.

(2) A request for expedited processing may be made at any time. Requests based on paragraphs (f)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section must be submitted to the Commission or component of the Commission that maintains the records requested. When making a request for expedited processing of an administrative appeal, the request should be submitted to the Commission's Office of Legal Counsel, the office that adjudicates appeals.

(3) A requester who seeks expedited processing must submit a statement, certified to be true and correct, explaining in detail the basis for making the request for expedited processing. For example, under paragraph (f)(1)(ii) of this section, a requester who is not a full-time member of the news media must establish that the requester is a person whose primary professional activity or occupation is information dissemination, though it need not be the requester's sole occupation. Such a requester also must establish a particular urgency to inform the public about the government activity involved in the request—one that extends beyond the public's right to know about government activity generally. Depending on the circumstances, the existence of numerous recently published articles on a given subject may be helpful in establishing the requirement that there be an ''urgency to inform'' the public on the topic. This factor is not dispositive. As a matter of administrative discretion, the Commission may waive the formal certification requirement.

(4) The Commission must notify the requester within 10 calendar days of the receipt of a request for expedited processing of its decision whether to grant or deny expedited processing. If expedited processing is granted, the request must be given priority, placed in the processing track for expedited requests, and must be processed as soon as practicable. If a request for expedited processing is denied, the Commission must act on any appeal of that decision expeditiously.

(g) *Tolling.* The Commission may toll the statutory time period to issue its determination on a FOIA request one time during the processing of the request to obtain clarification from the requester. The statutory time period to issue the determination on disclosure is tolled until EEOC receives the information reasonably requested from the requester. The agency may also toll the statutory time period to issue the determination to clarify with the requester issues regarding fees. There is no limit on the number of times the agency may request clarifying fee information from the requester.

[81 FR 95873, Dec. 29, 2016]

§ 1610.10 Responses: Form and content.

(a) *In general.* The Commission, to the extent practicable, will communicate with requesters having access to the Internet electronically, such as email or web portal.

(b) *Acknowledgments of requests.* The Commission must acknowledge the request in writing and assign it an individualized tracking number if it will take longer than 10 working days to process. The Commission must include in the acknowledgment a brief description of the records sought to allow requesters to more easily keep track of their requests.

(c) *Estimated dates of completion and interim responses.* Upon request, the Commission will provide an estimated date by which it expects to provide a response to the requester. If a request involves a voluminous amount of material, or searches in multiple locations, the Commission may provide interim responses, releasing the records on a rolling basis.

(d) *Grants of requests.* Once the Commission determines it will grant a request in full or in part, it must notify the requester in writing. The agency must also inform the requester of any fees charged under §1610.15 of this part and must disclose the requested records to the requester promptly upon payment of any applicable fees. The Commission must inform the requester of the availability of its FOIA Public Liaison to offer assistance.

(e) *Adverse determinations of requests.* If the Commission makes an adverse determination denying a request in any respect, it must notify the requester of that determination in writing. Adverse

determinations, or denials of requests, include decisions that: The requested record is exempt, in whole or in part; the request does not reasonably describe the records sought; the information requested is not a record subject to the FOIA; the requested record does not exist, cannot be located, or has been destroyed; or the requested record is not readily reproducible in the form or format sought by the requester. Adverse determinations also include denials involving fees or fee waiver matters or denials of requests for expedited processing.

(f) *Content of denial.* The denial must be signed by the head of the Commission or designee and must include:

(1) The name and title or position of the person responsible for the denial;

(2) A brief statement of the reasons for the denial, including any FOIA exemption applied by the Commission in denying the request;

(3) An estimate of the volume of any records or information withheld, such as the number of pages or some other reasonable form of estimation (such an estimate is not required if the volume is otherwise indicated by deletions marked on records that are disclosed in part or if providing an estimate would harm an interest protected by an applicable exemption);

(4) A statement that the denial may be appealed under paragraph 1610.11 of this section, and a description of the appeal requirements; and

(5) A statement notifying the requester of the assistance available from the Commission's FOIA Public Liaison and the dispute resolution services offered by OGIS.

(g) *Markings on released documents.* Records disclosed in part must be marked clearly to show the amount of information deleted and the exemption under which the deletion was made unless doing so would harm an interest protected by an applicable exemption. The location of the information deleted must also be indicated on the record, if technically feasible.

[81 FR 95874, Dec. 29, 2016]

§ 1610.11 Appeals to the legal counsel from initial denials.

(a) *Requirements for making an appeal.* A requester may appeal any adverse determination to the Legal Counsel, or the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs. Any appeal of a determination issued by a District Director or the District Director's designee must include a copy of the District Director's or the District Director's designee's determination. If a FOIA appeal is misdirected to a District Office, the District Office shall forward the appeal to the Legal Counsel, or the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, as appropriate, within 10 business days. Examples of adverse determinations are provided in §1610.10(e). Requesters can submit appeals by mail, by fax to (202) 827–7545, by email to *FOIA@eeoc.gov*, or online at *https://publicportalfoiapal.eeoc.gov/palMain.aspx*. The requester must make the appeal in writing and to be considered timely it must be postmarked, or in the case of electronic submissions, transmitted, within 90 calendar days after the date of the response. The appeal should clearly identify the Commission determination that is being appealed and the assigned request number. To facilitate handling, the requester should mark both the appeal letter and envelope, or subject line of the electronic transmission, ''Freedom of Information Act Appeal.''

(b) *Adjudication of appeals.* (1) The Legal Counsel or designee, or the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, as appropriate, will decide all appeals under this section.

(2) An appeal ordinarily will not be adjudicated if the request becomes a matter of FOIA litigation.

(c) *Decisions on appeals.* The Commission must provide its decision on an appeal in writing. A decision that upholds the Commission's determination in whole or in part must contain a statement that identifies the reasons for the affirmance, including any FOIA exemptions applied. The decision must provide the requester with notification of the statutory right to file a lawsuit and will inform the requester of the dispute resolution services offered by the Office of Government Information Services of the National Archives and Records Administration as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. If the Commission's decision is remanded or modified on appeal, the Commission

will notify the requester of that determination in writing. The Commission will then further process the request in accordance with that appeal determination and will respond directly to the requester.

(d) *Engaging in dispute resolution services provided by OGIS.* Dispute resolution is a voluntary process. If the Commission agrees to participate in the dispute resolution services provided by OGIS, it will actively engage as a partner to the process in an attempt to resolve the dispute.

(e) *When appeal is required.* Before seeking review by a court of the Commission's adverse determination, a requester generally must first submit a timely administrative appeal.

(f) No personal appearance, oral argument or hearing will ordinarily be permitted in connection with an appeal to the Legal Counsel or the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs.

(g) On appeal, the Legal Counsel or designee, or the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, as appropriate, may reduce any fees previously assessed.

(h) In the event that the Commission terminates its proceedings on a charge after the District Director or the District Director's designee denies a request, in whole or in part, for the charge file but during consideration of the requester's appeal from that denial, the request may be remanded for redetermination. The requester retains a right to appeal to the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, from the decision on remand.

[78 FR 36652, June 19, 2013, as amended at 81 FR 95874, Dec. 29, 2016; 82 FR 45182, Sept. 28, 2017; 87 FR 14799, Mar. 16, 2022]

§ 1610.13 Maintenance of files.

The Commission must preserve all correspondence pertaining to the requests that it receives under this subpart, as well as copies of all requested records, until disposition or destruction is authorized pursuant to Title 44 of the United States Code or the General Records Schedule 4.2 of the National Archives and Records Administration. The Commission must not dispose of or destroy records while they are the subject of a pending request, appeal, or lawsuit under the FOIA.

[82 FR 45182, Sept. 28, 2017]

§ 1610.14 Waiver of user charges.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, the Legal Counsel or designee, the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, and the District Directors or designees shall assess fees where applicable in accordance with §1610.15 for search, review, and duplication of records requested. They shall also have authority to furnish documents without any charge or at a reduced charge if disclosure of the information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.

(b) District directors, field directors, area directors, local directors and the librarian are hereby authorized to collect fees where applicable in accordance with §1610.15 for duplication of records which are to be made available for public inspection and copying in the district, field, area or local office, or in the headquarters library in accordance with §1610.4(b). District directors, field directors, area directors, local directors and the librarian are hereby authorized to duplicate such records without charge, or at a reduced charge in accordance with the criteria of paragraph (a) of this section.

[52 FR 13830, Apr. 27, 1987, as amended at 54 FR 32062, Aug. 4, 1989; 56 FR 29578, June 28, 1991; 63 FR 1342, Jan. 9, 1998; 71 FR 26830, May 9, 2006; 78 FR 36653, June 19, 2013]

§ 1610.15 Schedule of fees and method of payment for services rendered.

(a) *In general.* (1) The Commission will charge for processing requests under the FOIA in accordance with the provisions of this section and with the OMB Guidelines. For purposes of assessing fees, the FOIA establishes three categories of requesters:

(i) Commercial use requesters;

(ii) Non-commercial scientific or educational institutions or news media requesters; and

(iii) All other requesters.

(2) Different fees are assessed depending on the category. Requesters may

seek a fee waiver. The Commission must consider requests for fee waiver in accordance with the requirements in paragraph (k) of this section. To resolve any fee issues that arise under this section, the Commission may contact a requester for additional information. The Commission must ensure that searches, review, and duplication are conducted in the most efficient and the least expensive manner. The Commission ordinarily will collect all applicable fees before sending copies of records to a requester. Requesters must pay fees by check or money order made payable to the Treasury of the United States, or through *Pay.gov*.

(b) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

(1) Commercial use request refers to a request that asks for information for a use or a purpose that furthers a commercial, trade, or profit interest, which can include furthering those interests through litigation. An agency's decision to place a requester in the commercial use category will be made on a case-by-case basis based on the requester's intended use of the information. The Commission will notify requesters of their placement in this category.

(2) Direct costs refers to those expenses that the Commission incurs in searching for and duplicating (and, in the case of commercial use requests, reviewing) records in order to respond to a FOIA request. For example, direct costs include the salary of the employee performing the work (for example, the basic rate of pay for the employee, plus 16 percent of that rate to cover benefits) and the cost of operating computers and other electronic equipment, such as photocopiers and scanners. Direct costs do not include overhead expenses such as the costs of space, and of heating or lighting a facility.

(3) Duplication refers to reproducing a copy of a record, or of the information contained in it, necessary to respond to a FOIA request. Copies can take the form of paper, audiovisual materials, or electronic records, among others.

(4) Educational institution refers to any school that operates a program of scholarly research. A requester in this fee category must show that the request is made in connection with his or her role at the educational institution. The Commission may seek verification from the requester that the request is in furtherance of scholarly research, and the Commission will advise requesters of their placement in this category.

Example 1. A request from a professor of sociology at a university for records relating to women in the workplace, written on letterhead of the Department of Sociology, would be presumed to be from an educational institution.

Example 2. A request from the same professor of sociology seeking candidate correspondence from the Commission in furtherance of a mystery book she is writing would not be presumed to be an institutional request, regardless of whether it was written on institutional stationery.

Example 3. A student who makes a request in furtherance of her coursework or other school-sponsored activities and provides a copy of a course syllabus or other reasonable documentation to indicate the research purpose for the request, would qualify as part of this fee category.

(5) Noncommercial scientific institution is an institution that is not operated on a ''commercial basis,'' as defined in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, and that is operated solely for the purpose of conducting scientific research the results of which are not intended to promote any particular product or industry. A requester in this category must show that the request is authorized by and is made under the auspices of a qualifying institution and that the records are sought to further scientific research and are not for a commercial use. The Commission will advise requesters of their placement in this category.

(6) Representative of the news media is any person or entity that gathers information of potential interest to a segment of the public, uses its editorial skills to turn the raw materials into a distinct work, and distributes that work to an audience. The term ''news'' means information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public. Examples of news media entities include television or radio stations that broadcast ''news'' to the public at large and publishers of periodicals that disseminate

''news'' and make their products available through a variety of means to the general public, including news organizations that disseminate solely on the Internet. A request for records supporting the news-dissemination function of the requester will not be considered to be for a commercial use. ''Freelance journalists'' who demonstrate a solid basis for expecting publication through a news media entity will be considered representatives of the news media. A publishing contract would provide the clearest evidence that publication is expected; however, the Commission can also consider a requester's past publication record in making this determination. The Commission will advise requesters of their placement in this category.

(7) Review is the examination of a record located in response to a request in order to determine whether any portion of it is exempt from disclosure. Review time includes processing any record for disclosure, such as doing all that is necessary to prepare the record for disclosure, including the process of redacting the record and marking the appropriate exemptions. Review costs are properly charged even if a record ultimately is not disclosed. Review time also includes time spent both obtaining and considering any formal objection to disclosure made by a confidential commercial information submitter under §1610.19, but it does not include time spent resolving general legal or policy issues regarding the application of exemptions.

(8) Search is the process of looking for and retrieving records or information responsive to a request. Search time includes page-by-page or line-by-line identification of information within records and the reasonable efforts expended to locate and retrieve information from electronic records.

(c) *Charging fees.* In responding to FOIA requests, the Commission will charge the following fees unless a waiver or reduction of fees has been granted under paragraph (k) of this section. Because the fee amounts provided below already account for the direct costs associated with a given fee type, the Commission will not add any additional costs to charges calculated under this section.

(1) *Search.* (i) Requests made by educational institutions, noncommercial scientific institutions, or representatives of the news media are not subject to search fees. The Commission will charge search fees for all other requesters, subject to the restrictions of paragraph (d) of this section. The Commission may properly charge for time spent searching even if it does not locate any responsive records or if it determines that the records are entirely exempt from disclosure.

(ii) For each quarter hour spent by personnel searching for requested records, including electronic searches that do not require new programming, the fees will be charged as follows:

(A) By clerical personnel—at the rate of $5.00 per quarter hour.

(B) By paralegals—at the rate of $9.00 per quarter hour.

(C) By professional personnel—at the rate of $10.00 per quarter hour.

(D) By managers—at the rate of $17.50 per quarter hour.

(E) By SES employees—at the rate of $20.00 per quarter hour.

(iii) The Commission will charge the direct costs associated with conducting any search that requires the creation of a new computer program to locate the requested records. The Commission must notify the requester of the costs associated with creating such a program, and the requester must agree to pay the associated costs before the costs may be incurred.

(iv) For requests that require the retrieval of records stored by the Commission at a Federal Records Center operated by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the Commission will charge additional costs in accordance with the Transactional Billing Rate Schedule established by NARA: *http://www.archives.gov/dc-metro/suitland/delivery-fees.html.*

(2) *Duplication.* The Commission will charge duplication fees to all requesters, subject to the restrictions of paragraph (d) of this section. The Commission must honor a requester's preference for receiving a record in a particular form or format where the Commission can readily reproduce it in the form or format requested. Where photocopies are supplied, the Commission

will provide one copy per request at the cost of $.15/page. For copies of records produced on tapes, disks, or other media, agencies will charge the direct costs of producing the copy, including operator time. Where paper documents must be scanned in order to comply with a requester's preference to receive the records in an electronic format, the requester must also pay the direct costs associated with scanning those materials. For other forms of duplication, the Commission will charge the direct costs.

(3) *Review*. The Commission will charge review fees to requesters who make commercial use requests. Review fees will be assessed in connection with the initial review of the record, for example, the review conducted by an agency to determine whether an exemption applies to a particular record or portion of a record. No charge will be made for review at the administrative appeal stage of exemptions applied at the initial review stage. However, if a particular exemption is deemed to no longer apply, any costs associated with an agency's re-review of the records in order to consider the use of other exemptions may be assessed as review fees. Review fees will be charged at the same rates as those charged for a search under paragraph (c)(1)(ii) of this section.

(d) *Restrictions on charging fees*. (1) When the Commission determines that a requester is an educational institution, non-commercial scientific institution, or representative of the news media, and the records are not sought for commercial use, it will not charge search fees.

(2)(i) If the Commission fails to comply with the FOIA's time limits in which to respond to a request, it may not charge search fees, or, in instances of requests from requesters described in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, may not charge duplication fees, except as described in paragraphs (d)(2)(ii) through (iv) of this section.

(ii) If the Commission has determined that unusual circumstances as defined by the FOIA apply and the Commission provided timely written notice to the requester in accordance with the FOIA, a failure to comply with the time limit shall be excused for an additional 10 days.

(iii) If the Commission has determined that unusual circumstances, as defined by the FOIA, apply and more than 5,000 pages are necessary to respond to the request, the Commission may charge search fees, or, in the case of requesters described in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, may charge duplication fees, if the following steps are taken. The Commission must have provided timely written notice of unusual circumstances to the requester in accordance with the FOIA, and the Commission must have discussed with the requester via written mail, email or telephone (or not made less than three good-faith attempts to do so) how the requester could effectively limit the scope of the request in accordance with 5 U.S.C 552(a)(6)(B)(ii). If this exception is satisfied, the Commission may charge all applicable fees incurred in the processing of the request.

(iv) If a court has determined that exceptional circumstances exist, as defined by the FOIA, a failure to comply with the time limits shall be excused for the length of time provided by the court order.

(3) No search or review fees will be charged for a quarter-hour period unless more than half of that period is required for search or review.

(4) Except for requesters seeking records for a commercial use, the Commission must provide without charge:

(i) The first 100 pages of duplication (or the cost equivalent for other media); and

(ii) The first two hours of search.

(5) No fee will be charged when the total fee, after deducting the 100 free pages (or its cost equivalent) and the first two hours of search, is equal to or less than $25.00.

(e) *Notice of anticipated fees in excess of $25.00*. (1) When the Commission determines or estimates that the fees to be assessed in accordance with this section will exceed $25.00, the Commission must notify the requester of the actual or estimated amount of the fees, including a breakdown of the fees for search, review, or duplication, unless the requester has indicated a willingness to pay fees as high as those anticipated. If only a portion of the fee can

be estimated readily, the Commission will advise the requester accordingly. If the request is not for noncommercial use, the notice will specify that the requester is entitled to the statutory entitlements of 100 pages of duplication at no charge and, if the requester is charged search fees, two hours of search time at no charge, and will advise the requester whether those entitlements have been provided.

(2) If the agency notifies the requester that the actual or estimated fees are in excess of $25.00, the request will not be considered received and further work will not be completed until the requester commits in writing to pay the actual or estimated total fee, or designates some amount of fees the requester is willing to pay, or in the case of a noncommercial use requester who has not yet been provided with the requester's statutory entitlements, designates that the requester seeks only that which can be provided by the statutory entitlements. The requester must provide the commitment or designation in writing, and must, when applicable, designate an exact dollar amount the requester is willing to pay. The Commission is not required to accept payments in installments.

(3) If the requester has indicated a willingness to pay some designated amount of fees, but the Commission estimates that the total fee will exceed that amount, the Commission will toll the processing of the request when it notifies the requester of the estimated fees in excess of the amount the requester has indicated a willingness to pay. The Commission will inquire whether the requester wishes to revise the amount of fees the requester is willing to pay or modify the request. Once the requester responds, the time to respond will resume from where it was at the date of the notification.

(4) The Commission must make available its FOIA Public Liaison or other FOIA professional to assist any requester in reformulating a request to meet the requester's needs at a lower cost.

(f) *Charges for other services.* Although not required to provide special services, if the Commission chooses to do so as a matter of administrative discretion, the direct costs of providing the service will be charged. Examples of such services include certifying that records are true copies, providing multiple copies of the same document, or sending records by means other than first class mail. The Commission charges for the following special services:

(1) For attestation of documents—$25.00 per authenticating affidavit or declaration. Additionally, there may be search and review charges assessed in accordance with the rates listed in paragraph (c)(1) of this section.

(2) For certification of document—$50.00 per authenticating affidavit or declaration. Additionally, there may be search and review charges assessed in accordance with the rates listed in paragraph (c)(1) of this section.

(g) *Charging interest.* The Commission may charge interest on any unpaid bill starting on the 31st day following the date of billing the requester. Interest charges will be assessed at the rate provided in 31 U.S.C. 3717 and will accrue from the billing date until payment is received by the agency. Agencies must follow the provisions of the Debt Collection Act of 1982, 5 U.S.C. 5514, as amended, and its administrative procedures, including the use of consumer reporting agencies, collection agencies, and offset.

(h) *Aggregating requests.* When the Commission reasonably believes that a requester or a group of requesters acting in concert is attempting to divide a single request into a series of requests for the purpose of avoiding fees, the Commission may aggregate those requests and charge accordingly. The Commission may presume that multiple requests of this type made within a 30-day period have been made in order to avoid fees. For requests separated by a longer period, the Commission will aggregate them only where there is a reasonable basis for determining that aggregation is warranted in view of all the circumstances involved. Multiple requests involving unrelated matters cannot be aggregated.

(i) *Advance payments.* (1) For requests other than those described in paragraph (i)(2) or (3) of this section, the Commission cannot require the requester to make an advance payment

before work is commenced or continued on a request. Payment owed for work already completed (for example, payment before copies are sent to a requester) is not an advance payment.

(2) When the Commission determines or estimates that a total fee to be charged under this section will exceed $250.00, it may require that the requester make an advance payment up to the amount of the entire anticipated fee before beginning to process the request. The Commission may elect to process the request prior to collecting fees when it receives a satisfactory assurance of full payment from a requester with a history of prompt payment.

(3) Where a requester has previously failed to pay a properly charged FOIA fee to the Commission within 30 calendar days of the billing date, the Commission may require that the requester pay the full amount due, plus any applicable interest on that prior request, and the Commission may require that the requester make an advance payment of the full amount of any anticipated fee before the Commission begins to process a new request or continues to process a pending request or any pending appeal. Where the Commission has a reasonable basis to believe that a requester has misrepresented the requester's identity in order to avoid paying outstanding fees, it may require that the requester provide proof of identity.

(4) In cases in which the Commission requires advance payment, the request will not be considered received and further work will not be completed until the required payment is received. If the requester does not pay the advance payment within 30 calendar days after the date of the Commission's fee determination, the request will be closed.

(j) *Other statutes specifically providing for fees.* The fee schedule of this section does not apply to fees charged under any statute that specifically requires an agency to set and collect fees for particular types of records. In instances where records responsive to a request are subject to a statutorily-based fee schedule program, the Commission must inform the requester of the contact information for that program.

(k) *Requirements for waiver or reduction of fees.* (1) Requesters may seek a waiver of fees by submitting a written application demonstrating how disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.

(2) The Commission must furnish records responsive to a request without charge or at a reduced rate when it determines, based on all available information, that the factors described in paragraphs (k)(2)(i) through (iii) of this section are satisfied.

(i) Disclosure of the requested information would shed light on the operations or activities of the government. The subject of the request must concern identifiable operations or activities of the Federal Government with a connection that is direct and clear, not remote or attenuated.

(ii) Disclosure of the requested information would be likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of those operations or activities. This factor is satisfied when the following criteria are met:

(A) Disclosure of the requested records must be meaningfully informative about government operations or activities. The disclosure of information that already is in the public domain, in either the same or a substantially identical form, would not be meaningfully informative if nothing new would be added to the public's understanding.

(B) The disclosure must contribute to the understanding of a reasonably broad audience of persons interested in the subject, as opposed to the individual understanding of the requester. A requester's expertise in the subject area as well as the requester's ability and intention to effectively convey information to the public must be considered. The Commission will presume that a representative of the news media will satisfy this consideration.

(iii) The disclosure must not be primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. To determine whether disclosure of the requested information is primarily in the commercial interest

of the requester, the Commission will consider the following criteria:

(A) The Commission must identify whether the requester has any commercial interest that would be furthered by the requested disclosure. A commercial interest includes any commercial, trade, or profit interest. Requesters must be given an opportunity to provide explanatory information regarding this consideration.

(B) If there is an identified commercial interest, the Commission must determine whether that is the primary interest furthered by the request. A waiver or reduction of fees is justified when the requirements of paragraphs (k)(2)(i) and (ii) of this section are satisfied and any commercial interest is not the primary interest furthered by the request. The Commission ordinarily will presume that when a news media requester has satisfied factors set forth in paragraphs (k)(2)(i) and (ii) of this section, the request is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester. Disclosure to data brokers or others who merely compile and market government information for direct economic return will not be presumed to primarily serve the public interest.

(3) Where only some of the records to be released satisfy the requirements for a waiver of fees, a waiver must be granted for those records.

(4) Requests for a waiver or reduction of fees should be made when the request is first submitted to the Commission and should address the criteria referenced above. A requester may submit a fee waiver request at a later time so long as the underlying record request is pending or on administrative appeal. When a requester who has committed to pay fees subsequently asks for a waiver of those fees and that waiver is denied, the requester must pay any costs incurred up to the date the fee waiver request was received.

[81 FR 95875, Dec. 29, 2016]

§ 1610.16 [Reserved]

§ 1610.17 Exemptions.

(a) 5 U.S.C. 552 exempts from all of its publication and disclosure requirements nine categories of records which are described in 552(b). These categories include such matters as national defense and foreign policy information, investigatory files, internal procedures and communications, materials exempted from disclosure by other statutes, information given in confidence, and matters involving personal privacy.

(b) The Commission shall withhold information under the FOIA only if:

(1) It reasonably foresees that disclosure would harm an interest protected by an exemption; or

(2) Disclosure is prohibited by law.

(c)(1) The Commission shall consider whether partial disclosure of information is possible whenever it determines that a full disclosure of a requested record is not possible; and

(2) Take reasonable steps necessary to segregate and release nonexempt information.

(d) Paragraph (c) of this section does not require disclosure of information that is otherwise prohibited from disclosure by law, or otherwise exempted from disclosure under Exemption 3.

(e) Section 706(b) of title VII provides that the Commission shall not make public charges which have been filed. It also provides that (subsequent to the filing of a charge, an investigation, and a finding that there is reasonable cause to believe that the charge is true) nothing said or done during and as a part of the Commission's endeavors to eliminate any alleged unlawful employment practice by informal methods of conference, conciliation, and persuasion may be made public by the Commission without the written consent of the parties concerned; nor may it be used as evidence in a subsequent proceeding. Any officer or employee of the Commission who shall make public in any manner whatever any information in violation of section 706(b) shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be fined not more than $1,000 or imprisoned not more than 1 year.

(f) Section 709 of title VII authorizes the Commission to conduct investigations of charges filed under section 706, engage in cooperative efforts with State and local agencies charged with the administration of State or local fair employment practices laws, and issue regulations concerning reports

and record-keeping. Section (e) of section 709 provides that it shall be unlawful for any officer or employee of the Commission to make public in any manner whatever any information obtained by the Commission pursuant to its authority under section 709 prior to the institution of any proceeding under the act involving such information. Any officer or employee of the Commission who shall make public in any manner whatever any information in violation of section 709(e) shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be fined not more than $1,000 or imprisoned not more than 1 year.

(g) Special disclosure rules apply to the case files for charging parties, aggrieved persons on whose behalf a charge has been filed, and entities against whom charges have been filed. The special disclosure rules are available in the public reading areas of the Commission. Under sections 706 and 709, case files involved in the administrative process of the Commission are not available to the public.

(h) Each executed statistical reporting form required under part 1602 of this chapter, such as Employer Information Report EEO–1, etc., relating to a particular employer is exempt from disclosure to the public prior to the institution of a proceeding under title VII involving information from such form.

(i) Section 107 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12117); section 207(a) of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 2000ff–6); and section 104 of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2) explicitly adopt the powers, remedies, and procedures set forth in sections 706 and 709 of title VII. Accordingly, the prohibitions on disclosure contained in sections 706 and 709 of title VII as outlined in paragraphs (b), (c), (d), and (e) of this section, apply with equal force to requests for information related to charges and executed statistical reporting forms filed with the Commission under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, or the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.

(j) Requests for information relating to open case files covering alleged violations of the Equal Pay Act (29 U.S.C. 206(b)) or the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (29 U.S.C. 621 *et seq.*) will ordinarily be denied under the seventh exemption of the Freedom of Information Act as investigatory records compiled for law enforcement purposes.

(k) The medical, financial, and personnel files of employees of the Commission are exempt from disclosure to the public.

(l) The deliberative process privilege attached to Exemption 5 shall not apply to records created 25 years or more before the date on which the records were requested.

[40 FR 8171, Feb. 26, 1975, as amended at 45 FR 40605, June 16, 1980; 56 FR 29579, June 28, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 81 FR 95878, Dec. 29, 2016; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1610.18 Information to be disclosed.

The Commission will provide the following information to the public. This information will also be made available electronically:

(a) The Commission will make available for inspection and copying certain tabulations of aggregate industry, area, and other statistics derived from the Commission's reporting programs authorized by section 709(c) of title VII, provide that such tabulations: Were previously compiled by the Commission and are available in documentary form; comprise an aggregation of data from not less than three responding entities; and, do not reveal the identity of an individual or dominant entity in a particular industry or area;

(b) All blank forms used by the Commission;

(c) Subject to the restrictions and procedures set forth in §1610.19, all signed contracts, final bids on all signed contracts, and agreements between the Commission and State or local agencies charged with the administration of State or local fair employment practices laws;

(d) All final reports that do not contain statutorily confidential material in a recognizable form;

(e) All agency correspondence to members of the public, Members of

Congress, or other persons not government employees or special government employees, except those containing information that would produce an invasion of privacy if made public;

(f) All administrative staff manuals and instructions to staff that affect members of the public unless the materials are promptly published and copies offered for sale; and

(g) All final votes of each Commissioner, for every Commission meeting, except for votes pertaining to filing suit against respondents until such litigation is commenced.

(h) Underlying annual FOIA report data.

[56 FR 29579, June 28, 1991, as amended at 63 FR 1342, Jan. 9, 1998; 78 FR 36653, June 19, 2013]

§ 1610.19 Predisclosure notification procedures for confidential commercial information.

(a) *Definitions.* (1) Confidential commercial information means commercial or financial information obtained by the agency from a submitter that may be protected from disclosure under Exemption 4 of the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4).

(2) Submitter means any person or entity, including a corporation, State, or foreign government, but not including another Federal Government entity, that provides confidential commercial information, either directly or indirectly to the Federal Government.

(b) *Designation of confidential commercial information.* A submitter of confidential commercial information must use good faith efforts to designate by appropriate markings, at the time of submission, any portion of its submission that it considers to be protected from disclosure under Exemption 4. These designations expire 10 years after the date of the submission unless the submitter requests and provides justification for a longer designation period.

(c) *When notice to submitters is required.* (1) The Commission must promptly provide written notice to the submitter of confidential commercial information whenever records containing such information are requested under the FOIA if the Commission determines that it may be required to disclose the records, provided—

(i) The requested information has been designated in good faith by the submitter as information considered protected from disclosure under Exemption 4; or

(ii) The Commission has a reason to believe that the requested information may be protected from disclosure under Exemption 4, but has not yet determined whether the information is protected from disclosure.

(2) The notice must either describe the commercial information requested or include a copy of the requested records or portions of records containing the information. In cases involving a voluminous number of submitters, the Commission may post or publish a notice in a place or manner reasonably likely to inform the submitters of the proposed disclosure, instead of sending individual notifications.

(d) *Exceptions to submitter notice requirements.* The notice requirements of this section do not apply if:

(1) The Commission determines that the information is exempt under the FOIA, and therefore will not be disclosed;

(2) The information has been lawfully published or has been officially made available to the public;

(3) Disclosure of the information is required by a statute other than the FOIA or by a regulation issued in accordance with the requirements of Executive Order 12600 of June 23, 1987; or

(4) The designation made by the submitter under paragraph (b) of this section appears obviously frivolous. In such case, the Commission must give the submitter written notice of any final decision to disclose the information within 10 days prior to a specified disclosure date.

(e) *Opportunity to object to disclosure.* (1) The Commission must specify a reasonable time period within which the submitter must respond to the notice referenced above.

(2) If a submitter has any objections to disclosure, it should provide the agency a detailed written statement that specifies all grounds for withholding the particular information under any exemption of the FOIA. In

order to rely on Exemption 4 as basis for nondisclosure, the submitter must explain why the information constitutes a trade secret or commercial or financial information that is confidential.

(3) A submitter who fails to respond within the time period specified in the notice will be considered to have no objection to disclosure of the information. The Commission is not required to consider any information received after the date of any disclosure decision. Any information provided by a submitter under this subpart may itself be subject to disclosure under the FOIA.

(f) *Analysis of objections.* The Commission must consider a submitter's objections and specific grounds for nondisclosure in deciding whether to disclose the requested information.

(g) *Notice of intent to disclose.* Whenever the Commission decides to disclose information over the objection of a submitter, the Commission must provide the submitter written notice, which must include:

(1) A statement of the reasons why each of the submitter's disclosure objections was not sustained;

(2) A description of the information to be disclosed or copies of the records as the Commission intends to release them; and

(3) A specified disclosure date, which must be 10 days after the notice.

(h) *Notice of FOIA lawsuit.* Whenever a requester files a lawsuit seeking to compel the disclosure of confidential commercial information, the Commission must promptly notify the submitter.

(i) *Requester notification.* The Commission must notify the requester whenever it provides the submitter with notice and an opportunity to object to disclosure; whenever it notifies the submitter of its intent to disclose the requested information; and whenever a submitter files a lawsuit to prevent the disclosure of the information.

[81 FR 95878, Dec. 29, 2016]

§ 1610.20 [Reserved]

§ 1610.21 Annual report.

(a) The Legal Counsel shall, on or before February 1, submit individual Freedom of Information Act reports for each principal agency FOIA component and one for the entire agency covering the preceding fiscal year to the Attorney General of the United States and to the director of the Office of Information Government Services. The reports shall include those matters required by 5 U.S.C. 552(e), and shall be made available electronically on the agency Web site.

(b) The Commission will make each such report available for public inspection in an electronic format. In addition, the Commission will make the raw statistical data used in each report available in a timely manner for public inspection in an electronic format, which will be available—

(1) Without charge, license, or registration requirement;

(2) In an aggregated, searchable format; and

(3) In a format that may be downloaded in bulk.

(c) When and as directed by the Attorney General, the Chief FOIA Officer, through the Office of the Chair, shall review and report to the Attorney General on the agency's performance in implementing its responsibilities under FOIA.

[78 FR 36653, June 19, 2013, as amended at 81 FR 95879, Dec. 29, 2016]

Subpart B—Production in Response to Subpenas or Demands of Courts or Other Authorities

§ 1610.30 Purpose and scope.

This subpart contains the regulations of the Commission concerning procedures to be followed when a subpena, order, or other demand (hereinafter in this subpart referred to as a ''demand'') of a court or other authority is issued for the production or disclosure of (a) any material contained in the files of the Commission; (b) any information relating to material contained in the files of the Commission; or (c) any information or material acquired by any person while such person was an employee of the Commission as a part of the performance of his official duties or because of his official status.

[32 FR 16261, Nov. 29, 1967]

§ 1610.32 Production prohibited unless approved by the Legal Counsel.

No employee or former employee of the Commission shall, in response to a demand of a court or other authority, produce any material contained in the files of the Commission or disclose any information or produce any material acquired as part of the performance of his official duties or because of his official status without the prior approval of the Legal Counsel.

[32 FR 16261, Nov. 29, 1967, as amended at 47 FR 46275, Oct. 18, 1982]

§ 1610.34 Procedure in the event of a demand for production or disclosure.

(a) Whenever a demand is made upon an employee or former employee of the Commission for the production of material or the disclosure of information described in §1610.30, he shall immediately notify the Legal Counsel. If possible, the Legal Counsel shall be notified before the employee or former employee concerned replies to or appears before the court or other authority.

(b) If response to the demand is required before instructions from the Legal Counsel are received, an attorney designated for that purpose by the Commission shall appear with the employee or former employee upon whom the demand has been made, and shall furnish the court or other authority with a copy of the regulations contained in this part and inform the court or other authority that the demand has been or is being, as the case may be, referred for prompt consideration by the Legal Counsel. The court or other authority shall be requested respectfully to stay the demand pending receipt of the requested instructions from the Legal Counsel.

[32 FR 16261, Nov. 29, 1967, as amended at 47 FR 46275, Oct. 18, 1982; 63 FR 1342, Jan. 9, 1998]

§ 1610.36 Procedure in the event of an adverse ruling.

If the court or other authority declines to stay the effect of the demand in response to a request made in accordance with §1610.34(b) pending receipt of instructions from the Legal Counsel, or if the court or other authority rules that the demand must be complied with irrespective of the instructions from the Legal Counsel not to produce the material or disclose the information sought, the employee or former employee upon whom the demand has been made shall respectfully decline to comply with the demand (United States ex rel. *Touhy* v. *Ragen*, 340 U.S. 462 (1951)).

[32 FR 16261, Nov. 29, 1967, as amended at 47 FR 46275, Oct. 18, 1982]

PART 1611—PRIVACY ACT REGULATIONS

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 552a.

SOURCE: 42 FR 7949, Feb. 8, 1977, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1611.1 Purpose and scope.

This part contains the regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (the Commission) implementing the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a. It sets forth the basic responsibilities of the Commission under the Privacy Act (the Act) and offers guidance to members of the public who wish to exercise any of the rights established by the Act with regard to records maintained by the Commission.

All records contained in system EEOC/GOVT–1, including those maintained by other agencies, are subject to the Commission's Privacy Act regulations. Requests for access to, an accounting of disclosures for, or amendment of records in EEOC/GOVT–1 must be processed by agency personnel in accordance with this part. Commission records that are contained in a government-wide system of records established by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the General Services Administration (GSA), the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) or the Department of Labor (DOL) for which those agencies have published systems notices are subject to the publishing agency's Privacy Act regulations. Where the government-wide systems notices permit access to these records through the employing agency, an individual should submit requests for access to, for amendment of or for an accounting of disclosures to the Commission offices as indicated in §1611.3(b).

[56 FR 29580, June 28, 1991]

§1611.2 Definitions.

For purposes of this part, the terms *individual*, *maintain*, *record*, and *system of records* shall have the meanings set forth in 5 U.S.C. 552a.

§1611.3 Procedures for requests pertaining to individual records in a record system.

(a) Any person who wishes to be notified if a system of records maintained by the Commission contains any record pertaining to him or her, or to request access to such record or to request an accounting of disclosures made of such record, shall submit a written request, either in person or by mail, in accordance with the instructions set forth in the system notice published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. The request shall include:

(1) The name of the individual making the request;

(2) The name of the system of records (as set forth in the system notice to which the request relates);

(3) Any other information specified in the system notice; and

(4) When the request is for access to records, a statement indicating whether the requester desires to make a personal inspection of the records or be supplied with copies by mail.

(b) Requests pertaining to records contained in a system of records established by the Commission and for which the Commission has published a system notice should be submitted to the person or office indicated in the system notice. Requests pertaining to Commission records contained in the government-wide systems of records listed below should be submitted as follows:

(1) For systems OPM/GOVT–1 (General Personnel Records), OPM/GOVT–2 (Employee Performance File System Records), OPM/GOVT–3 (Records of Adverse Actions and Actions Based on Unacceptable Performance), OPM/GOVT–5 (Recruiting, Examining and Placement Records), OPM/GOVT–6 (Personnel Research and Test Validation Records), OPM/GOVT–9 (Files on Position Classification Appeals, Job Grading Appeals and Retained Grade or Pay Appeals), OPM/GOVT–10 (Employee Medical File System Records) and DOL/ESA–13 (Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Federal Employees' Compensation File), to the Director of Personnel Management Services, EEOC, 131 M Street, NE., Washington, DC 20507;

(2) For systems OGE/GOVT–1 (Executive Branch Public Financial Disclosure Reports and Other Ethics Program Records), OGE/GOVT–2 (Confidential Statements of Employment and Financial Interests) and MSPB/GOVT–1 (Appeal and Case Records), to the Legal Counsel, EEOC, 131 M Street, NE., Washington, DC 20507;

(3) For system OPM/GOVT–7 (Applicant Race, Sex, National Origin, and Disability Status Records), to the Director of the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, EEOC, 131 M Street NE., Washington, DC 20507;

(4) For systems GSA/GOVT–3 (Travel Charge Card Program) and GSA/GOVT–4 (Contracted Travel Services Program) to the Director of Financial and Resource Management Services, EEOC, 131 M Street, NE., Washington, DC 20507.

(c) Any person whose request for access under paragraph (a) of this section is denied, may appeal that denial in accordance with §1611.5(c).

[42 FR 7949, Feb. 8, 1977, as amended at 56 FR 29581, June 28, 1991; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009]

§1611.4 Times, places, and requirements for identification of individuals making requests.

(a) If a person submitting a request for access under §1611.3 has asked that the Commission authorize a personal inspection of records pertaining to that person, and the appropriate Commission official has granted that request the requester shall present himself or herself at the time and place specified in the Commission's response or arrange another, mutually convenient time with the appropriate Commission official.

(b) Prior to inspection of the records, the requester shall present sufficient personal identification (e.g., driver's license, employee identification card, social security card, credit cards). If the requester is unable to provide such identification, the requester shall complete and sign in the presence of a Commission official a signed statement asserting his or her identity and stipulating that he or she understands that knowingly or willfully seeking or obtaining access to records about another individual under false pretenses is a misdemeanor punishable by fine up to $5,000.

(c) Any person who has requested access under §1611.3 to records through personal inspection, and who wishes to be accompanied by another person or persons during this inspection, shall submit a written statement authorizing disclosure of the record in such person's or person's presence.

(d) If an individual submitting a request by mail under §1611.3 wishes to have copies furnished by mail, he or she must include with the request a signed and notarized statement asserting his or her identity and stipulating that he or she understands that knowlingly or willfully seeking or obtaining access to records about another individual under false pretenses is a misdemeanor punishable by fine up to $5,000.

(e) A request filed by the parent of any minor or the legal guardian of any incompetent person shall: state the relationship of the requester to the individual to whom the record pertains; present sufficient identification; and, if not evident from information already available to the Commission, present appropriate proof of the relationship or guardianship.

(f) A person making a request pursuant to a power of attorney must possess a specific power of attorney to make that request.

(g) No verification of identity will be required where the records sought are publicly available under the Freedom of Information Act.

§1611.5 Disclosure of requested information to individuals.

(a) Upon receipt of request for notification as to whether the Commission maintains a record about an individual and/or request for access to such record:

(1) The appropriate Commission official shall acknowledge such request in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the request. Wherever practicable, the acknowledgement should contain the notification and/or determination required in paragraph (a) (2) of this section.

(2) The appropriate Commission official shall provide, within 30 working days of receipt of the request, written notification to the requester as to the existence of the records and/or a determination as to whether or not access will be granted. In some cases, such as where records have to be recalled from the Federal Records Center, notification and/or a determination of access may be delayed. In the event of such a delay, the Commission official shall inform the requester of this fact, the reasons for the delay, and an estimate of the date on which notification and/or a determination will be forthcoming.

(3) If access to a record is granted, the determination shall indicate when and where the record will be available for personal inspection. If a copy of the record has been requested, the Commission official shall mail that copy or retain it at the Commission to present to the individual, upon receipt of a check

or money order in an amount computed pursuant to §1611.11.

(4) When access to a record is to be granted, the appropriate Commission official will normally provide access within 30 working days of receipt of the request unless, for good cause shown, he or she is unable to do so, in which case the requester shall be informed within 30 working days of receipt of the request as to those reasons and when it is anticipated that access will be granted.

(5) The Commission shall not deny any request under §1611.3 concerning the existence of records about the requester in any system of records it maintains, or any request for access to such records, unless that system is exempted from the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552a in §§1611.13, 1611.14, or 1611.15.

(6) If the Commission receives a request pursuant to §1611.3 for access to records in a system of records it maintains which is so exempt, the appropriate Commission official shall deny the request.

(b) Upon request, the appropriate Commission official shall make available an accounting of disclosures pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(c)(3), unless that system is exempted from the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552a in §§1611.13, 1611.14, or 1611.15.

(c) If a request for access to records is denied pursuant to paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, the determination shall specify the reasons for the denial and advise the individual how to appeal the denial. If the request pertains to a system of records for which the Commission has published a system notice, any appeal must be submitted in writing to the Legal Counsel, EEOC, 131 M Street, NE., Washington, DC 20507. If the request pertains to a government-wide system of records any appeal should be in writing, identified as a Privacy Act appeal and submitted as follows:

(1) For systems established by OPM and for which OPM has published a system notice, to the Assistant Director for Workforce Information, Personnel Systems and Oversight Group, OPM, 1900 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20415. The OPM Privacy Act regulations, 5 CFR 297.207, shall govern such appeals.

(2) For systems established by OGE and for which OGE has published a system notice, to the Privacy Act Officer, Office of Government Ethics, 1201 New York Avenue, NW., Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005–3917. The OGE Privacy Act regulations, 5 CFR part 2606, shall govern such appeals.

(3) For the system established by MSPB and for which MSPB has published a system notice, to the Deputy Executive Director for Management, U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20419. The MSPB Privacy Act regulations, 5 CFR part 1205, shall govern such appeals.

(4) For systems established by GSA and for which GSA has published a system notice, to GSA Privacy Act Officer, General Services Administration (ATRAI), Washington, DC 20405. The GSA Privacy Act regulations, 41 CFR 105–64.301–5, shall govern such appeals.

(5) For the system established by DOL and for which DOL has published a system notice, to the Solicitor of Labor, Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20210. The DOL Privacy Act regulations, 29 CFR 70a.9, shall govern such appeals.

(d) In the event that access to a record is denied on appeal by the Legal Counsel or the Legal Counsel's designee, the requestor shall be advised of his or her right to bring a civil action in Federal district court for review of the denial in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a(g).

(e) Nothing in 5 U.S.C. 552a or this part allows an individual access to any information compiled in reasonable anticipation of a civil action or proceeding.

[42 FR 7949, Feb. 8, 1977, as amended at 56 FR 29581, June 28, 1991; ; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009; 74 FR 6831, Feb. 11, 2009]

§1611.6 Special procedures: Medical records.

In the event the Commission receives a request pursuant to §1611.3 for access to medical records (including psychological records) whose disclosure of which the appropriate Commission official determines could be harmful to the

individual to whom they relate, he or she may refuse to disclose the records directly to the requester but shall transmit them to a physician designated by that individual.

§ 1611.7 Request for correction or amendment to record.

(a) Any person who wishes to request correction or amendment of any record pertaining to him or her which is contained in a system of records maintained by the Commission, shall submit that request in writing in accordance with the instructions set forth in the system notice for that system of records. If the request is submitted by mail, the envelope should be clearly labeled ''Personal Information Amendment.'' The request shall include:

(1) The name of the individual making the request;

(2) The name of the system of records as set forth in the system notice to which the request relates;

(3) A description of the nature (e.g., modification, addition or deletion) and substance of the correction or amendment requested; and

(4) Any other information specified in the system notice.

(b) Any person submitting a request pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section shall include sufficient information in support of that request to allow the Commission to apply the standards set forth in 5 U.S.C. 552a (e).

(c) All requests to amend pertaining to personnel records described in §1611.3(b) shall conform to the requirements of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section and may be directed to the appropriate officials as indicated in §1611.3(b). Such requests may also be directed to the system manager specified in the OPM's systems notices.

(d) Any person whose request under paragraph (a) of this section is denied may appeal that denial in accordance with §1611.9(a).

[42 FR 7949, Feb. 8, 1977, as amended at 56 FR 29581, June 28, 1991]

§ 1611.8 Agency review of request for correction or amendment to record.

(a) When the Commission receives a request for amendment or correction under §1611.7(a), the appropriate Commission official shall acknowledge that request in writing within 10 working days of receipt. He or she shall promptly either:

(1) Determine to grant all or any portion of a request for correction or amendment; and:

(i) Advise the individual of that determination;

(ii) Make the requested correction or amendment; and

(iii) Inform any person or agency outside the Commission to whom the record has been disclosed, and where an accounting of that disclosure is maintained in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a(c), of the occurrence and substance of the correction or amendments, or;

(2) Inform the requester of the refusal to amend the record in accordance with the request; the reason for the refusal; and the procedures whereby the requester can appeal the refusal to the Legal Counsel of the Commission.

(b) If the Commission official informs the requester of the determination within the 10-day deadline, a separate acknowledgement is not required.

(c) In conducting the review of a request for correction or amendment, the Commission official shall be guided by the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552a(e).

(d) In the event that the Commission receives a notice of correction or amendment from another agency that pertains to records maintained by the Commission, the Commission shall make the appropriate correction or amendment to its records and comply with paragraph (a)(1)(iii) of this section.

(e) Requests for amendment or correction of records maintained in the government-wide systems of records listed in §1611.5(c) shall be governed by the appropriate agency's regulations cited in that paragraph. Requests for amendment or correction of records maintained by other agencies in system EEOC/GOVT–1 shall be governed by the Commission's regulations in this part.

[42 FR 7949, Feb. 8, 1977, as amended at 56 FR 29581, June 28, 1991]

§ 1611.9 Appeal of initial adverse agency determination on correction or amendment.

(a) If a request for correction or amendment of a record in a system of records established by EEOC is denied, the requester may appeal the determination in writing to the Legal Counsel, EEOC, 131 M Street, NE., Washington, DC 20507. If the request pertains to a record that is contained in the government-wide systems of records listed in §1611.5(c), an appeal must be made in accordance with the appropriate agency's regulations cited in that paragraph.

(b) The Legal Counsel or the Legal Counsel's designee shall make a final determination with regard to an appeal submitted under paragraph (a) of this section not later than 30 working days from the date on which the individual requests a review, unless for good cause shown, this 30-day period is extended and the requester is notified of the reasons for the extension and of the estimated date on which a final determination will be made. Such extensions will be used only in exceptional circumstances and will not normally exceed 30 working days.

(c) In conducting the review of an appeal submitted under paragraph (a) of this section, the Legal Counsel or the Legal Counsel's designee shall be guided by the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552a(e).

(d) If the Legal Counsel or the Legal Counsel's designee determines to grant all or any portion of a request on an appeal submitted under paragraph (a) of this section, he or she shall so inform the requester, and the appropriate Commission official shall comply with the procedures set forth in §1611.8(a)(1)(ii) and (iii).

(e) If the Legal Counsel or the Legal Counsel's designee determines in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section not to grant all or any portion of a request on an appeal submitted under paragraph (a) of this section, he or she shall inform the requester:

(1) Of this determination and the reasons for it;

(2) Of the requester's right to file a concise statement of reasons for disagreement with the determination of the Legal Counsel or the Legal Counsel's designee;

(3) That such statements of disagreement will be made available to anyone to whom the record is subsequently disclosed, together with (if the Legal Counsel or Legal Counsel's designee deems it appropriate) a brief statement summarizing the Legal Counsel or Legal Counsel's designee's reasons for refusing to amend the record;

(4) That prior recipients of the disputed record will be provided with a copy of the statement of disagreement together with (if the Legal Counsel or Legal Counsel's designee deems it appropriate) a brief statement of the Legal Counsel or Legal Counsel's designee's reasons for refusing to amend the record, to the extent that an accounting of disclosure is maintained under 5 U.S.C. 552a(c); and

(5) Of the requester's right to file a civil action in Federal district court to seek a review of the determination of the Legal Counsel or the Legal Counsel's designee in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a(g).

(f) The Legal Counsel or the Legal Counsel's designee shall ensure that any statements of disagreement submitted by a requestor are made available or distributed in accordance with paragraphs (e) (3) and (4) of this section.

[56 FR 29582, June 28, 1991, as amended by; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009]

§ 1611.10 Disclosure of record to person other than the individual to whom it pertains.

The Commission shall not disclose any record which is contained in a system of records it maintains, by any means of communication to any person or to another agency, except pursuant to a written request by, or with the prior written consent of the individual to whom the record pertains, unless the disclosure is authorized by one or more provisions of 5 U.S.C. 552a(b).

§ 1611.11 Fees.

(a) No fee shall be charged for searches necessary to locate records. No charge shall be made if the total fees authorized are less than $1.00. Fees shall be charged for services rendered under this part as follows:

(1) For copies made by photocopy—$0.15 per page (maximum of 10 copies). For copies prepared by computer, such as tapes or printouts, EEOC will charge the direct cost incurred by the agency, including operator time. For other forms of duplication, EEOC will charge the actual costs of that duplication.

(2) For attestation of documents—$25.00 per authenticating affidavit or declaration.

(3) For certification of documents—$50.00 per authenticating affidavit or declaration.

(b) All required fees shall be paid in full prior to issuance of requested copies of records. Fees are payable to ''Treasurer of the United States.''

[71 FR 11309, Mar. 7, 2006]

§ 1611.12 Penalties.

The criminal penalties which have been established for violations of the Privacy Act of 1974 are set forth in 5 U.S.C. 552a(i). Penalties are applicable to any officer or employee of the Commission; to contractors and employees of such contractors who enter into contracts with the Commission on or after September 27, 1975, and who are considered to be employees of the Commission within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. 552a(m); and to any person who knowingly and willfully requests or obtains any record concerning an individual from the Commission under false pretenses.

§ 1611.13 Specific Exemptions—Charge and complaint files.

Pursuant to subsection (k)(2) of the Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(2), systems EEOC–1 (Age and Equal Pay Act Discrimination Case Files), EEOC–3 (Title VII, Americans with Disabilities Act, GINA, and PWFA Discrimination Case Files), EEOC–15 (Internal Harassment Inquiries) and EEOC/GOVT–1 (Equal Employment Opportunity Complaint Records and Appeal Records) are exempt from subsections (c)(3), (d), (e)(1), (e)(4)(G), (e)(4)(H), (e)(4)(I), and (f) of the Privacy Act. The Commission has determined to exempt these systems from the above-named provisions of the Privacy Act for the following reasons:

(a) The files in these systems contain information obtained by the Commission and other Federal agencies in the course of harassment inquiries, and investigations of charges and complaints that violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, and the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act have occurred. It would impede the law enforcement activities of the Commission and other agencies if these provisions of the Act applied to such records.

(b) The subject individuals of the files in these systems know that the Commission or their employing agencies are maintaining a file on their charge, complaint, or inquiry, and the general nature of the information contained in it.

(c) Subject individuals of the files in EEOC–1 (Age and Equal Pay Act Discrimination Case Files), EEOC–3 (Title VII, Americans with Disabilities Act, GINA, and PWFA Discrimination Case Files), and EEOC/GOVT–1 (Equal Employment Opportunity Complaint Records and Appeal Records) have been provided a means of access to their records by the Freedom of Information Act. Subject individuals of the charge files in system EEOC–3 have also been provided a means of access to their records by section 83 of the Commission's Compliance Manual. Subject individuals of the case files in system EEOC/GOVT–1 have also been provided a means of access to their records by the Commission's Equal Employment Opportunity in the Federal Government regulation, 29 CFR 1614.108(f).

(d) Many of the records contained in system EEOC/GOVT–1 are obtained from other systems of records. If such records are incorrect, it would be more appropriate for an individual to seek to amend or correct those records in their primary filing location so that notice of the correction can be given to all recipients of that information.

(e) Subject individuals of the files in each of these systems have access to relevant information provided by the allegedly discriminating employer, accuser or harasser as part of the investigatory process and are given the opportunity to explain or contradict such

information and to submit any responsive evidence of their own. To allow such individuals the additional right to amend or correct the records submitted by the allegedly discriminatory employer, accuser or harasser would undermine the investigative process and destroy the integrity of the administrative record.

(f) The Commission has determined that the exemption of these four systems of records from subsections (c)(3), (d), (e)(1), (e)(4)(G), (e)(4)(H), (e)(4)(I) and (f) of the Privacy Act is necessary for the agency's law enforcement efforts.

[67 FR 72373, Dec. 5, 2002, as amended at 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11170, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1611.14 Exemptions—Office of Inspector General Files.

(a) *General.* The system of records entitled Office of Inspector General Investigative Files consists, in part, of information compiled by the OIG for the purpose of criminal law enforcement investigations. Therefore, to the extent that information in this system falls within the scope of Exemption (j)(2) of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a(j)(2), this system of records is exempt from the requirements of the following subsections of the Privacy Act, for the reasons stated below.

(1) From subsection (c)(3), because release of an accounting of disclosures to an individual who is the subject of an investigation could reveal the nature and scope of the investigation and could result in the altering or destruction of evidence, improper influencing of witnesses, and other evasive actions that could impede or compromise the investigation.

(2) From subsection (d)(1), because release of investigative records to an individual who is the subject of an investigation could interfere with pending or prospective law enforcement proceedings, constitute an unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of third parties, reveal the identity of confidential sources, or reveal sensitive investigative techniques and procedures.

(3) From subsection (d)(2), because amendment or correction of investigative records could interfere with pending or prospective law enforcement proceedings, or could impose an impossible administrative and investigative burden by requiring the OIG to continuously retrograde its investigations attempting to resolve questions of accuracy, relevance, timeliness and completeness.

(4) From subsection (e)(1), because it is often impossible to determine relevance or necessity of information in the early stages of an investigation. The value of such information is a question of judgment and timing; what appears relevant and necessary when collected may ultimately be evaluated and viewed as irrelevant and unnecessary to an investigation. In addition, the OIG may obtain information concerning the violation of laws other than those within the scope of its jurisdiction. In the interest of effective law enforcement, the OIG should retain this information because it may aid in establishing patterns of unlawful activity and provide leads for other law enforcement agencies. Further, in obtaining evidence during an investigation, information may be provided to the OIG which relates to matters incidental to the main purpose of the investigation but which may be pertinent to the investigative jurisdiction of another agency. Such information cannot readily be identified.

(5) From subsection (e)(2), because in a law enforcement investigation it is usually counterproductive to collect information to the greatest extent practicable from the subject thereof. It is not always feasible to rely upon the subject of an investigation as a source for information which may implicate him or her in illegal activities. In addition, collecting information directly from the subject could seriously compromise an investigation by prematurely revealing its nature and scope, or could provide the subject with an opportunity to conceal criminal activities, or intimidate potential sources, in order to avoid apprehension.

(6) From subsection (e)(3), because providing such notice to the subject of an investigation, or to other individual sources, could seriously compromise the investigation by prematurely revealing its nature and scope, or could

inhibit cooperation, permit the subject to evade apprehension, or cause interference with undercover activities.

(b) *Specific.* The system of records entitled Office of Inspector General Investigative Files consists, in part, of investigatory material compiled by the OIG for law enforcement purposes. Therefore, to the extent that information in this system falls within the coverage of exemption (k)(2) of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(2), this system of records is exempt from the requirements of the following subsections of the Privacy Act, for the reasons stated below.

(1) From subsection (c)(3), because release of an accounting of disclosures to an individual who is the subject of an investigation could reveal the nature and scope of the investigation and could result in the altering or destruction of evidence, improper influencing of witnesses, and other evasive actions that could impede or compromise the investigation.

(2) From subsection (d)(1), because release of investigative records to an individual who is the subject of an investigation could interfere with pending or prospective law enforcement proceedings, constitute an unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of third parties, reveal the identity of confidential sources, or reveal sensitive investigative techniques and procedures.

(3) From subsection (d)(2), because amendment or correction of investigative records could interfere with pending or prospective law enforcement proceedings, or could impose an impossible administrative and investigative burden by requiring the OIG to continuously retrograde its investigations attempting to resolve questions of accuracy, relevance, timeliness and completeness.

(4) From subsection (e)(1), because it is often impossible to determine relevance or necessity of information in the early stages of an investigation. The value of such information is a question of judgment and timing; what appears relevant and necessary when collected may ultimately be evaluated and viewed as irrelevant and unnecessary to investigation. In addition, the OIG may obtain information concerning the violation of laws other than those within the scope of its jurisdiction. In the interest of effective law enforcement, the OIG could retain this information because it may aid in establishing patterns of unlawful activity and provide leads for other law enforcement agencies. Further, in obtaining evidence during an investigation, information may be provided to the OIG which relates to matters incidental to the main purpose of the investigation but which may be pertinent to the investigative jurisdiction of another agency. Such information cannot readily be identified.

[67 FR 72374, Dec. 5, 2002]

§ 1611.15 Exemption—EEOC Personnel Security Files.

EEOC's system of records entitled EEOC Personnel Security Files contains records that document and support decisions regarding suitability, eligibility and fitness for service of applicants for EEOC employment and contract positions. The records include background investigation records. Pursuant to section (k)(5) of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(5), this system of records is exempt from the provisions of sections (c)(3) and (d)(1) of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a(c)(3) and (d)(1), but only to the extent that the accounting of disclosures or the disclosure of such material would reveal the identity of a source who furnished information to the government under an express promise that the identity of the source would be held in confidence.

[74 FR 6832, Feb. 11, 2009]

PART 1612—GOVERNMENT IN THE SUNSHINE ACT REGULATIONS

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 552b, sec. 713, 78 Stat. 265; 42 U.S.C. 2000e–12.

SOURCE: 42 FR 13830, Mar. 14, 1977, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1612.1 Purpose and scope.

This part contains the regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (hereinafter, the Commission) implementing the Government in the Sunshine Act of 1976, 5 U.S.C. 552b, which entitles the public to the fullest practicable information regarding the decision-making processes of the Commission. The provisions of this part set forth the basic responsibilities of the Commission with regard to the Commission's compliance with the requirements of the Sunshine Act and offers guidance to members of the public who wish to exercise any of the rights established by the Act.

§ 1612.2 Definitions.

The following definitions apply for purposes of this part:

(a) The term *agency* means the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and any subdivision thereof authorized to act on its behalf.

(b) The term *meeting* means the deliberations of at least three of the members of the agency, which is a quorum of Commissioners, where such deliberations determine or result in the joint conduct or disposition of official agency business (including conference calls), but does not include:

(1) Individual members' consideration of official agency business circulated to the members in writing for disposition by notation or other separate, sequential consideration of Commission business by Commissioners,

(2) Deliberations to decide whether a meeting or portion(s) of a meeting or series of meetings should be open or closed.

(3) Deliberations to decide whether to withhold from disclosure information pertaining to a meeting or portions of a meeting or a series of meetings, or

(4) Deliberations pertaining to any change in any meeting or to changes in the public announcement of such meeting.

(c) The term *member* means each Commissioner of the agency.

(d) The term *entire membership* means the number of members holding office at the time of the meeting in question.

(e) The term *person* means any individual, partnership, corporation, association, or public or private organization.

(f) The term *public observation* means attendance at any meeting open to the public but does not include participation, or attempted participation, in such meeting in any manner.

§ 1612.3 Open meeting policy.

(a) All meetings of the Commission shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this part.

(b) Except as otherwise provided in §1612.4, every portion of every meeting shall be open to public observation. Public observation does not include participation or disruptive conduct by observers. Any attempted participation or disruptive conduct by observers shall be cause for removal of persons so engaged at the discretion of the presiding member of the agency.

(c) When holding open meetings, the Commission shall provide ample space, sufficient visibility, and adequate acoustics for persons in attendance at the meeting.

(d) Observers may take still photographs and use portable sound recorders which do not require electrical outlets. Persons may take pictures only at the beginning of a meeting and may not use flash equipment. Permission to use non-battery operated sound recorders and visual recorders must be sought reasonably in advance of a meeting. Such request must be made in writing to the Commission through the Office of the Executive Secretariat. The Commission may permit such activities to be conducted under specified limitations which insure proper decorum and minimum interference with the meeting. In all cases, audio or visual recording shall not disrupt or otherwise impede the meeting.

§ 1612.4 Exemptions to open meeting policy.

Except in a case where the agency finds that the public interest requires otherwise, the provisions of §1612.3 shall not apply to any meeting or portion of a meeting or portion of a meeting where the agency determines that an open meeting or the disclosure of information from such meeting or portions of a meeting is likely to:

(a) Disclose matters that are (1) specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive Order to be kept secret in the interests of national defense or foreign policy and (2) in fact properly classified pursuant to such Executive Order;

(b) Relate solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of the agency;

(c) Disclose matters specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552), provided that such statute (1) requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue, or (2) establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;

(d) Disclose trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;

(e) Involve accusing any person of a crime or formally censuring any person;

(f) Disclose information of a personal nature where disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

(g) Disclose investigatory records compiled for law enforcement purposes, or information which if written would be contained in such records, but only to the extent that the production of such records or information would (1) interfere with enforcement proceedings, (2) deprive a persons of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, (3) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, (4) disclose the identity of a confidential source, and, in the case of a record compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national security intelligence investigation, confidential information furnished only by the confidential source, (5) disclose investigative techniques and procedures, or (6) endanger the life of physical safety of law enforcement personnel;

(h) Disclose 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;

(i) Disclose information the premature disclosure of which would be likely to significantly frustrate implementation of a proposed agency action, except where the agency has already disclosed to the public the content or nature of the disclosed action, or where the agency is required by law to make such disclosure on its own initiative prior to taking final agency action on such proposal; or

(j) Specifically concern the agency's issuance of a subpoena, or the agency's participation in a civil action or proceeding, an action in a foreign court or international tribunal, or an arbitration, or the initiation, conduct, or disposition by the agency of a particular case of formal agency adjudication pursuant to the procedures specified in 5 U.S.C. 554 or otherwise involving a determination on the record after opportunity for a hearing.

§ 1612.5 Closed meeting procedures: agency initiated requests.

(a) Any member of the agency, the Legal Counsel, or any other Commission official submitting an agenda item for the subject meeting may request that any meeting or portion thereof be closed to public observation for any of the reasons provided in §1612.4 of this part by submitting a request in writing to the Commission through the Office of the Executive Secretariat no later than fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the meeting.

(b) Upon receipt of any request made under paragraph (a) of this section, the Executive Secretary shall submit the request to the Legal Counsel for certification in accordance with §1612.9 of this part.

(c) No later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the scheduled meeting

the members of the agency shall, upon consideration of the request submitted and consideration of the certified opinion of the Legal Counsel, determine by recorded vote whether to close the meeting or portion of the meeting to public observation. The members may vote less than seven days prior to the scheduled meeting where:

(1) A majority of the members of the Commission determines by recorded vote that agency business requires that any such meeting or series of meetings be held at an earlier date.

(2) A meeting is closed under the Commission's regulation as set forth in §1612.13(a) of this part.

(3) A meeting is closed pursuant to a request made under §1612.6 of this part and submitted less than seven days prior to the meeting.

(4) There is a need to change the subject matter or the determination to open or close a meeting previously announced.

(d) The Commissioner shall, at the same time, vote on whether to withhold any information pertaining to the meeting and otherwise required to be announced (§1612.7(a)(3)) or made publicly available (paragraphs (f) (2) and (3) of this section).

(e) A meeting, portion of a meeting, or series of meetings may be closed to public observation only when a majority of the entire agency membership votes to take such action. Information pertaining to a meeting, portion of a meeting or series of meetings otherwise required to be announced (§1612.7(a)(3)) or made publicly available (paragraphs (f) (2) and (3) of this section) shall be withheld only when a majority of the entire agency membership votes to take such action.

(f) With respect to each vote taken on whether a meeting should be open or closed, the agency shall, within one day of such vote, make publicly available the following information:

(1) A written copy of the vote of each participating Commission member on the question.

(2) A written explanation of Commission action closing a meeting or portions thereof, and

(3) The name and affiliation of any persons who are expected to attend a closed meeting.

(g) The agency shall, within one day, make publicly available the vote of each Commission member on whether or not to withhold any of the information described in paragraphs (f) (2) or (3) of this section.

(h) A separate vote shall be taken for each meeting proposed to be closed to the public and with respect to any information proposed to be withheld from the public. However, a single vote may be taken with respect to a series of meetings proposed to be closed to the public, and with respect to information concerning such series of meetings, if each meeting involves the same particular matters and is scheduled to be held no later than thirty (30) calendar days after the first meeting in the series.

[42 FR 13830, Mar. 14, 1977, as amended at 47 FR 46276, Oct. 18, 1982]

§1612.6 Closed meeting procedures: request initiated by an interested person.

(a) Any person as defined in §1612.2 of this part whose interest may be directly affected by a portion of a meeting may request that the agency close that portion of the meeting to the public for any of the reasons listed in §1612.4(e), (f) or (g).

(b) Any person described in paragraph (a) of this section who submits a request that a portion of a meeting be closed, shall submit such request to the Chairman of the agency at the following address: the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 131 M Street NE., Washington, DC 20507. Such person shall state with particularity that portion of a meeting sought to be closed and the reasons for such request.

(c) The Chairman, upon receipt of any request made under paragraph (a) of this section, shall furnish a copy of the request to:

(1) Each member of the agency.

(2) The Legal Counsel for certification in accordance with §1612.9 of this part.

(d) Any member of the agency may request agency action upon such request.

(e) The Commission shall, upon the request of any one of its members and consideration of the certified opinion

of the Legal Counsel, determine by recorded vote whether to close such meeting or portion thereof.

(f) The Chairman of the Commission shall promptly communicate to any person making a request to close a meeting or portion of a meeting under this section the agency's final disposition of such request.

[42 FR 13830, Mar. 14, 1977, as amended at 47 FR 46276, Oct. 18, 1982; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009]

§ 1612.7 Public announcement of agency meetings.

(a) Public announcement of each meeting by the agency shall be accomplished by recorded telephone message at telephone number (202) 921–2750, and by posting such announcements on the Commission's public Web site located at *http://www.eeoc.gov* not later than one week prior to commencement of a meeting or the commencement of the first meeting in a series of meetings, except as otherwise provided in this section, and shall disclose:

(1) The time of the meeting.

(2) The place of the meeting.

(3) The subject matter of each portion of the meeting or series of meetings.

(4) Whether any portion(s) of a meeting will be open or closed to public observation.

(5) The name and telephone number of an official designated to respond to requests for information about the meeting.

(b) Where a meeting is closed to the public, the agency may withhold and not announce the information specified in paragraph (a)(3) of this section, if and to the extent that it finds that such action is justified under §1612.4. Information shall be withheld only by a recorded vote of a majority of the entire membership of the agency.

(c) The announcement described in paragraph (a) of this section may be accomplished less than one week prior to the commencement of any meeting or series of meetings where:

(1) A majority of the members of the Commission determines by recorded vote that agency business requires that any such meeting or series of meetings be held at an earlier date.

(2) A meeting is closed under the Commission's regulation as set forth in §1612.13(a) of this part.

(3) A meeting is closed pursuant to a request made under §1612.6 of this part and submitted less than seven days prior to the meeting.

(4) There has been a change in the subject matter or determination to open or close a meeting previously announced.

In these instances, the agency shall make public announcement at the earliest practicable time.

(d) Immediately following any public announcement accomplished under the provisions of this section, the agency shall submit a notice for publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER disclosing:

(1) The time of the meeting.

(2) The place of the meeting.

(3) The subject matter of each portion of each meeting or series of meetings.

(4) Whether any portion(s) of a meeting will be open or closed to public observation.

(5) The name and telephone number of an official designated to respond to requests for information about the meeting.

[42 FR 13830, Mar. 14, 1977, as amended at 55 FR 8140, Mar. 7, 1990; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009; 74 FR 42025, Aug. 20, 2009; 87 FR 14799, Mar. 16, 2022]

§ 1612.8 Public announcement of changes in meetings.

(a) The agency is required to make a public announcement of any changes in its meeting or portion(s) thereof. If, after the announcement provided for in §1612.7, the time or place of a meeting is changed or the meeting is cancelled, the agency will announce the change at the earliest practicable time. The subject matter or the determination to open or close the meeting may be changed only if (1) a majority of the entire membership of the agency determines by recorded vote that agency business so requires and that no earlier announcement of the change was possible and (2) the agency publicly announces the change and the vote of each member upon such change at the earliest practicable time.

(b) Immediately following any public announcement of any change accomplished under the provisions of this section, the agency shall submit a notice for publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER disclosing:

(1) The time of the meeting.

(2) The place of the meeting.

(3) The subject matter of each portion of each meeting or series of meetings.

(4) Whether any portion(s) of a meeting is open or closed to public observation.

(5) Any change in paragraphs (b) (1), (2), (3), or (4) of this section.

(6) The name and telephone number of the official designated to respond to requests for information about any meeting.

§ 1612.9 Legal Counsel's certification in closing a meeting.

(a) Upon any proper request made pursuant to this part, that the agency close a meeting or portion(s) thereof, the Legal Counsel shall certify in writing to the agency, whether in his or her opinion the closing of a meeting or portion(s) thereof is proper under the provisions of this part and the terms of the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. 552b). If, in the opinion of the Legal Counsel, a meeting or portion(s) thereof is proper for closing under this part and the terms of the Government in the Sunshine Act, his or her certification of that opinion shall cite each applicable particular exemption of that Act and provision of this part.

(b) A copy of the certification of the Legal Counsel as described in paragraph (a) of this section together with a statement of the presiding officer of the meeting setting forth the time and place of the relevant meeting or meetings, and the persons present, shall be maintained by the agency in a public file.

[42 FR 13830, Mar. 14, 1977, as amended at 47 FR 46276, Oct. 18, 1982]

§ 1612.10 Recordkeeping requirements.

(a) In the case of any meeting or portion(s) thereof to be closed to public observation under the provisions of this part, the following records shall be maintained by the Executive Secretary of the agency:

(1) The certification of the Legal Counsel pursuant to § 1612.9 of this part;

(2) A statement from the presiding officer of the meeting or portion(s) thereof setting forth the time and place of the meeting, and the persons present;

(3) A complete electronic recording adequate to record fully the proceedings of each meeting closed to the public observation, except that in a meeting closed pursuant to paragraph (h) or (j) of § 1612.4, the agency may maintain minutes in lieu of a recording. Such minutes shall fully, and clearly describe all matters discussed and shall provide a full and accurate summary of any actions taken, and the reasons therefor, including a description of each of the views expressed on any item and the record of any roll call vote. All documents considered in connection with any item shall be identified in the minutes.

(b) If the agency has determined that the meeting or portion(s) thereof may properly be closed to the public, the electronic recording or minutes shall not be made available to the public until such future time, if any, as it is determined by the Commission upon request, that the reasons for closing the meeting no longer pertain; Provided, however, that any separable portion of a recording or minutes will be made promptly available to the public if that portion does not contain information properly withheld under § 1612.4.

(c) The agency shall maintain a copy of the electronic recording or minutes for a period of two years after the meeting, or until one year after the conclusion of the proceeding to which the meeting relates, whichever occurs later.

[42 FR 13830, Mar. 14, 1977, as amended at 47 FR 46276, Oct. 18, 1982]

§ 1612.11 Public access to records.

All requests for information shall be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the agency. Requests to inspect or copy the electronic recordings or minutes of agency meetings or portions thereof will be considered under the provisions of § 1612.4 of this part.

§ 1612.12 Fees.

(a) Records provided to the public under this part shall be furnished at the expense of the party requesting copies of the recording or minutes, upon payment of the actual cost of duplication.

(b) All required fees shall be paid in full prior to issuance of requested copies of records. Fees are payable to the ''Treasurer of the United States.''

§ 1612.13 Meetings closed by regulation.

(a) This paragraph constitutes the Commission's regulation promulgated pursuant to paragraph (d)(4) of the Government in the Sunshine Act and may be invoked by the agency to close meetings or portions thereof where the subject matter of such meeting or portion of a meeting is likely to involve:

(1) Matters pertaining to the issuance of subpoenas;

(2) Subpoena modification and revocation requests, and

(3) The Agency's participation in civil actions or proceedings pertaining thereto.

(b) When closing a meeting or portion thereof under the Commission's regulation set forth in paragraph (a) of this section, a majority of the Commission membership shall vote at or before the beginning of such meeting or portion thereof to do so. The vote to close a meeting by regulation shall be recorded and made publicly available.

(c) The Commission's determination to promulgate the regulation in paragraph (a) of this section is based upon a review of the agenda of Commission meetings for the two years prior to the promulgation of these regulations.

(1) Since the Commission's practice of conducting weekly meetings began in 1975, proposed litigation against title VII respondents has been a regular agenda item. The tenth exemption of the Government in the Sunshine Act, 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(10), exempts the discussion of these matters from the open meeting requirements of the Act.

(2) Thus, the Commission has determined that a majority of its meetings or portions thereof may properly be closed to the public under the tenth exemption of the Sunshine Act, and that paragraph (d)(4) of the Sunshine Act is properly relied upon in promulgating the Commission's regulation in paragraph (a) of this section.

§ 1612.14 Judicial review.

Any person may bring an action in a United States District Court to challenge or enforce the provisions of this part. Such action may be brought prior to or within sixty (60) calendar days after the meeting in question, except that if proper public announcement of the meeting is not made, the action may be instituted at any time within sixty (60) days after such announcement is made. An action may be brought where the agency meeting was held or in the District of Columbia.

PART 1614—FEDERAL SECTOR EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

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1614.706 Other data.
1614.707 Data to be posted by EEOC.

AUTHORITY: 29 U.S.C. 206(d), 633a, 791 and 794a; 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16, 2000ff–6(e), and 2000gg–2(e); E.O. 10577, 3 CFR, 1954–1958 Comp., p. 218; E.O. 11222, 3 CFR, 1964–1965 Comp., p. 306; E.O. 11478, 3 CFR, 1969 Comp., p. 133; E.O. 12106, 3 CFR, 1978 Comp., p. 263; Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1978, 3 CFR, 1978 Comp., p. 321.

SOURCE: 57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Agency Program To Promote Equal Employment Opportunity

§ 1614.101 General policy.

(a) It is the policy of the Government of the United States to provide equal opportunity in employment for all persons, to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race; color; religion; sex; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; and to promote the full realization of equal employment opportunity through a continuing affirmative program in each agency.

(b) No person shall be subject to retaliation for opposing any practice made unlawful by title VII of the Civil Rights Act (title VII) (42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) (29 U.S.C. 621 *et seq.*), the Equal Pay Act (29 U.S.C. 206(d)), the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 791 *et seq.*), the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) (42 U.S.C. 2000ff *et seq.*), or the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) (42 U.S.C. 2000gg *et seq.*) or for participating in any stage of administrative or judicial proceedings under those statutes.

[89 FR 11171, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1614.102 Agency program.

(a) Each agency shall maintain a continuing affirmative program to promote equal opportunity and to identify and eliminate discriminatory practices and policies. In support of this program, the agency shall:

(1) Provide sufficient resources to its equal employment opportunity program to ensure efficient and successful operation;

(2) Provide for the prompt, fair and impartial processing of complaints in accordance with this part and the instructions contained in the Commission's Management Directives;

(3) Conduct a continuing campaign to eradicate every form of prejudice or discrimination from the agency's personnel policies, practices and working conditions;

(4) Communicate the agency's equal employment opportunity policy and

program and its employment needs to all sources of job candidates without regard to race; color; religion; sex; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; and solicit their recruitment assistance on a continuing basis;

(5) Review, evaluate and control managerial and supervisory performance in such a manner as to insure a continuing affirmative application and vigorous enforcement of the policy of equal opportunity, and provide orientation, training and advice to managers and supervisors to assure their understanding and implementation of the equal employment opportunity policy and program;

(6) Take appropriate disciplinary action against employees who engage in discriminatory practices;

(7) Make reasonable accommodation to the religious needs of applicants and employees when those accommodations can be made without undue hardship on the business of the agency;

(8) Make reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of qualified applicants and employees with handicaps unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the agency's program;

(9) Provide recognition to employees, supervisors, managers and units demonstrating superior accomplishment in equal employment opportunity;

(10) Establish a system for periodically evaluating the effectiveness of the agency's overall equal employment opportunity effort;

(11) Provide the maximum feasible opportunity to employees to enhance their skills through on-the-job training, work-study programs and other training measures so that they may perform at their highest potential and advance in accordance with their abilities;

(12) Inform its employees and recognized labor organizations of the affirmative equal employment opportunity policy and program and enlist their cooperation; and

(13) Participate at the community level with other employers, with schools and universities and with other public and private groups in cooperative action to improve employment opportunities and community conditions that affect employability.

(b) In order to implement its program, each agency shall:

(1) Develop the plans, procedures and regulations necessary to carry out its program;

(2) Establish or make available an alternative dispute resolution program. Such program must be available for both the pre-complaint process and the formal complaint process.

(3) Appraise its personnel operations at regular intervals to assure their conformity with its program, this part 1614 and the instructions contained in the Commission's management directives;

(4) Designate a Director of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO Director), EEO Officer(s), and such Special Emphasis Program Managers (e.g., People With Disabilities Program, Federal Women's Program and Hispanic Employment Program), clerical and administrative support as may be necessary to carry out the functions described in this part in all organizational units of the agency and at all agency installations. The EEO Director shall be under the immediate supervision of the agency head;

(5) Make written materials available to all employees and applicants informing them of the variety of equal employment opportunity programs and administrative and judicial remedial procedures available to them and prominently post such written materials in all personnel and EEO offices and throughout the workplace;

(6) Ensure that full cooperation is provided by all agency employees to EEO Counselors and agency EEO personnel in the processing and resolution of pre-complaint matters and complaints within an agency and that full cooperation is provided to the Commission in the course of appeals, including granting the Commission routine access to personnel records of the agency when required in connection with an investigation; and

(7) Publicize to all employees and post at all times the names, business telephone numbers and business addresses of the EEO Counselors (unless the counseling function is centralized,

in which case only the telephone number and address need be publicized and posted), a notice of the time limits and necessity of contacting a Counselor before filing a complaint and the telephone numbers and addresses of the EEO Director, EEO Officer(s) and Special Emphasis Program Managers.

(c) Under each agency program, the EEO Director shall be responsible for:

(1) Advising the head of the agency with respect to the preparation of national and regional equal employment opportunity plans, procedures, regulations, reports and other matters pertaining to the policy in §1614.101 and the agency program;

(2) Evaluating from time to time the sufficiency of the total agency program for equal employment opportunity and reporting to the head of the agency with recommendations as to any improvement or correction needed, including remedial or disciplinary action with respect to managerial, supervisory or other employees who have failed in their responsibilities;

(3) When authorized by the head of the agency, making changes in programs and procedures designed to eliminate discriminatory practices and to improve the agency's program for equal employment opportunity;

(4) Providing for counseling of aggrieved individuals and for the receipt and processing of individual and class complaints of discrimination; and

(5) Assuring that individual complaints are fairly and thoroughly investigated and that final action is taken in a timely manner in accordance with this part.

(d) Directives, instructions, forms and other Commission materials referenced in this part may be obtained in accordance with the provisions of 29 CFR 1610.7 of this chapter.

(e) Agency programs shall comply with this part and the Management Directives and Bulletins that the Commission issues. The Commission will review agency programs from time to time to ascertain whether they are in compliance. If an agency program is found not to be in compliance, efforts shall be undertaken to obtain compliance. If those efforts are not successful, the Chair may issue a notice to the head of any federal agency whose programs are not in compliance and publicly identify each non-compliant agency.

(f) Unless prohibited by law or executive order, the Commission, in its discretion and for good cause shown, may grant agencies prospective variances from the complaint processing procedures prescribed in this Part. Variances will permit agencies to conduct pilot projects of proposed changes to the complaint processing requirements of this Part that may later be made permanent through regulatory change. Agencies requesting variances must identify the specific section(s) of this Part from which they wish to deviate and exactly what they propose to do instead, explain the expected benefit and expected effect on the process of the proposed pilot project, indicate the proposed duration of the pilot project, and discuss the method by which they intend to evaluate the success of the pilot project. Variances will not be granted for individual cases and will usually not be granted for more than 24 months. The Director of the Office of Federal Operations for good cause shown may grant requests for extensions of variances for up to an additional 12 months. Pilot projects must require that participants knowingly and voluntarily opt-in to the pilot project. Requests for variances should be addressed to the Director, Office of Federal Operations.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37655, July 12, 1999; 67 FR 35735, May 21, 2002; 74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009; 77 FR 43504, July 25, 2012; 89 FR 11171, Feb. 14, 2024]

§1614.103 Complaints of discrimination covered by this part.

(a) Individual and class complaints of employment discrimination and retaliation prohibited by title VII (discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex and national origin), the ADEA (discrimination on the basis of age when the aggrieved individual is at least 40 years of age), the Rehabilitation Act (discrimination on the basis of disability), the Equal Pay Act (sex-based wage discrimination), GINA (discrimination on the basis of genetic information), or the PWFA (discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions)

shall be processed in accordance with this part. Complaints alleging retaliation prohibited by these statutes are considered to be complaints of discrimination for purposes of this part.

(b) This part applies to:

(1) Military departments as defined in 5 U.S.C. 102;

(2) Executive agencies as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105;

(3) The United States Postal Service, Postal Rate Commission and Tennessee Valley Authority;

(4) All units of the judicial branch of the Federal government having positions in the competitive service, except for complaints under the Rehabilitation Act;

(5) The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Corps;

(6) The Government Printing Office except for complaints under the Rehabilitation Act; and

(7) The Smithsonian Institution.

(c) Within the covered departments, agencies and units, this part applies to all employees and applicants for employment, and to all employment policies or practices affecting employees or applicants for employment including employees and applicants who are paid from nonappropriated funds, unless otherwise excluded.

(d) This part does not apply to:

(1) Uniformed members of the military departments referred to in paragraph (b)(1) of this section:

(2) Employees of the General Accounting Office;

(3) Employees of the Library of Congress;

(4) Aliens employed in positions, or who apply for positions, located outside the limits of the United States; or

(5) Equal Pay Act complaints of employees whose services are performed within a foreign country or certain United States territories as provided in 29 U.S.C. 213(f).

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37655, July 12, 1999; 74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009; 77 FR 43504, July 25, 2012; 89 FR 11171, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1614.104 Agency processing.

(a) Each agency subject to this part shall adopt procedures for processing individual and class complaints of discrimination that include the provisions contained in §§ 1614.105 through 1614.110 and in § 1614.204, and that are consistent with all other applicable provisions of this part and the instructions for complaint processing contained in the Commission's Management Directives.

(b) The Commission shall periodically review agency resources and procedures to ensure that an agency makes reasonable efforts to resolve complaints informally, to process complaints in a timely manner, to develop adequate factual records, to issue decisions that are consistent with acceptable legal standards, to explain the reasons for its decisions, and to give complainants adequate and timely notice of their rights.

§ 1614.105 Pre-complaint processing.

(a) Aggrieved persons who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race; color; religion; sex; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions must consult a Counselor prior to filing a complaint in order to try to informally resolve the matter.

(1) An aggrieved person must initiate contact with a Counselor within 45 days of the date of the matter alleged to be discriminatory or, in the case of personnel action, within 45 days of the effective date of the action.

(2) The agency or the Commission shall extend the 45-day time limit in paragraph (a)(1) of this section when the individual shows that he or she was not notified of the time limits and was not otherwise aware of them, that he or she did not know and reasonably should not have been known that the discriminatory matter or personnel action occurred, that despite due diligence he or she was prevented by circumstances beyond his or her control from contacting the counselor within the time limits, or for other reasons considered sufficient by the agency or the Commission.

(b)(1) At the initial counseling session, Counselors must advise individuals in writing of their rights and responsibilities, including the right to request a hearing or an immediate final decision after an investigation by the

agency in accordance with §1614.108(f), election rights pursuant to §§1614.301 and 1614.302, the right to file a notice of intent to sue pursuant to §1614.201(a) and a lawsuit under the ADEA instead of an administrative complaint of age discrimination under this part, the duty to mitigate damages, administrative and court time frames, and that only the claims raised in precomplaint counseling (or issues or claims like or related to issues or claims raised in pre-complaint counseling) may be alleged in a subsequent complaint filed with the agency. Counselors must advise individuals of their duty to keep the agency and Commission informed of their current address and to serve copies of appeal papers on the agency. The notice required by paragraphs (d) or (e) of this section shall include a notice of the right to file a class complaint. If the aggrieved person informs the Counselor that he or she wishes to file a class complaint, the Counselor shall explain the class complaint procedures and the responsibilities of a class agent.

(2) Counselors shall advise aggrieved persons that, where the agency agrees to offer ADR in the particular case, they may choose between participation in the alternative dispute resolution program and the counseling activities provided for in paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) Counselors shall conduct counseling activities in accordance with instructions contained in Commission Management Directives. When advised that a complaint has been filed by an aggrieved person, the Counselor shall submit a written report within 15 days to the agency office that has been designated to accept complaints and the aggrieved person concerning the issues discussed and actions taken during counseling.

(d) Unless the aggrieved person agrees to a longer counseling period under paragraph (e) of this section, or the aggrieved person chooses an alternative dispute resolution procedure in accordance with paragraph (b)(2) of this section, the Counselor shall conduct the final interview with the aggrieved person within 30 days of the date the aggrieved person contacted the agency's EEO office to request counseling. If the matter has not been resolved, the aggrieved person shall be informed in writing by the Counselor, not later than the thirtieth day after contacting the Counselor, of the right to file a discrimination complaint. The notice shall inform the complainant of the right to file a discrimination complaint within 15 days of receipt of the notice, of the appropriate official with whom to file a complaint and of the complainant's duty to assure that the agency is informed immediately if the complainant retains counsel or a representative.

(e) Prior to the end of the 30-day period, the aggrieved person may agree in writing with the agency to postpone the final interview and extend the counseling period for an additional period of no more than 60 days. If the matter has not been resolved before the conclusion of the agreed extension, the notice described in paragraph (d) of this section shall be issued.

(f) Where the aggrieved person chooses to participate in an alternative dispute resolution procedure in accordance with paragraph (b)(2) of this section, the pre-complaint processing period shall be 90 days. If the claim has not been resolved before the 90th day, the notice described in paragraph (d) of this section shall be issued.

(g) The Counselor shall not attempt in any way to restrain the aggrieved person from filing a complaint. The Counselor shall not reveal the identity of an aggrieved person who consulted the Counselor, except when authorized to do so by the aggrieved person, or until the agency has received a discrimination complaint under this part from that person involving that same matter.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37656, July 12, 1999; 74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11171, Feb. 14, 2024]

§1614.106 Individual complaints.

(a) A complaint must be filed with the agency that allegedly discriminated against the complainant.

(b) A complaint must be filed within 15 days of receipt of the notice required by §1614.105 (d), (e) or (f).

(c) A complaint must contain a signed statement from the person

claiming to be aggrieved or that person's attorney. This statement must be sufficiently precise to identify the aggrieved individual and the agency and to describe generally the action(s) or practice(s) that form the basis of the complaint. The complaint must also contain a telephone number and address where the complainant or the representative can be contacted.

(d) A complainant may amend a complaint at any time prior to the conclusion of the investigation to include issues or claims like or related to those raised in the complaint. After requesting a hearing, a complainant may file a motion with the administrative judge to amend a complaint to include issues or claims like or related to those raised in the complaint.

(e) The agency shall acknowledge receipt of a complaint or an amendment to a complaint in writing and inform the complainant of the date on which the complaint or amendment was filed. The agency shall advise the complainant in the acknowledgment of the EEOC office and its address where a request for a hearing shall be sent. Such acknowledgment shall also advise the complainant that:

(1) The complainant has the right to appeal the final action on or dismissal of a complaint; and

(2) The agency is required to conduct an impartial and appropriate investigation of the complaint within 180 days of the filing of the complaint unless the parties agree in writing to extend the time period. When a complaint has been amended, the agency shall complete its investigation within the earlier of 180 days after the last amendment to the complaint or 360 days after the filing of the original complaint, except that the complainant may request a hearing from an administrative judge on the consolidated complaints any time after 180 days from the date of the first filed complaint.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37656, July 12, 1999]

§ 1614.107 Dismissals of complaints.

(a) Prior to a request for a hearing in a case, the agency shall dismiss an entire complaint:

(1) That fails to state a claim under § 1614.103 or § 1614.106(a) or states the same claim that is pending before or has been decided by the agency or Commission;

(2) That fails to comply with the applicable time limits contained in §§ 1614.105, 1614.106 and 1614.204(c), unless the agency extends the time limits in accordance with § 1614.604(c), or that raises a matter that has not been brought to the attention of a Counselor and is not like or related to a matter that has been brought to the attention of a Counselor;

(3) That is the basis of a pending civil action in a United States District Court in which the complainant is a party provided that at least 180 days have passed since the filing of the administrative complaint, or that was the basis of a civil action decided by a United States District Court in which the complainant was a party;

(4) Where the complainant has raised the matter in a negotiated grievance procedure that permits allegations of discrimination or in an appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board and § 1614.301 or § 1614.302 indicates that the complainant has elected to pursue the non-EEO process;

(5) That is moot or alleges that a proposal to take a personnel action, or other preliminary step to taking a personnel action, is discriminatory, unless the complaint alleges that the proposal or preliminary step is retaliatory;

(6) Where the complainant cannot be located, provided that reasonable efforts have been made to locate the complainant and the complainant has not responded within 15 days to a notice of proposed dismissal sent to his or her last known address;

(7) Where the agency has provided the complainant with a written request to provide relevant information or otherwise proceed with the complaint, and the complainant has failed to respond to the request within 15 days of its receipt or the complainant's response does not address the agency's request, provided that the request included a notice of the proposed dismissal. Instead of dismissing for failure to cooperate, the complaint may be adjudicated if sufficient information for that purpose is available;

(8) That alleges dissatisfaction with the processing of a previously filed complaint; or

(9) Where the agency, strictly applying the criteria set forth in Commission decisions, finds that the complaint is part of a clear pattern of misuse of the EEO process for a purpose other than the prevention and elimination of employment discrimination. A clear pattern of misuse of the EEO process requires:

(i) Evidence of multiple complaint filings; and

(ii) Allegations that are similar or identical, lack specificity or involve matters previously resolved; or

(iii) Evidence of circumventing other administrative processes, retaliating against the agency's in-house administrative processes or overburdening the EEO complaint system.

(b) Where the agency believes that some but not all of the claims in a complaint should be dismissed for the reasons contained in paragraphs (a)(1) through (9) of this section, the agency shall notify the complainant in writing of its determination, the rationale for that determination and that those claims will not be investigated, and shall place a copy of the notice in the investigative file. A determination under this paragraph is reviewable by an administrative judge if a hearing is requested on the remainder of the complaint, but is not appealable until final action is taken on the remainder of the complaint.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37656, July 12, 1999; 77 FR 43504, July 25, 2012]

§ 1614.108 Investigation of complaints.

(a) The investigation of complaints shall be conducted by the agency against which the complaint has been filed.

(b) In accordance with instructions contained in Commission Management Directives, the agency shall develop an impartial and appropriate factual record upon which to make findings on the claims raised by the written complaint. An appropriate factual record is one that allows a reasonable fact finder to draw conclusions as to whether discrimination occurred. Agencies may use an exchange of letters or memoranda, interrogatories, investigations, fact-finding conferences or any other fact-finding methods that efficiently and thoroughly address the matters at issue. Agencies are encouraged to incorporate alternative dispute resolution techniques into their investigative efforts in order to promote early resolution of complaints.

(c) The procedures in paragraphs (c)(1) through (3) of this section apply to the investigation of complaints:

(1) The complainant, the agency, and any employee of a Federal agency shall produce such documentary and testimonial evidence as the investigator deems necessary.

(2) Investigators are authorized to administer oaths. Statements of witnesses shall be made under oath or affirmation or, alternatively, by written statement under penalty of perjury.

(3) When the complainant, or the agency against which a complaint is filed, or its employees fail without good cause shown to respond fully and in timely fashion to requests for documents, records, comparative data, statistics, affidavits, or the attendance of witness(es), the investigator may note in the investigative record that the decisionmaker should, or the Commission on appeal may, in appropriate circumstances:

(i) Draw an adverse inference that the requested information, or the testimony of the requested witness, would have reflected unfavorably on the party refusing to provide the requested information;

(ii) Consider the matters to which the requested information or testimony pertains to be established in favor of the opposing party;

(iii) Exclude other evidence offered by the party failing to produce the requested information or witness;

(iv) Issue a decision fully or partially in favor of the opposing party; or

(v) Take such other actions as it deems appropriate.

(d) Any investigation will be conducted by investigators with appropriate security clearances. The Commission will, upon request, supply the agency with the name of an investigator with appropriate security clearances.

(e) The agency shall complete its investigation within 180 days of the date of filing of an individual complaint or within the time period contained in an order from the Office of Federal Operations on an appeal from a dismissal pursuant to §1614.107. By written agreement within those time periods, the complainant and the respondent agency may voluntarily extend the time period for not more than an additional 90 days. The agency may unilaterally extend the time period or any period of extension for not more than 30 days where it must sanitize a complaint file that may contain information classified pursuant to Exec. Order No. 12356, or successor orders, as secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy, provided the investigating agency notifies the parties of the extension.

(f) Within 180 days from the filing of the complaint, or where a complaint was amended, within the earlier of 180 days after the last amendment to the complaint or 360 days after the filing of the original complaint, within the time period contained in an order from the Office of Federal Operations on an appeal from a dismissal, or within any period of extension provided for in paragraph (e) of this section, the agency shall provide the complainant with a copy of the investigative file, and shall notify the complainant that, within 30 days of receipt of the investigative file, the complainant has the right to request a hearing and decision from an administrative judge or may request an immediate final decision pursuant to §1614.110 from the agency with which the complaint was filed. The notice that the complainant has the right to request a hearing and decision from an administrative judge shall inform the complainant that the hearing request may be filed using the EEOC Public Portal, available at *https://publicportal.eeoc.gov*.

(g) If the agency does not send the notice required in paragraph (f) of this section within the applicable time limits, it shall, within those same time limits, issue a written notice to the complainant informing the complainant that it has been unable to complete its investigation within the time limits required by §1614.108(f) and estimating a date by which the investigation will be completed. Further, the notice must explain that if the complainant does not want to wait until the agency completes the investigation, he or she may request a hearing in accordance with paragraph (h) of this section, or file a civil action in an appropriate United States District Court in accordance with §1614.407(b). Such notice shall contain information about the hearing procedures.

(h) Where the complainant has received the notice required in paragraph (f) of this section or at any time after 180 days have elapsed from the filing of the complaint, the complainant may request a hearing by submitting a written request for a hearing directly to the EEOC office indicated in the agency's acknowledgment letter, or by filing a request for a hearing through the EEOC Public Portal.The complainant shall send a copy of the request for a hearing to the agency EEO office. Within 15 days of receipt of the request for a hearing, the agency shall provide a copy of the complaint file to EEOC and, if not previously provided, to the complainant.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37656, July 12, 1999; 77 FR 43505, July 25, 2012; 88 FR 57881, Aug. 24, 2023]

§1614.109 Hearings.

(a) When a complainant requests a hearing, the Commission shall appoint an administrative judge to conduct a hearing in accordance with this section. Upon appointment, the administrative judge shall assume full responsibility for the adjudication of the complaint, including overseeing the development of the record. Any hearing will be conducted by an administrative judge or hearing examiner with appropriate security clearances.

(b) *Dismissals.* Administrative judges may dismiss complaints pursuant to §1614.107, on their own initiative, after notice to the parties, or upon an agency's motion to dismiss a complaint.

(c) *Offer of resolution.* (1) Any time after the filing of the written complaint but not later than the date an administrative judge is appointed to conduct a hearing, the agency may

make an offer of resolution to a complainant who is represented by an attorney.

(2) Any time after the parties have received notice that an administrative judge has been appointed to conduct a hearing, but not later than 30 days prior to the hearing, the agency may make an offer of resolution to the complainant, whether represented by an attorney or not.

(3) The offer of resolution shall be in writing and shall include a notice explaining the possible consequences of failing to accept the offer. The agency's offer, to be effective, must include attorney's fees and costs and must specify any non-monetary relief. With regard to monetary relief, an agency may make a lump sum offer covering all forms of monetary liability, or it may itemize the amounts and types of monetary relief being offered. The complainant shall have 30 days from receipt of the offer of resolution to accept it. If the complainant fails to accept an offer of resolution and the relief awarded in the administrative judge's decision, the agency's final decision, or the Commission decision on appeal is not more favorable than the offer, then, except where the interest of justice would not be served, the complainant shall not receive payment from the agency of attorney's fees or costs incurred after the expiration of the 30-day acceptance period. An acceptance of an offer must be in writing and will be timely if postmarked or received within the 30-day period. Where a complainant fails to accept an offer of resolution, an agency may make other offers of resolution and either party may seek to negotiate a settlement of the complaint at any time.

(d) *Discovery.* The administrative judge shall notify the parties of the right to seek discovery prior to the hearing and may issue such discovery orders as are appropriate. Unless the parties agree in writing concerning the methods and scope of discovery, the party seeking discovery shall request authorization from the administrative judge prior to commencing discovery. Both parties are entitled to reasonable development of evidence on matters relevant to the issues raised in the complaint, but the administrative judge may limit the quantity and timing of discovery. Evidence may be developed through interrogatories, depositions, and requests for admissions, stipulations or production of documents. It shall be grounds for objection to producing evidence that the information sought by either party is irrelevant, overburdensome, repetitious, or privileged.

(e) *Conduct of hearing.* Agencies shall provide for the attendance at a hearing of all employees approved as witnesses by an administrative judge. Attendance at hearings will be limited to persons determined by the administrative judge to have direct knowledge relating to the complaint. Hearings are part of the investigative process and are thus closed to the public. The administrative judge shall have the power to regulate the conduct of a hearing, limit the number of witnesses where testimony would be repetitious, and exclude any person from the hearing for contumacious conduct or misbehavior that obstructs the hearing. The administrative judge shall receive into evidence information or documents relevant to the complaint. Rules of evidence shall not be applied strictly, but the administrative judge shall exclude irrelevant or repetitious evidence. The administrative judge or the Commission may refer to the Disciplinary Committee of the appropriate Bar Association any attorney or, upon reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard, suspend or disqualify from representing complainants or agencies in EEOC hearings any representative who refuses to follow the orders of an administrative judge, or who otherwise engages in improper conduct.

(f) *Procedures.* (1) The complainant, an agency, and any employee of a Federal agency shall produce such documentary and testimonial evidence as the administrative judge deems necessary. The administrative judge shall serve all orders to produce evidence on both parties.

(2) Administrative judges are authorized to administer oaths. Statements of witnesses shall be made under oath or affirmation or, alternatively, by written statement under penalty of perjury.

(3) When the complainant, or the agency against which a complaint is filed, or its employees fail without good cause shown to respond fully and in timely fashion to an order of an administrative judge, or requests for the investigative file, for documents, records, comparative data, statistics, affidavits, or the attendance of witness(es), the administrative judge shall, in appropriate circumstances:

(i) Draw an adverse inference that the requested information, or the testimony of the requested witness, would have reflected unfavorably on the party refusing to provide the requested information;

(ii) Consider the matters to which the requested information or testimony pertains to be established in favor of the opposing party;

(iii) Exclude other evidence offered by the party failing to produce the requested information or witness;

(iv) Issue a decision fully or partially in favor of the opposing party; or

(v) Take such other actions as appropriate.

(g) *Summary judgment.* (1) If a party believes that some or all material facts are not in genuine dispute and there is no genuine issue as to credibility, the party may, at least 15 days prior to the date of the hearing or at such earlier time as required by the administrative judge, file a statement with the administrative judge prior to the hearing setting forth the fact or facts and referring to the parts of the record relied on to support the statement. The statement must demonstrate that there is no genuine issue as to any such material fact. The party shall serve the statement on the opposing party.

(2) The opposing party may file an opposition within 15 days of receipt of the statement in paragraph (d)(1) of this section. The opposition may refer to the record in the case to rebut the statement that a fact is not in dispute or may file an affidavit stating that the party cannot, for reasons stated, present facts to oppose the request. After considering the submissions, the administrative judge may order that discovery be permitted on the fact or facts involved, limit the hearing to the issues remaining in dispute, issue a decision without a hearing or make such other ruling as is appropriate.

(3) If the administrative judge determines upon his or her own initiative that some or all facts are not in genuine dispute, he or she may, after giving notice to the parties and providing them an opportunity to respond in writing within 15 calendar days, issue an order limiting the scope of the hearing or issue a decision without holding a hearing.

(h) *Record of hearing.* The hearing shall be recorded and the agency shall arrange and pay for verbatim transcripts. All documents submitted to, and accepted by, the administrative judge at the hearing shall be made part of the record of the hearing. If the agency submits a document that is accepted, it shall furnish a copy of the document to the complainant. If the complainant submits a document that is accepted, the administrative judge shall make the document available to the agency representative for reproduction.

(i) *Decisions by administrative judges.* Unless the administrative judge makes a written determination that good cause exists for extending the time for issuing a decision, an administrative judge shall issue a decision on the complaint, and shall order appropriate remedies and relief where discrimination is found, within 180 days of receipt by the administrative judge of the complaint file from the agency. The administrative judge shall transmit copies of the hearing record, including the transcript, and the decision to the parties. If an agency does not issue a final order within 40 days of receipt of the administrative judge's decision in accordance with 1614.110, then the decision of the administrative judge shall become the final action of the agency.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37657, July 12, 1999; 77 FR 43505, July 25, 2012; 88 FR 57881, Aug. 24, 2023]

§ 1614.110 Final action by agencies.

(a) *Final action by an agency following a decision by an administrative judge.* When an administrative judge has issued a decision under § 1614.109(b), (g) or (i), the agency shall take final action on the complaint by issuing a final order within 40 days of receipt of the

hearing file and the administrative judge's decision. The final order shall notify the complainant whether or not the agency will fully implement the decision of the administrative judge and shall contain notice of the complainant's right to appeal to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the right to file a civil action in federal district court, the name of the proper defendant in any such lawsuit and the applicable time limits for appeals and lawsuits. If the final order does not fully implement the decision of the administrative judge, then the agency shall simultaneously file an appeal in accordance with §1614.403 and append a copy of the appeal to the final order. A copy of EEOC Form 573 shall be attached to the final order.

(b) *Final action by an agency in all other circumstances.* When an agency dismisses an entire complaint under §1614.107, receives a request for an immediate final decision or does not receive a reply to the notice issued under §1614.108(f), the agency shall take final action by issuing a final decision. The final decision shall consist of findings by the agency on the merits of each issue in the complaint, or, as appropriate, the rationale for dismissing any claims in the complaint and, when discrimination is found, appropriate remedies and relief in accordance with subpart E of this part. The agency shall issue the final decision within 60 days of receiving notification that a complainant has requested an immediate decision from the agency, or within 60 days of the end of the 30-day period for the complainant to request a hearing or an immediate final decision where the complainant has not requested either a hearing or a decision. The final action shall contain notice of the right to appeal the final action to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the right to file a civil action in federal district court, the name of the proper defendant in any such lawsuit and the applicable time limits for appeals and lawsuits. A copy of EEOC Form 573 shall be attached to the final action.

(c) When an agency takes final action by issuing a final order or decision that requires the agency to include a notice that the complainant has the right to file an appeal with the EEOC, the notice shall inform the complainant that the appeal may be filed using the EEOC Public Portal, available at *https://publicportal.eeoc.gov*.

[64 FR 37657, July 12, 1999, as amended at 88 FR 57881, Aug. 24, 2023]

Subpart B—Provisions Applicable to Particular Complaints

§1614.201 Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

(a) As an alternative to filing a complaint under this part, an aggrieved individual may file a civil action in a United States district court under the ADEA against the head of an alleged discriminating agency after giving the Commission not less than 30 days' notice of the intent to file such an action. Such notice must be filed in writing with EEOC, at P.O. Box 77960, Washington, DC 20013, or by personal delivery or facsimile within 180 days of the occurrence of the alleged unlawful practice.

(b) The Commission may exempt a position from the provisions of the ADEA if the Commission establishes a maximum age requirement for the position on the basis of a determination that age is a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to the performance of the duties of the position.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37658, July 12, 1999; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009; 85 FR 35561, June 11, 2020]

§1614.202 Equal Pay Act.

(a) In its enforcement of the Equal Pay Act, the Commission has the authority to investigate an agency's employment practices on its own initiative at any time in order to determine compliance with the provisions of the Act. The Commission will provide notice to the agency that it will be initiating an investigation.

(b) Complaints alleging violations of the Equal Pay Act shall be processed under this part.

§1614.203 Rehabilitation Act.

(a) *Definitions.* The following definitions apply for purposes of this section:

(1) The term *ADA* means title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (42 U.S.C. 12101

through 12117), title V of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 12201 through 12213), as it applies to employment, and the regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission implementing titles I and V of the ADA at part 1630 of this chapter.

(2) The term *disability* means disability as defined under §1630.2(g) through (l) of this chapter.

(3) The term *hiring authority that takes disability into account* means a hiring authority that permits an agency to consider disability status during the hiring process, including the hiring authority for individuals with intellectual disabilities, severe physical disabilities, or psychiatric disabilities, as set forth at 5 CFR 213.3102(u); the Veterans' Recruitment Appointment authority, as set forth at 5 CFR part 307; and the 30% or More Disabled Veteran authority, as set forth at 5 CFR 316.302(b)(4), 316.402(b)(4).

(4) The term *personal assistance service provider* means an employee or independent contractor whose primary job functions include provision of personal assistance services.

(5) The term *personal assistance services* means assistance with performing activities of daily living that an individual would typically perform if he or she did not have a disability, and that is not otherwise required as a reasonable accommodation, including, for example, assistance with removing and putting on clothing, eating, and using the restroom.

(6) The term *Plan* means an affirmative action plan for the hiring, placement, and advancement of individuals with disabilities, as required under 29 U.S.C. 791(b).

(7) The term *Schedule A hiring authority for persons with certain disabilities* means the hiring authority for individuals with intellectual disabilities, severe physical disabilities, or psychiatric disabilities, as set forth at 5 CFR 213.3102(u).

(8) The term *Section 501* means section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 791).

(9) The term *targeted disability* means a disability that is designated as a ''targeted disability or health condition'' on the Office of Personnel Management's Standard Form 256 or that falls under one of the first 12 categories of disability listed in Part A of question 5 of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Demographic Information on Applicants form.

(10) The term *undue hardship* has the meaning set forth in part 1630 of this chapter.

(b) *Nondiscrimination.* Federal agencies shall not discriminate on the basis of disability in regard to the hiring, advancement or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training, or other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. The standards used to determine whether Section 501 has been violated in a complaint alleging employment discrimination under this part shall be the standards applied under the ADA.

(c) *Model employer.* The Federal Government shall be a model employer of individuals with disabilities. Agencies shall give full consideration to the hiring, advancement, and retention of qualified individuals with disabilities in the federal workforce. Agencies shall also take affirmative action to promote the recruitment, hiring, and advancement of qualified individuals with disabilities, with the goal of eliminating under-representation of individuals with disabilities in the federal workforce.

(d) *Affirmative action plan.* Pursuant to 29 U.S.C. 791, each agency shall adopt and implement a Plan that provides sufficient assurances, procedures, and commitments to provide adequate hiring, placement, and advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities at all levels of federal employment. An agency fails to satisfy this requirement unless it has adopted and implemented a Plan that meets the following criteria:

(1) *Disability hiring and advancement program*—(i) *Recruitment.* The Plan shall require the agency to take specific steps to ensure that a broad range of individuals with disabilities, including individuals with targeted disabilities, will be aware of and be encouraged to apply for job vacancies when eligible. Such steps shall include, at a minimum—

(A) Use of programs and resources that identify job applicants with disabilities, including individuals with targeted disabilities, who are eligible to be appointed under a hiring authority that takes disability into account, consistent with applicable OPM regulations, examples of which could include programs that provide the qualifications necessary for particular positions within the agency to individuals with disabilities, databases of individuals with disabilities who previously applied to the agency but were not hired for the positions they applied for, and training and internship programs that lead directly to employment for individuals with disabilities; and

(B) Establishment and maintenance of contacts (which may include formal agreements) with organizations that specialize in providing assistance to individuals with disabilities, including individuals with targeted disabilities, in securing and maintaining employment, such as American Job Centers, State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies, the Veterans' Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program, Centers for Independent Living, and Employment Network service providers.

(ii) *Application process.* The Plan shall ensure that the agency has designated sufficient staff to handle any disability-related issues that arise during the application and selection processes, and shall require the agency to provide such individuals with sufficient training, support, and other resources to carry out their responsibilities under this section. Such responsibilities shall include, at a minimum—

(A) Ensuring that disability-related questions from members of the public regarding the agency's application and selection processes are answered promptly and correctly, including questions about reasonable accommodations needed by job applicants during the application and selection processes and questions about how individuals may apply for appointment under hiring authorities that take disability into account;

(B) Processing requests for reasonable accommodations needed by job applicants during the application and placement processes, and ensuring that the agency provides such accommodations when required to do so under the standards set forth in part 1630 of this chapter;

(C) Accepting applications for appointment under hiring authorities that take disability into account, consistent with applicable OPM regulations;

(D) If an individual has applied for appointment to a particular position under a hiring authority that takes disability into account, determining whether the individual is eligible for appointment under such authority, and, if so, forwarding the individual's application to the relevant hiring officials with an explanation of how and when the individual may be appointed, consistent with all applicable laws;

(E) Overseeing any other agency programs designed to increase hiring of individuals with disabilities.

(iii) *Advancement program.* The Plan shall require the agency to take specific steps to ensure that current employees with disabilities have sufficient opportunities for advancement. Such steps may include, for example—

(A) Efforts to ensure that employees with disabilities are informed of and have opportunities to enroll in relevant training, including management training when eligible;

(B) Development or maintenance of a mentoring program for employees with disabilities; and

(C) Administration of exit interviews that include questions on how the agency could improve the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, and advancement of individuals with disabilities.

(2) *Disability anti-harassment policy.* The Plan shall require the agency to state specifically in its anti-harassment policy that harassment based on disability is prohibited, and to include in its training materials examples of the types of conduct that would constitute disability-based harassment.

(3) *Reasonable accommodation*—(i) *Procedures.* The Plan shall require the agency to adopt, post on its public Web site, and make available to all job applicants and employees in written and accessible formats, reasonable accommodation procedures that are easy to understand and that, at a minimum—

(A) Explain relevant terms such as ''reasonable accommodation,'' ''disability,'' ''interactive process,'' ''qualified,'' and ''undue hardship,'' consistent with applicable statutory and regulatory definitions, using examples where appropriate;

(B) Explain that reassignment to a vacant position for which an employee is qualified, and not just permission to compete for such position, is a reasonable accommodation, and that the agency must consider providing reassignment to a vacant position as a reasonable accommodation when it determines that no other reasonable accommodation will permit an employee with a disability to perform the essential functions of his or her current position;

(C) Notify supervisors and other relevant agency employees how and where they are to conduct searches for available vacancies when considering reassignment as a reasonable accommodation;

(D) Explain that an individual may request a reasonable accommodation orally or in writing at any time, need not fill out any specific form in order for the interactive process to begin, and need not have a particular accommodation in mind before making a request, and that the request may be made to a supervisor or manager in the individual's chain of command, the office designated by the agency to oversee the reasonable accommodation process, any agency employee connected with the application process, or any other individual designated by the agency to accept such requests;

(E) Include any forms the agency uses in connection with a reasonable accommodation request as attachments, and indicate that such forms are available in alternative formats that are accessible to people with disabilities;

(F) Describe the agency's process for determining whether to provide a reasonable accommodation, including the interactive process, and provide contact information for the individual or program office from whom requesters will receive a final decision;

(G) Provide guidance to supervisors on how to recognize requests for reasonable accommodation;

(H) Require that decision makers communicate, early in the interactive process and periodically throughout the process, with individuals who have requested a reasonable accommodation;

(I) Explain when the agency may require an individual who requests a reasonable accommodation to provide medical information that is sufficient to explain the nature of the individual's disability, his or her need for reasonable accommodation, and how the requested accommodation, if any, will assist the individual to apply for a job, perform the essential functions of a job, or enjoy the benefits and privileges of the workplace;

(J) Explain the agency's right to request relevant supplemental medical information if the information submitted by the requester is insufficient for the purposes specified in paragraph (d)(3)(i)(I) of this section;

(K) Explain the agency's right to have medical information reviewed by a medical expert of the agency's choosing at the agency's expense;

(L) Explain the agency's obligation to keep medical information confidential, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, and the limited circumstances under which such information may be disclosed;

(M) Designate the maximum amount of time the agency has, absent extenuating circumstances, to either provide a requested accommodation or deny the request, and explain that the time limit begins to run when the accommodation is first requested;

(N) Explain that the agency will not be expected to adhere to its usual timelines if an individual's health professional fails to provide needed documentation in a timely manner;

(O) Explain that, where a particular reasonable accommodation can be provided in less than the maximum amount of time permitted under paragraph (d)(3)(i)(M) of this section, failure to provide the accommodation in a prompt manner may result in a violation of the Rehabilitation Act;

(P) Provide for expedited processing of requests for reasonable accommodations that are needed sooner than the

maximum allowable time frame permitted under paragraph (d)(3)(i)(M) of this section;

(Q) Explain that, when all the facts and circumstances known to the agency make it reasonably likely that an individual will be entitled to a reasonable accommodation, but the accommodation cannot be provided immediately, the agency shall provide an interim accommodation that allows the individual to perform some or all of the essential functions of his or her job, if it is possible to do so without imposing undue hardship on the agency;

(R) Inform applicants and employees how they may track the processing of requests for reasonable accommodation;

(S) Explain that, where there is a delay in either processing a request for or providing a reasonable accommodation, the agency must notify the individual of the reason for the delay, including any extenuating circumstances that justify the delay;

(T) Explain that individuals who have been denied reasonable accommodations have the right to file complaints pursuant to 29 CFR 1614.106;

(U) Encourage the use of voluntary informal dispute resolution processes that individuals may use to obtain prompt reconsideration of denied requests for reasonable accommodation;

(V) Provide that the agency shall give the requester a notice consistent with the requirements of paragraph (d)(3)(iii) of this section at the time a request for reasonable accommodation is denied; and

(W) Provide information on how to access additional information regarding reasonable accommodation, including, at a minimum, Commission guidance and technical assistance documents.

(ii) *Cost of accommodations.* The Plan shall require the agency to take specific steps to ensure that requests for reasonable accommodation are not denied for reasons of cost, and that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from employment due to the anticipated cost of a reasonable accommodation, if the resources available to the agency as a whole, excluding those designated by statute for a specific purpose that does not include reasonable accommodation, would enable it to provide an effective reasonable accommodation without undue hardship. Such steps shall be reasonably designed to, at a minimum—

(A) Ensure that anyone who is authorized to grant or deny requests for reasonable accommodation or to make hiring decisions is aware that, pursuant to the regulations implementing the undue hardship defense at 29 CFR part 1630, all resources available to the agency as a whole, excluding those designated by statute for a specific purpose that does not include reasonable accommodation, are considered when determining whether a denial of reasonable accommodation based on cost is lawful; and

(B) Ensure that anyone authorized to grant or deny requests for reasonable accommodation or to make hiring decisions is aware of, and knows how to arrange for the use of, agency resources available to provide the accommodation, including any centralized fund the agency may have for that purpose.

(iii) *Notification of basis for denial.* The Plan shall require the agency to provide a job applicant or employee who is denied a reasonable accommodation with a written notice at the time of the denial, in an accessible format when requested, that—

(A) Explains the reasons for the denial and notifies the job applicant or employee of any available internal appeal or informal dispute resolution processes;

(B) Informs the job applicant or employee of the right to challenge the denial by filing a complaint of discrimination under this part;

(C) Provides instructions on how to file such a complaint; and

(D) Explains that, pursuant to 29 CFR 1614.105, the right to file a complaint will be lost unless the job applicant or employee initiates contact with an EEO Counselor within 45 days of the denial, regardless of whether the applicant or employee participates in an informal dispute resolution process.

(4) *Accessibility of facilities and technology*—(i) *Notice of rights.* The Plan shall require the agency to adopt, post on its public Web site, and make available to all employees in written and accessible formats, a notice that—

(A) Explains their rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794d, concerning the accessibility of agency technology, and the Architectural Barriers Act, 42 U.S.C. 4151 through 4157, concerning the accessibility of agency building and facilities;

(B) Provides contact information for an agency employee who is responsible for ensuring the physical accessibility of the agency's facilities under the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, and an agency employee who is responsible for ensuring that the electronic and information technology purchased, maintained, or used by the agency is readily accessible to, and usable by, individuals with disabilities, as required by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and

(C) Provides instructions on how to file complaints alleging violations of the accessibility requirements of the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

(ii) *Assistance with filing complaints at other agencies.* If an agency's investigation of a complaint filed under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 shows that a different entity is responsible for the alleged violation, the Plan shall require the agency to inform the individual who filed the complaint where he or she may file a complaint against the other entity, if possible.

(5) *Personal assistance services allowing employees to participate in the workplace*—(i) *Obligation to provide personal assistance services.* The Plan shall require the agency to provide an employee with, in addition to professional services required as a reasonable accommodation under the standards set forth in part 1630 of this chapter, personal assistance services during work hours and job-related travel if—

(A) The employee requires such services because of a targeted disability;

(B) Provision of such services would, together with any reasonable accommodations required under the standards set forth in part 1630 of this chapter, enable the employee to perform the essential functions of his or her position; and

(C) Provision of such services would not impose undue hardship on the agency.

(ii) *Service providers.* The Plan shall state that personal assistance services required under paragraph (d)(5)(i) of this section must be performed by a personal assistance service provider. The Plan may permit the agency to require personal assistance service providers to provide personal assistance services to more than one individual. The Plan may also permit the agency to require personal assistance service providers to perform tasks unrelated to personal assistance services, but only to the extent that doing so does not result in failure to provide personal assistance services required under paragraph (d)(5)(i) of this section in a timely manner.

(iii) *No adverse action.* The Plan shall prohibit the agency from taking adverse actions against job applicants or employees based on their need for, or perceived need for, personal assistance services.

(iv) *Selection of personal assistance service providers.* The Plan shall require the agency, when selecting someone who will provide personal assistance services to a single individual, to give primary consideration to the individual's preferences to the extent permitted by law.

(v) *Written procedures.* The Plan shall require the agency to adopt, post on its public Web site, and make available to all job applicants and employees in written and accessible formats, procedures for processing requests for personal assistance services. An agency may satisfy this requirement by stating, in the procedures required under paragraph (d)(3)(i) of this section, that the process for requesting personal assistance services, the process for determining whether such services are required, and the agency's right to deny such requests when provision of the services would pose an undue hardship, are the same as for reasonable accommodations.

(6) *Utilization analysis*—(i) *Current utilization.* The Plan shall require the agency to perform a workforce analysis annually to determine the percentage of its employees at each grade and salary level who have disabilities, and the

percentage of its employees at each grade and salary level who have targeted disabilities.

(ii) *Source of data*. For purposes of the analysis required under paragraph (d)(6)(i) of this section, an employee may be classified as an individual with a disability or an individual with a targeted disability on the basis of—

(A) The individual's self-identification as an individual with a disability or an individual with a targeted disability on a form, including but not limited to the Office of Personnel Management's Standard Form 256, which states that the information collected will be kept confidential and used only for statistical purposes, and that completion of the form is voluntary;

(B) Records relating to the individual's appointment under a hiring authority that takes disability into account, if applicable; and

(C) Records relating to the individual's requests for reasonable accommodation, if any.

(iii) *Data accuracy*. The Plan shall require the agency to take steps to ensure that data collected pursuant to paragraph (d)(6)(i) of this section are accurate.

(7) *Goals*—(i) *Adoption*. The Plan shall commit the agency to the goal of ensuring that—

(A) No less than 12% of employees at the GS–11 level and above, together with employees who are not paid under the General Schedule but who have salaries equal to or greater than employees at the GS–11, step 1 level in the Washington, DC locality, are individuals with disabilities;

(B) No less than 12% of employees at the GS–10 level and below, together with employees who are not paid under the General Schedule but who have salaries less than employees at the GS–11, step 1 level in the Washington, DC locality, are individuals with disabilities;

(C) No less than 2% of employees at the GS–11 level and above, together with employees who are not paid under the General Schedule but who have salaries equal to or greater than employees at the GS–11, step 1 level in the Washington, DC locality, are individuals with targeted disabilities; and

(D) No less than 2% of employees at the GS–10 level and below, together with employees who are not paid under the General Schedule but who have salaries less than employees at the GS–11, step 1 level in the Washington, DC locality, are individuals with targeted disabilities.

(ii) *Progression toward goals*. The Plan shall require the agency to take specific steps that are reasonably designed to gradually increase the number of persons with disabilities or targeted disabilities employed at the agency until it meets the goals established pursuant to paragraph (d)(7)(i) of this section. Examples of such steps include, but are not limited to—

(A) Increased use of hiring authorities that take disability into account to hire or promote individuals with disabilities or targeted disabilities, as applicable;

(B) To the extent permitted by applicable laws, consideration of disability or targeted disability status as a positive factor in hiring, promotion, or assignment decisions;

(C) Disability-related training and education campaigns for all employees in the agency;

(D) Additional outreach or recruitment efforts;

(E) Increased efforts to hire and retain individuals who require supported employment because of a disability, who have retained the services of a job coach at their own expense or at the expense of a third party, and who may be given permission to use the job coach during work hours as a reasonable accommodation without imposing undue hardship on the agency; and

(F) Adoption of training, mentoring, or internship programs for individuals with disabilities.

(8) *Recordkeeping*. The Plan shall require the agency to keep records that it may use to determine whether it is complying with the nondiscrimination and affirmative action requirements imposed under Section 501, and to make such records available to the Commission upon the Commission's request, including, at a minimum, records of—

(i) The number of job applications received from individuals with disabilities, and the number of individuals with disabilities who were hired by the agency;

(ii) The number of job applications received from individuals with targeted disabilities, and the number of individuals with targeted disabilities who were hired by the agency;

(iii) All rescissions of conditional job offers, demotions, and terminations taken against applicants or employees as a result of medical examinations or inquiries;

(iv) All agency employees hired under the Schedule A hiring authority for persons with certain disabilities, and each such employee's date of hire, entering grade level, probationary status, and current grade level;

(v) The number of employees appointed under the Schedule A hiring authority for persons with certain disabilities who have been converted to career or career-conditional appointments in the competitive service, and the number of such employees who were terminated prior to being converted to a career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service; and

(vi) Details about each request for reasonable accommodation including, at a minimum—

(A) The specific reasonable accommodation requested, if any;

(B) The job (occupational series, grade level, and agency component) sought by the requesting applicant or held by the requesting employee;

(C) Whether the accommodation was needed to apply for a job, perform the essential functions of a job, or enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment;

(D) Whether the request was granted (which may include an accommodation different from the one requested) or denied;

(E) The identity of the deciding official;

(F) If denied, the basis for such denial; and

(G) The number of days taken to process the request.

(e) *Reporting*—(1) *Submission to the Commission.* On an annual basis, each federal agency shall submit to the Commission for approval, at such time and in such manner as the Commission deems appropriate—

(i) A copy of its current Plan;

(ii) The results of the two most recent workforce analyses performed pursuant to paragraph (d)(6) of this section showing the percentage of employees with disabilities and employees with targeted disabilities in each of the designated pay groups;

(iii) The number of individuals appointed to positions within the agency under the Schedule A hiring authority for persons with certain disabilities during the previous year, and the total number of employees whose employment at the agency began by appointment under the Schedule A hiring authority for persons with certain disabilities; and

(iv) A list of changes made to the Plan since the prior submission, if any, and an explanation of why those changes were made.

(2) *Availability to the public.* Each agency shall make the information submitted to the Commission pursuant to paragraph (e)(1) of this section available to the public by, at a minimum, posting a copy of the submission on its public Web site and providing a means by which members of the public may request copies of the submission in accessible formats.

(f) *Commission approval and disapproval*—(1) *Basis for approval.* If the Commission determines that an agency has adopted and implemented a Plan that meets the requirements set forth in paragraph (d) of this section, the Commission shall approve the Plan.

(2) *Basis for disapproval.* If the Commission determines that an agency has failed to adopt and implement a Plan that meets the requirements set forth in paragraph (d) of this section, the Commission shall disapprove the Plan as required by 29 U.S.C. 791(b). Failure to achieve a goal set forth in paragraph (d)(7)(i) of this section, by itself, is not grounds for disapproval unless the Plan fails to require the agency to take specific steps that are reasonably designed to achieve the goal.

[82 FR 677, Jan. 3, 2017]

§ 1614.204 Class complaints.

(a) *Definitions.* (1) A *class* is a group of employees, former employees or applicants for employment who, it is alleged, have been or are being adversely

affected by an agency personnel management policy or practice that discriminates against the group on the basis of their race; color; religion; sex; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

(2) A *class complaint* is a written complaint of discrimination filed on behalf of a class by the agent of the class alleging that:

(i) The class is so numerous that a consolidated complaint of the members of the class is impractical;

(ii) There are questions of fact common to the class;

(iii) The claims of the agent of the class are typical of the claims of the class;

(iv) The agent of the class, or, if represented, the representative, will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the class.

(3) An *agent of the class* is a class member who acts for the class during the processing of the class complaint.

(b) *Pre-complaint processing.* An employee or applicant who wishes to file a class complaint must seek counseling and be counseled in accordance with §1614.105. A complainant may move for class certification at any reasonable point in the process when it becomes apparent that there are class implications to the claim raised in an individual complaint. If a complainant moves for class certification after completing the counseling process contained in §1614.105, no additional counseling is required. The administrative judge shall deny class certification when the complainant has unduly delayed in moving for certification.

(c) *Filing and presentation of a class complaint.* (1) A class complaint must be signed by the agent or representative and must identify the policy or practice adversely affecting the class as well as the specific action or matter affecting the class agent.

(2) The complaint must be filed with the agency that allegedly discriminated not later than 15 days after the agent's receipt of the notice of right to file a class complaint.

(3) The complaint shall be processed promptly; the parties shall cooperate and shall proceed at all times without undue delay.

(d) *Acceptance or dismissal.* (1) Within 30 days of an agency's receipt of a complaint, the agency shall: Designate an agency representative who shall not be any of the individuals referenced in §1614.102(b)(3), and forward the complaint, along with a copy of the Counselor's report and any other information pertaining to timeliness or other relevant circumstances related to the complaint, to the Commission. The Commission shall assign the complaint to an administrative judge or complaints examiner with a proper security clearance when necessary. The administrative judge may require the complainant or agency to submit additional information relevant to the complaint.

(2) The administrative judge may dismiss the complaint, or any portion, for any of the reasons listed in §1614.107 or because it does not meet the prerequisites of a class complaint under §1614.204(a)(2).

(3) If the allegation is not included in the Counselor's report, the administrative judge shall afford the agent 15 days to state whether the matter was discussed with the Counselor and, if not, explain why it was not discussed. If the explanation is not satisfactory, the administrative judge shall dismiss the allegation. If the explanation is satisfactory, the administrative judge shall refer the allegation to the agency for further counseling of the agent. After counseling, the allegation shall be consolidated with the class complaint.

(4) If an allegation lacks specificity and detail, the administrative judge shall afford the agent 15 days to provide specific and detailed information. The administrative judge shall dismiss the complaint if the agent fails to provide such information within the specified time period. If the information provided contains new allegations outside the scope of the complaint, the administrative judge shall advise the agent how to proceed on an individual or class basis concerning these allegations.

(5) The administrative judge shall extend the time limits for filing a complaint and for consulting with a Counselor in accordance with the time limit

extension provisions contained in §§ 1614.105(a)(2) and 1614.604.

(6) When appropriate, the administrative judge may decide that a class be divided into subclasses and that each subclass be treated as a class, and the provisions of this section then shall be construed and applied accordingly.

(7) The administrative judge shall transmit his or her decision to accept or dismiss a complaint to the agency and the agent. The agency shall take final action by issuing a final order within 40 days of receipt of the hearing record and administrative judge's decision. The final order shall notify the agent whether or not the agency will implement the decision of the administrative judge. If the final order does not implement the decision of the administrative judge, the agency shall simultaneously appeal the administrative judge's decision in accordance with §1614.403 and append a copy of the appeal to the final order. A dismissal of a class complaint shall inform the agent either that the complaint is being filed on that date as an individual complaint of discrimination and will be processed under subpart A or that the complaint is also dismissed as an individual complaint in accordance with §1614.107. In addition, it shall inform the agent of the right to appeal the dismissal of the class complaint to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or to file a civil action and shall include EEOC Form 573, Notice of Appeal/Petition.

(e) *Notification.* (1) Within 15 days of receiving notice that the administrative judge has accepted a class complaint or a reasonable time frame specified by the administrative judge, the agency shall use reasonable means, such as delivery, mailing to last known address or distribution, to notify all class members of the acceptance of the class complaint.

(2) Such notice shall contain:

(i) The name of the agency or organizational segment, its location, and the date of acceptance of the complaint;

(ii) A description of the issues accepted as part of the class complaint;

(iii) An explanation of the binding nature of the final decision or resolution of the complaint on class members; and

(iv) The name, address and telephone number of the class representative.

(f) *Obtaining evidence concerning the complaint.* (1) The administrative judge shall notify the agent and the agency representative of the time period that will be allowed both parties to prepare their cases. This time period will include at least 60 days and may be extended by the administrative judge upon the request of either party. Both parties are entitled to reasonable development of evidence on matters relevant to the issues raised in the complaint. Evidence may be developed through interrogatories, depositions, and requests for admissions, stipulations or production of documents. It shall be grounds for objection to producing evidence that the information sought by either party is irrelevant, overburdensome, repetitious, or privileged.

(2) If mutual cooperation fails, either party may request the administrative judge to rule on a request to develop evidence. If a party fails without good cause shown to respond fully and in timely fashion to a request made or approved by the administrative judge for documents, records, comparative data, statistics or affidavits, and the information is solely in the control of one party, such failure may, in appropriate circumstances, caused the administrative judge:

(i) To draw an adverse inference that the requested information would have reflected unfavorably on the party refusing to provide the requested information;

(ii) To consider the matters to which the requested information pertains to be established in favor of the opposing party;

(iii) To exclude other evidence offered by the party failing to produce the requested information;

(iv) To recommend that a decision be entered in favor of the opposing party; or

(v) To take such other actions as the administrative judge deems appropriate.

(3) During the period for development of evidence, the administrative judge may, in his or her discretion, direct that an investigation of facts relevant

to the complaint or any portion be conducted by an agency certified by the Commission.

(4) Both parties shall furnish to the administrative judge copies of all materials that they wish to be examined and such other material as may be requested.

(g) *Opportunity for resolution of the complaint.* (1) The administrative judge shall furnish the agent and the representative of the agency a copy of all materials obtained concerning the complaint and provide opportunity for the agent to discuss materials with the agency representative and attempt resolution of the complaint.

(2) The complaint may be resolved by agreement of the agency and the agent at any time pursuant to the notice and approval procedure contained in paragraph (g)(4) of this section.

(3) If the complaint is resolved, the terms of the resolution shall be reduced to writing and signed by the agent and the agency.

(4) Notice of the resolution shall be given to all class members in the same manner as notification of the acceptance of the class complaint and to the administrative judge. It shall state the relief, if any, to be granted by the agency and the name and address of the EEOC administrative judge assigned to the case. It shall state that within 30 days of the date of the notice of resolution, any member of the class may petition the administrative judge to vacate the resolution because it benefits only the class agent, or is otherwise not fair, adequate and reasonable to the class as a whole. The administrative judge shall review the notice of resolution and consider any petitions to vacate filed. If the administrative judge finds that the proposed resolution is not fair, adequate and reasonable to the class as a whole, the administrative judge shall issue a decision vacating the agreement and may replace the original class agent with a petitioner or some other class member who is eligible to be the class agent during further processing of the class complaint. The decision shall inform the former class agent or the petitioner of the right to appeal the decision to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and include EEOC Form 573, Notice of Appeal/Petition. If the administrative judge finds that the resolution is fair, adequate and reasonable to the class as a whole, the resolution shall bind all members of the class.

(h) *Hearing.* On expiration of the period allowed for preparation of the case, the administrative judge shall set a date for hearing. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with 29 CFR 1614.109 (a) through (f).

(i) *Decisions:* The administrative judge shall transmit to the agency and class agent a decision on the complaint, including findings, systemic relief for the class and any individual relief, where appropriate, with regard to the personnel action or matter that gave rise to the complaint. If the administrative judge finds no class relief appropriate, he or she shall determine if a finding of individual discrimination is warranted and, if so, shall order appropriate relief.

(j) *Agency final action.* (1) Within 60 days of receipt of the administrative judge's decision on the complaint, the agency shall take final action by issuing a final order. The final order shall notify the class agent whether or not the agency will fully implement the decision of the administrative judge and shall contain notice of the class agent's right to appeal to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the right to file a civil action in federal district court, the name of the proper defendant in any such lawsuit, and the applicable time limits for appeals and lawsuits. If the final order does not fully implement the decision of the administrative judge, then the agency shall simultaneously file an appeal in accordance with §1614.403 and append a copy of the appeal to the final order. A copy of EEOC Form 573 shall be attached to the final order. When an agency takes final action by issuing a final order or decision that requires the agency to include a notice that the class agent has the right to file an appeal with the EEOC, the notice shall inform the class agent that the appeal may be filed using the EEOC Public Portal, available at *https://publicportal.eeoc.gov.*

(2) If an agency does not issue a final order within 60 days of receipt of the administrative judge's decision, then

the decision of the administrative judge shall become the final action of the agency.

(3) A final order on a class complaint shall, subject to subpart D of this part, be binding on all members of the class and the agency.

(k) *Notification of final action:* The agency shall notify class members of the final action and relief awarded, if any, through the same media employed to give notice of the existence of the class complaint. The notice, where appropriate, shall include information concerning the rights of class members to seek individual relief, and of the procedures to be followed. Notice shall be given by the agency within 10 days of the transmittal of the final action to the agent.

(l) *Relief for individual class members.* (1) When discrimination is found, an agency must eliminate or modify the employment policy or practice out of which the complaint arose and provide individual relief, including an award of attorney's fees and costs, to the agent in accordance with §1614.501.

(2) When class-wide discrimination is not found, but it is found that the class agent is a victim of discrimination, §1614.501 shall apply. The agency shall also, within 60 days of the issuance of the final order finding no class-wide discrimination, issue the acknowledgement of receipt of an individual complaint as required by §1614.106(d) and process in accordance with the provisions of subpart A of this part, each individual complaint that was subsumed into the class complaint.

(3) When discrimination is found in the final order and a class member believes that he or she is entitled to individual relief, the class member may file a written claim with the head of the agency or its EEO Director within 30 days of receipt of notification by the agency of its final order. Administrative judges shall retain jurisdiction over the complaint in order to resolve any disputed claims by class members. The claim must include a specific detailed showing that the claimant is a class member who was affected by the discriminatory policy or practice, and that this discriminatory action took place within the period of time for which class-wide discrimination was found in the final order. Where a finding of discrimination against a class has been made, there shall be a presumption of discrimination as to each member of the class. The agency must show by clear and convincing evidence that any class member is not entitled to relief. The administrative judge may hold a hearing or otherwise supplement the record on a claim filed by a class member. The agency or the Commission may find class-wide discrimination and order remedial action for any policy or practice in existence within 45 days of the agent's initial contact with the Counselor. Relief otherwise consistent with this part may be ordered for the time the policy or practice was in effect. The agency shall issue a final order on each such claim within 90 days of filing. Such decision must include a notice of the right to file an appeal or a civil action in accordance with subpart D of this part and the applicable time limits. When an agency takes final action by issuing a final order or decision that requires the agency to include a notice that the class member has the right to file an appeal with the EEOC, the notice shall inform the class member that the appeal may be filed using the EEOC Public Portal, available at *https://publicportal.eeoc.gov*.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37658, July 12, 1999; 74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009; 77 FR 43505, July 25, 2012; 88 FR 57881, Aug. 24, 2023; 89 FR 11171, Feb. 14, 2024]

Subpart C—Related Processes

§1614.301 Relationship to negotiated grievance procedure.

(a) When a person is employed by an agency subject to 5 U.S.C. 7121(d) and is covered by a collective bargaining agreement that permits allegations of discrimination to be raised in a negotiated grievance procedure, a person wishing to file a complaint or a grievance on a matter of alleged employment discrimination must elect to raise the matter under either part 1614 or the negotiated grievance procedure, but not both. An election to proceed under this part is indicated only by the filing of a written complaint; use of the pre-complaint process as described in

§ 1614.105 does not constitute an election for purposes of this section. An aggrieved employee who files a complaint under this part may not thereafter file a grievance on the same matter. An election to proceed under a negotiated grievance procedure is indicated by the filing of a timely written grievance. An aggrieved employee who files a grievance with an agency whose negotiated agreement permits the acceptance of grievances which allege discrimination may not thereafter file a complaint on the same matter under this part 1614 irrespective of whether the agency has informed the individual of the need to elect or of whether the grievance has raised an issue of discrimination. Any such complaint filed after a grievance has been filed on the same matter shall be dismissed without prejudice to the complainant's right to proceed through the negotiated grievance procedure including the right to appeal to the Commission from a final decision as provided in subpart D of this part. The dismissal of such a complaint shall advise the complainant of the obligation to raise discrimination in the grievance process and of the right to appeal the final grievance decision to the Commission.

(b) When a person is not covered by a collective bargaining agreement that permits allegations of discrimination to be raised in a negotiated grievance procedure, allegations of discrimination shall be processed as complaints under this part.

(c) When a person is employed by an agency not subject to 5 U.S.C 7121(d) and is covered by a negotiated grievance procedure, allegations of discrimination shall be processed as complaints under this part, except that the time limits for processing the complaint contained in § 1614.106 and for appeal to the Commission contained in § 1614.402 may be held in abeyance during processing of a grievance covering the same matter as the complaint if the agency notifies the complainant in writing that the complaint will be held in abeyance pursuant to this section.

§ 1614.302 Mixed case complaints.

(a) *Definitions*—(1) *Mixed case complaint.* A mixed case complaint is a complaint of employment discrimination filed with a federal agency based on race; color; religion; sex; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions related to or stemming from an action that can be appealed to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB). The complaint may contain only an allegation of employment discrimination or it may contain additional allegations that the MSPB has jurisdiction to address.

(2) *Mixed case appeals.* A mixed case appeal is an appeal filed with the MSPB that alleges that an appealable agency action was effected, in whole or in part, because of discrimination on the basis of race; color; religion; sex; national origin; disability; age; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

(b) *Election.* An aggrieved person may initially file a mixed case complaint with an agency pursuant to this part or an appeal on the same matter with the MSPB pursuant to 5 CFR 1201.151, but not both. An agency shall inform every employee who is the subject of an action that is appealable to the MSPB and who has either orally or in writing raised the issue of discrimination during the processing of the action of the right to file either a mixed case complaint with the agency or to file a mixed case appeal with the MSPB. The person shall be advised that he or she may not initially file both a mixed case complaint and an appeal on the same matter and that whichever is filed first shall be considered an election to proceed in that forum. If a person files a mixed case appeal with the MSPB instead of a mixed case complaint and the MSPB dismisses the appeal for jurisdictional reasons, the agency shall promptly notify the individual in writing of the right to contact an EEO counselor within 45 days of receipt of this notice and to file an EEO complaint, subject to § 1614.107. The date on which the person filed his or her appeal with MSPB shall be deemed to be the date of initial contact with the counselor. If a person files a timely appeal with MSPB from the agency's processing of a mixed case complaint and the MSPB dismisses it for jurisdictional reasons, the agency shall reissue a notice under § 1614.108(f)

giving the individual the right to elect between a hearing before an administrative judge and an immediate final decision.

(c) *Dismissal.* (1) An agency may dismiss a mixed case complaint for the reasons contained in, and under the conditions prescribed in, §1614.107.

(2) An agency decision to dismiss a mixed case complaint on the basis of the complainant's prior election of the MSPB procedures shall be made as follows:

(i) Where neither the agency nor the MSPB administrative judge questions the MSPB's jurisdiction over the appeal on the same matter, it shall dismiss the mixed case complaint pursuant to §1614.107(a)(4) and shall advise the complainant that he or she must bring the allegations of discrimination contained in the rejected complaint to the attention of the MSPB, pursuant to 5 CFR 1201.155. The dismissal of such a complaint shall advise the complainant of the right to petition the EEOC to review the MSPB's final decision on the discrimination issue. A dismissal of a mixed case complaint is not appealable to the Commission except where it is alleged that §1614.107(a)(4) has been applied to a non-mixed case matter.

(ii) Where the agency or the MSPB administrative judge questions the MSPB's jurisdiction over the appeal on the same matter, the agency shall hold the mixed case complaint in abeyance until the MSPB's administrative judge rules on the jurisdictional issue, notify the complainant that it is doing so, and instruct him or her to bring the allegation of discrimination to the attention of the MSPB. During this period of time, all time limitations for processing or filing under this part will be tolled. An agency decision to hold a mixed case complaint in abeyance is not appealable to EEOC. If the MSPB's administrative judge finds that MSPB has jurisdiction over the matter, the agency shall dismiss the mixed case complaint pursuant to §1614.107(a)(4), and advise the complainant of the right to petition the EEOC to review the MSPB's final decision on the discrimination issue. If the MSPB's administrative judge finds that MSPB does not have jurisdiction over the matter, the agency shall recommence processing of the mixed case complaint as a non-mixed case EEO complaint.

(d) *Procedures for agency processing of mixed case complaints.* When a complainant elects to proceed initially under this part rather than with the MSPB, the procedures set forth in subpart A shall govern the processing of the mixed case complaint with the following exceptions:

(1) At the time the agency advises a complainant of the acceptance of a mixed case complaint, it shall also advise the complainant that:

(i) If a final decision is not issued within 120 days of the date of filing of the mixed case complaint, the complainant may appeal the matter to the MSPB at any time thereafter as specified at 5 CFR 1201.154(b)(2) or may file a civil action as specified at §1614.310(g), but not both; and

(ii) If the complainant is dissatisfied with the agency's final decision on the mixed case complaint, the complainant may appeal the matter to the MSPB (not EEOC) within 30 days of receipt of the agency's final decision;

(2) Upon completion of the investigation, the notice provided the complainant in accordance with §1614.108(f) will advise the complainant that a final decision will be issued within 45 days without a hearing; and

(3) At the time that the agency issues its final decision on a mixed case complaint, the agency shall advise the complainant of the right to appeal the matter to the MSPB (not EEOC) within 30 days of receipt and of the right to file a civil action as provided at §1614.310(a).

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 17576, Apr. 22, 1996; 64 FR 37659, July 12, 1999; 74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009; 77 FR 43505, July 25, 2012; 89 FR 11171, Feb. 14, 2024]

§1614.303 Petitions to the EEOC from MSPB decisions on mixed case appeals and complaints.

(a) *Who may file.* Individuals who have received a final decision from the MSPB on a mixed case appeal or on the appeal of a final decision on a mixed case complaint under 5 CFR part 1201, subpart E and 5 U.S.C. 7702 may petition EEOC to consider that decision. The EEOC will not accept appeals from MSPB dismissals without prejudice.

(b) *Method of filing.* Filing shall be made by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the Office of Federal Operations, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, P.O. Box 77960, Washington, DC 20013.

(c) *Time to file.* A petition must be filed with the Commission either within 30 days of receipt of the final decision of the MSPB or within 30 days of when the decision of a MSPB field office becomes final.

(d) *Service.* The petition for review must be served upon all individuals and parties on the MSPB's service list by certified mail on or before the filing with the Commission, and the Clerk of the Board, MSPB, 1615 M Street, NW., Washington, DC 20419, and the petitioner must certify as to the date and method of service.

[74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009, as amended at 77 FR 51470, Aug. 24, 2012]

§ 1614.304 Contents of petition.

(a) *Form.* Petitions must be written or typed, but may use any format including a simple letter format. Petitioners are encouraged to use EEOC Form 573, Notice Of Appeal/Petition.

(b) *Contents.* Petitions must contain the following:

(1) The name and address of the petitioner;

(2) The name and address of the petitioner's representative, if any;

(3) A statement of the reasons why the decision of the MSPB is alleged to be incorrect, in whole or in part, only with regard to issues of discrimination based on race; color; religion; sex; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions;

(4) A copy of the decision issued by the MSPB; and

(5) The signature of the petitioner or representative, if any.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11171, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1614.305 Consideration procedures.

(a) Once a petition is filed, the Commission will examine it and determine whether the Commission will consider the decision of the MSPB. An agency may oppose the petition, either on the basis that the Commission should not consider the MSPB's decision or that the Commission should concur in the MSPB's decision, by filing any such argument with the Office of Federal Operations and serving a copy on the petitioner within 15 days of receipt by the Commission.

(b) The Commission shall determine whether to consider the decision of the MSPB within 30 days of receipt of the petition by the Commission's Office of Federal Operations. A determination of the Commission not to consider the decision shall not be used as evidence with respect to any issue of discrimination in any judicial proceeding concerning that issue.

(c) If the Commission makes a determination to consider the decision, the Commission shall within 60 days of the date of its determination, consider the entire record of the proceedings of the MSPB and on the basis of the evidentiary record before the Board as supplemented in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section, either:

(1) Concur in the decision of the MSPB; or

(2) Issue in writing a decision that differs from the decision of the MSPB to the extent that the Commission finds that, as a matter of law:

(i) The decision of the MSPB constitutes an incorrect interpretation of any provision of any law, rule, regulation, or policy directive referred to in 5 U.S.C. 7702(a)(1)(B); or

(ii) The decision involving such provision is not supported by the evidence in the record as a whole.

(d) In considering any decision of the MSPB, the Commission, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 7702(b)(4), may refer the case to the MSPB for the taking of additional evidence within such period as permits the Commission to make a decision within the 60-day period prescribed or provide on its own for the taking of additional evidence to the extent the Commission considers it necessary to supplement the record.

(e) Where the EEOC has differed with the decision of the MSPB under §1614.305(c)(2), the Commission shall refer the matter to the MSPB.

§ 1614.306 Referral of case to Special Panel.

If the MSPB reaffirms its decision under 5 CFR 1201.162(a)(2) with or without modification, the matter shall be immediately certified to the Special Panel established pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 7702(d). Upon certification, the Board shall, within five days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays), transmit to the Chairman of the Special Panel and to the Chairman of the EEOC the administrative record in the proceeding including—

(a) The factual record compiled under this section, which shall include a transcript of any hearing(s);

(b) The decisions issued by the Board and the Commission under 5 U.S.C. 7702; and

(c) A transcript of oral arguments made, or legal brief(s) filed, before the Board and the Commission.

§ 1614.307 Organization of Special Panel.

(a) The Special Panel is composed of:

(1) A Chairman appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, and whose term is 6 years;

(2) One member of the MSPB designated by the Chairman of the Board each time a panel is convened; and

(3) One member of the EEOC designated by the Chairman of the Commission each time a panel is convened.

(b) *Designation of Special Panel member*—(1) *Time of designation*. Within five days of certification of the case to the Special Panel, the Chairman of the MSPB and the Chairman of the EEOC shall each designate one member from their respective agencies to serve on the Special Panel.

(2) *Manner of designation*. Letters of designation shall be served on the Chairman of the Special Panel and the parties to the appeal.

§ 1614.308 Practices and procedures of the Special Panel.

(a) *Scope*. The rules in this subpart apply to proceedings before the Special Panel.

(b) *Suspension of rules in this subpart*. In the interest of expediting a decision, or for good cause shown, the Chairman of the Special Panel may, except where the rule in this subpart is required by statute, suspend the rules in this subpart on application of a party, or on his or her own motion, and may order proceedings in accordance with his or her direction.

(c) *Time limit for proceedings*. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 7702(d)(2)(A), the Special Panel shall issue a decision within 45 days of the matter being certified to it.

(d) *Administrative assistance to Special Panel*. (1) The MSPB and the EEOC shall provide the Panel with such reasonable and necessary administrative resources as determined by the Chairman of the Special Panel.

(2) Assistance shall include, but is not limited to, processing vouchers for pay and travel expenses.

(3) The Board and the EEOC shall be responsible for all administrative costs incurred by the Special Panel and, to the extent practicable, shall equally divide the costs of providing such administrative assistance. The Chairman of the Special Panel shall resolve the manner in which costs are divided in the event of a disagreement between the Board and the EEOC.

(e) *Maintenance of the official record*. The Board shall maintain the official record. The Board shall transmit two copies of each submission filed to each member of the Special Panel in an expeditious manner.

(f) *Filing and service of pleadings*. (1) The parties shall file the original and six copies of all submissions with the Clerk, Merit Systems Protection Board, 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20419. One copy of each submission shall be served on the other parties.

(2) A certificate of service specifying how and when service was made must accompany all submissions of the parties.

(3) Service may be by mail or by personal delivery during normal business hours (8:15 a.m.–4:45 p.m.). Due to the short statutory time limit, parties are required to file their submissions by overnight delivery service should they file by mail.

(4) The date of filing shall be determined by the date of mailing as indicated by the order date for the overnight delivery service. If the filing is

by personal delivery, it shall be considered filed on that date it is received in the office of the Clerk, MSPB.

(g) *Briefs and responsive pleadings.* If the parties wish to submit written argument, briefs shall be filed with the Special Panel within 15 days of the date of the Board's certification order. Due to the short statutory time limit responsive pleadings will not ordinarily be permitted.

(h) *Oral argument.* The parties have the right to oral argument if desired. Parties wishing to exercise this right shall so indicate at the time of filing their brief, or if no brief is filed, within 15 days of the date of the Board's certification order. Upon receipt of a request for argument, the Chairman of the Special Panel shall determine the time and place for argument and the time to be allowed each side, and shall so notify the parties.

(i) *Post-argument submissions.* Due to the short statutory time limit, no post-argument submissions will be permitted except by order of the Chairman of the Special Panel.

(j) *Procedural matters.* Any procedural matters not addressed in this subpart shall be resolved by written order of the Chairman of the Special Panel.

§ 1614.309 Enforcement of Special Panel decision.

The Board shall, upon receipt of the decision of the Special Panel, order the agency concerned to take any action appropriate to carry out the decision of the Panel. The Board's regulations regarding enforcement of a final order of the Board shall apply. These regulations are set out at 5 CFR part 1201, subpart E.

§ 1614.310 Right to file a civil action.

An individual who has a complaint processed pursuant to 5 CFR part 1201, subpart E or this subpart is authorized by 5 U.S.C. 7702 to file a civil action in an appropriate United States District Court:

(a) Within 30 days of receipt of a final decision issued by an agency on a complaint unless an appeal is filed with the MSPB; or

(b) Within 30 days of receipt of notice of the final decision or action taken by the MSPB if the individual does not file a petition for consideration with the EEOC; or

(c) Within 30 days of receipt of notice that the Commission has determined not to consider the decision of the MSPB; or

(d) Within 30 days of receipt of notice that the Commission concurs with the decision of the MSPB; or

(e) If the Commission issues a decision different from the decision of the MSPB, within 30 days of receipt of notice that the MSPB concurs in and adopts in whole the decision of the Commission; or

(f) If the MSPB does not concur with the decision of the Commission and reaffirms its initial decision or reaffirms its initial decision with a revision, within 30 days of the receipt of notice of the decision of the Special Panel; or

(g) After 120 days from the date of filing a formal complaint if there is no final action or appeal to the MSPB; or

(h) After 120 days from the date of filing an appeal with the MSPB if the MSPB has not yet made a decision; or

(i) After 180 days from the date of filing a petition for consideration with Commission if there is no decision by the Commission, reconsideration decision by the MSPB or decision by the Special Panel.

Subpart D—Appeals and Civil Actions

§ 1614.401 Appeals to the Commission.

(a) A complainant may appeal an agency's final action or dismissal of a complaint.

(b) An agency may appeal as provided in § 1614.110(a).

(c) A class agent or an agency may appeal an administrative judge's decision accepting or dismissing all or part of a class complaint; a class agent may appeal an agency's final action or an agency may appeal an administrative judge's decision on a class complaint; a class member may appeal a final decision on a claim for individual relief under a class complaint; and a class member, a class agent or an agency may appeal a final decision on a petition pursuant to § 1614.204(g)(4).

(d) A grievant may appeal the final decision of the agency, the arbitrator

or the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) on the grievance when an issue of employment discrimination was raised in a negotiated grievance procedure that permits such issues to be raised. A grievant may not appeal under this part, however, when the matter initially raised in the negotiated grievance procedure is still ongoing in that process, is in arbitration, is before the FLRA, is appealable to the MSPB or if 5 U.S.C. 7121(d) is inapplicable to the involved agency.

(e) A complainant, agent or individual class claimant may appeal to the Commission an agency's alleged noncompliance with a settlement agreement or final decision in accordance with §1614.504.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37659, July 12, 1999; 77 FR 43505, July 25, 2012]

§1614.402 Time for appeals to the Commission.

(a) Appeals described in §1614.401(a) and (c) must be filed within 30 days of receipt of the dismissal, final action or decision. Appeals described in §1614.401(b) must be filed within 40 days of receipt of the hearing file and decision. Appeals described in §1614.401(d) must be filed within 30 days of receipt of the final decision of the agency, the arbitrator or the Federal Labor Relations Authority. Where a complainant has notified the EEO Director of alleged noncompliance with a settlement agreement in accordance with §1614.504, the complainant may file an appeal 35 days after service of the allegations of noncompliance, but no later than 30 days after receipt of an agency's determination.

(b) If the complainant is represented by an attorney of record, then the 30-day time period provided in paragraph (a) of this section within which to appeal shall be calculated from the receipt of the required document by the attorney. In all other instances, the time within which to appeal shall be calculated from the receipt of the required document by the complainant.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37659, July 12, 1999; 77 FR 43505, July 25, 2012]

§1614.403 How to appeal.

(a) The complainant, agency, agent, grievant or individual class claimant (hereinafter appellant) must file an appeal with the Director, Office of Federal Operations, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, at P.O. Box 77960, Washington, DC 20013, or electronically, by email, or through FedSEP or the EEOC's Public Portal, as applicable, or by personal delivery or facsimile. The appellant should use EEOC Form 573, Notice of Appeal/Petition, and should indicate what is being appealed.

(b) The appellant shall furnish a copy of the appeal to the opposing party at the same time it is filed with the Commission. In or attached to the appeal to the Commission, the appellant must certify the date and method by which service was made on the opposing party.

(c) If an appellant does not file an appeal within the time limits of this subpart, the appeal shall be dismissed by the Commission as untimely.

(d) Any statement or brief on behalf of a complainant in support of the appeal must be submitted to the Office of Federal Operations within 30 days of filing the notice of appeal. Any statement or brief on behalf of the agency in support of its appeal must be submitted to the Office of Federal Operations within 20 days of filing the notice of appeal. The Office of Federal Operations will accept statements or briefs in support of an appeal by facsimile transmittal, provided they are no more than 10 pages long.

(e) The agency must submit the complaint file to the Office of Federal Operations within 30 days of initial notification that the complainant has filed an appeal or within 30 days of submission of an appeal by the agency.

(f) Any statement or brief in opposition to an appeal must be submitted to the Commission and served on the opposing party within 30 days of receipt of the statement or brief supporting the appeal, or, if no statement or brief supporting the appeal is filed, within 60 days of receipt of the appeal. The Office of Federal Operations will accept statements or briefs in opposition to an appeal by facsimile provided they are no more than 10 pages long.

(g) Agencies are required to submit appeals, complaint files, and other filings to the Office of Federal Operations in a digital format acceptable to the Commission, absent a showing of good cause why an agency cannot submit digital records. Appellants are encouraged, but not required, to submit digital appeals and supporting documentation to the Office of Federal Operations in a format acceptable to the Commission.

[64 FR 37659, July 12, 1999, as amended at 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009; 77 FR 43505, July 25, 2012; 88 FR 57881, Aug. 24, 2023]

§ 1614.404 Appellate procedure.

(a) On behalf of the Commission, the Office of Federal Operations shall review the complaint file and all written statements and briefs from either party. The Commission may supplement the record by an exchange of letters or memoranda, investigation, remand to the agency or other procedures.

(b) If the Office of Federal Operations requests information from one or both of the parties to supplement the record, each party providing information shall send a copy of the information to the other party.

(c) When either party to an appeal fails without good cause shown to comply with the requirements of this section or to respond fully and in timely fashion to requests for information, the Office of Federal Operations shall, in appropriate circumstances:

(1) Draw an adverse inference that the requested information would have reflected unfavorably on the party refusing to provide the requested information;

(2) Consider the matters to which the requested information or testimony pertains to be established in favor of the opposing party;

(3) Issue a decision fully or partially in favor of the opposing party; or

(4) Take such other actions as appropriate.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37659, July 12, 1999]

§ 1614.405 Decisions on appeals.

(a) The Office of Federal Operations, on behalf of the Commission, shall issue a written decision setting forth its reasons for the decision. The Commission shall dismiss appeals in accordance with §§ 1614.107, 1614.403(c) and 1614.409. The decision shall be based on the preponderance of the evidence. The decision on an appeal from an agency's final action shall be based on a de novo review, except that the review of the factual findings in a decision by an administrative judge issued pursuant to § 1614.109(i) shall be based on a substantial evidence standard of review. If the decision contains a finding of discrimination, appropriate remedy(ies) shall be included and, where appropriate, the entitlement to interest, attorney's fees or costs shall be indicated. The decision shall reflect the date of its issuance, inform the complainant of his or her civil action rights, and be transmitted to the complainant and the agency. For complainants who are not registered with the EEOC Public Portal, the decision will be transmitted by first class mail. For complainants who are registered with the Public Portal, the decision will be transmitted via the Portal provided the complainant affirmatively consents to receive the decision through the Portal. For registered complainants who do not provide affirmative consent, and for complainants who affirmatively consent but subsequently notify the Commission that they withdraw their consent, the decision will be transmitted by first class mail. The Commission will transmit the decision to the agency via FedSEP.

(b) The Office of Federal Operations, on behalf of the Commission, shall issue decisions on appeals of decisions to accept or dismiss a class complaint issued pursuant to § 1614.204(d)(7) within 90 days of receipt of the appeal.

(c) A decision issued under paragraph (a) of this section is final within the meaning of § 1614.407 unless a timely request for reconsideration is filed by a party to the case. A party may request reconsideration within 30 days of receipt of a decision of the Commission, which the Commission in its discretion may grant, if the party demonstrates that:

(1) The appellate decision involved a clearly erroneous interpretation of material fact or law; or

(2) The decision will have a substantial impact on the policies, practices or operations of the agency.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37659, July 12, 1999; 77 FR 43505, July 25, 2012; 88 FR 57881, Aug. 24, 2023]

§ 1614.406 Time limits. [Reserved]

§ 1614.407 Civil action: Title VII, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Rehabilitation Act, Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, and Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.

A complainant who has filed an individual complaint, an agent who has filed a class complaint or a claimant who has filed a claim for individual relief pursuant to a class complaint is authorized under title VII, the ADEA, the Rehabilitation Act, Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, and the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act to file a civil action in an appropriate United States District Court:

(a) Within 90 days of receipt of the agency final action on an individual or class complaint;

(b) After 180 days from the date of filing an individual or class complaint if agency final action has not been taken;

(c) Within 90 days of receipt of the Commission's final decision on an appeal; or

(d) After 180 days from the date of filing an appeal with the Commission if there has been no final decision by the Commission.

(e) After filing an appeal with the Commission from an agency final action, the complainant, class agent, or class claimant may withdraw the appeal and file a civil action within 90 days of receipt of the agency final action. If the complainant, class agent, or class claimant files an appeal with the Commission from a final agency action and more than 90 days have passed since receipt of the agency final action, the appellant may file a civil action only in accordance with paragraph (c) or (d) of this section.

(f) After filing a request for reconsideration of a Commission decision on an appeal, the complainant, class agent, or class claimant may withdraw the request and file a civil action within 90 days of receipt of the Commission's decision on the appeal. If the complainant, class agent, or class claimant files a request for reconsideration of a Commission decision on an appeal and more than 90 days have passed since the appellant received the Commission's decision on the appeal, the appellant may file a civil action only in accordance with paragraph (c) or (d) of this section.

(g) A complainant, class agent, or class claimant who follows the procedures described in paragraph (e) or (f) of this section shall be deemed to have exhausted his or her administrative remedies.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992. Redesignated and amended at 64 FR 37659, July 12, 1999; 85 FR 35561, June 11, 2020; 89 FR 11171, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1614.408 Civil action: Equal Pay Act.

A complainant is authorized under section 16(b) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 216(b)) to file a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction within two years or, if the violation is willful, three years of the date of the alleged violation of the Equal Pay Act regardless of whether he or she pursued any administrative complaint processing. Recovery of back wages is limited to two years prior to the date of filing suit, or to three years if the violation is deemed willful; liquidated damages in an equal amount may also be awarded. The filing of a complaint or appeal under this part shall not toll the time for filing a civil action.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992. Redesignated at 64 FR 37659, July 12, 1999]

§ 1614.409 Effect of filing a civil action.

Filing a civil action under § 1614.407 or § 1614.408 shall terminate Commission processing of the appeal. A Commission decision on an appeal issued after a complainant files suit in district court will not be enforceable by the Commission. If private suit is filed subsequent to the filing of an appeal and prior to a final Commission decision, the complainant should notify the Commission in writing.

[85 FR 35562, June 11, 2020]

Subpart E—Remedies and Enforcement

§ 1614.501 Remedies and relief.

(a) When an agency, or the Commission, in an individual case of discrimination, finds that an applicant or an employee has been discriminated against, the agency shall provide full relief which shall include the following elements in appropriate circumstances:

(1) Notification to all employees of the agency in the affected facility of their right to be free of unlawful discrimination and assurance that the particular types of discrimination found will not recur;

(2) Commitment that corrective, curative or preventive action will be taken, or measures adopted, to ensure that violations of the law similar to those found will not recur;

(3) An unconditional offer to each identified victim of discrimination of placement in the position the person would have occupied but for the discrimination suffered by that person, or a substantially equivalent position;

(4) Payment to each identified victim of discrimination on a make whole basis for any loss of earnings the person may have suffered as a result of the discrimination; and

(5) Commitment that the agency shall cease from engaging in the specific unlawful employment practice found in the case.

(b) *Relief for an applicant.* (1)(i) When an agency, or the Commission, finds that an applicant for employment has been discriminated against, the agency shall offer the applicant the position that the applicant would have occupied absent discrimination or, if justified by the circumstances, a substantially equivalent position unless clear and convincing evidence indicates that the applicant would not have been selected even absent the discrimination. The offer shall be made in writing. The individual shall have 15 days from receipt of the offer within which to accept or decline the offer. Failure to accept the offer within the 15-day period will be considered a declination of the offer, unless the individual can show that circumstances beyond his or her control prevented a response within the time limit.

(ii) If the offer is accepted, appointment shall be retroactive to the date the applicant would have been hired. Back pay, computed in the manner prescribed by 5 CFR 550.805, shall be awarded from the date the individual would have entered on duty until the date the individual actually enters on duty unless clear and convincing evidence indicates that the applicant would not have been selected even absent discrimination. Interest on back pay shall be included in the back pay computation where sovereign immunity has been waived. The individual shall be deemed to have performed service for the agency during this period for all purposes except for meeting service requirements for completion of a required probationary or trial period.

(iii) If the offer of employment is declined, the agency shall award the individual a sum equal to the back pay he or she would have received, computed in the manner prescribed by 5 CFR 550.805, from the date he or she would have been appointed until the date the offer was declined, subject to the limitation of paragraph (b)(3) of this section. Interest on back pay shall be included in the back pay computation. The agency shall inform the applicant, in its offer of employment, of the right to this award in the event the offer is declined.

(2) When an agency, or the Commission, finds that discrimination existed at the time the applicant was considered for employment but also finds by clear and convincing evidence that the applicant would not have been hired even absent discrimination, the agency shall nevertheless take all steps necessary to eliminate the discriminatory practice and ensure it does not recur.

(3) Back pay under this paragraph (b) for complaints under title VII or the Rehabilitation Act may not extend from a date earlier than two years prior to the date on which the complaint was initially filed by the applicant.

(c) *Relief for an employee.* When an agency, or the Commission, finds that an employee of the agency was discriminated against, the agency shall provide relief, which shall include, but need not be limited to, one or more of the following actions:

(1) Nondiscriminatory placement, with back pay computed in the manner prescribed by 5 CFR 550.805, unless clear and convincing evidence contained in the record demonstrates that the personnel action would have been taken even absent the discrimination. Interest on back pay shall be included in the back pay computation where sovereign immunity has been waived. The back pay liability under title VII or the Rehabilitation Act is limited to two years prior to the date the discrimination complaint was filed.

(2) If clear and convincing evidence indicates that, although discrimination existed at the time the personnel action was taken, the personnel action would have been taken even absent discrimination, the agency shall nevertheless eliminate any discriminatory practice and ensure it does not recur.

(3) Cancellation of an unwarranted personnel action and restoration of the employee.

(4) Expunction from the agency's records of any adverse materials relating to the discriminatory employment practice.

(5) Full opportunity to participate in the employee benefit denied (e.g., training, preferential work assignments, overtime scheduling).

(d) The agency has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the complainant has failed to mitigate his or her damages.

(e) *Attorney's fees or costs*—(1) *Awards of attorney's fees or costs.* The provisions of this paragraph relating to the award of attorney's fees or costs shall apply to allegations of discrimination prohibited by title VII and the Rehabilitation Act. In a decision or final action, the agency, administrative judge, or Commission may award the applicant or employee reasonable attorney's fees (including expert witness fees) and other costs incurred in the processing of the complaint.

(i) A finding of discrimination raises a presumption of entitlement to an award of attorney's fees.

(ii) Any award of attorney's fees or costs shall be paid by the agency.

(iii) Attorney's fees are allowable only for the services of members of the Bar and law clerks, paralegals or law students under the supervision of members of the Bar, except that no award is allowable for the services of any employee of the Federal Government.

(iv) Attorney's fees shall be paid for services performed by an attorney after the filing of a written complaint, provided that the attorney provides reasonable notice of representation to the agency, administrative judge or Commission, except that fees are allowable for a reasonable period of time prior to the notification of representation for any services performed in reaching a determination to represent the complainant. Agencies are not required to pay attorney's fees for services performed during the pre-complaint process, except that fees are allowable when the Commission affirms on appeal an administrative judge's decision finding discrimination after an agency takes final action by not implementing an administrative judge's decision. Written submissions to the agency that are signed by the representative shall be deemed to constitute notice of representation.

(2) *Amount of awards.* (i) When the agency, administrative judge or the Commission determines an entitlement to attorney's fees or costs, the complainant's attorney shall submit a verified statement of attorney's fees (including expert witness fees) and other costs, as appropriate, to the agency or administrative judge within 30 days of receipt of the decision and shall submit a copy of the statement to the agency. A statement of attorney's fees and costs shall be accompanied by an affidavit executed by the attorney of record itemizing the attorney's charges for legal services. The agency may respond to a statement of attorney's fees and costs within 30 days of its receipt. The verified statement, accompanying affidavit and any agency response shall be made a part of the complaint file.

(ii)(A) The agency or administrative judge shall issue a decision determining the amount of attorney's fees or costs due within 60 days of receipt of the statement and affidavit. The decision shall include a notice of right to appeal to the EEOC along with EEOC Form 573, Notice of Appeal/Petition and shall include the specific reasons

for determining the amount of the award.

(B) The amount of attorney's fees shall be calculated using the following standards: The starting point shall be the number of hours reasonably expended multiplied by a reasonable hourly rate. There is a strong presumption that this amount represents the reasonable fee. In limited circumstances, this amount may be reduced or increased in consideration of the degree of success, quality of representation, and long delay caused by the agency.

(C) The costs that may be awarded are those authorized by 28 U.S.C. 1920 to include: Fees of the reporter for all or any of the stenographic transcript necessarily obtained for use in the case; fees and disbursements for printing and witnesses; and fees for exemplification and copies necessarily obtained for use in the case.

(iii) Witness fees shall be awarded in accordance with the provisions of 28 U.S.C. 1821, except that no award shall be made for a Federal employee who is in a duty status when made available as a witness.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 60 FR 43372, Aug. 21, 1995; 64 FR 37659, July 12, 1999]

§ 1614.502 Compliance with final Commission decisions.

(a) Relief ordered in a final Commission decision is mandatory and binding on the agency except as provided in this section. Failure to implement ordered relief shall be subject to judicial enforcement as specified in § 1614.503(g).

(b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this section, when the agency requests reconsideration and the case involves removal, separation, or suspension continuing beyond the date of the request for reconsideration, and when the decision orders retroactive restoration, the agency shall comply with the decision to the extent of the temporary or conditional restoration of the employee to duty status in the position specified by the Commission, pending the outcome of the agency request for reconsideration.

(1) Service under the temporary or conditional restoration provisions of this paragraph (b) shall be credited toward the completion of a probationary or trial period, eligibility for a within-grade increase, or the completion of the service requirement for career tenure, if the Commission upholds its decision after reconsideration.

(2) When the agency requests reconsideration, it may delay the payment of any amounts ordered to be paid to the complainant until after the request for reconsideration is resolved. If the agency delays payment of any amount pending the outcome of the request to reconsider and the resolution of the request requires the agency to make the payment, then the agency shall pay interest from the date of the original appellate decision until payment is made.

(3) The agency shall notify the Commission and the employee in writing at the same time it requests reconsideration that the relief it provides is temporary or conditional and, if applicable, that it will delay the payment of any amounts owed but will pay interest as specified in paragraph (b)(2) of this section. Failure of the agency to provide notification will result in the dismissal of the agency's request.

(c) When no request for reconsideration is filed or when a request for reconsideration is denied, the agency shall provide the relief ordered and there is no further right to delay implementation of the ordered relief. The relief shall be provided in full not later than 120 days after receipt of the final decision unless otherwise ordered in the decision.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37660, July 12, 1999; 77 FR 43506, July 25, 2012]

§ 1614.503 Enforcement of final Commission decisions.

(a) *Petition for enforcement.* A complainant may petition the Commission for enforcement of a decision issued under the Commission's appellate jurisdiction. The petition shall be submitted to the Office of Federal Operations. The petition shall specifically set forth the reasons that lead the complainant to believe that the agency is not complying with the decision.

(b) *Compliance.* On behalf of the Commission, the Office of Federal Operations shall take all necessary action

to ascertain whether the agency is implementing the decision of the Commission. If the agency is found not to be in compliance with the decision, efforts shall be undertaken to obtain compliance.

(c) *Clarification.* On behalf of the Commission, the Office of Federal Operations may, on its own motion or in response to a petition for enforcement or in connection with a timely request for reconsideration, issue a clarification of a prior decision. A clarification cannot change the result of a prior decision or enlarge or diminish the relief ordered but may further explain the meaning or intent of the prior decision.

(d) *Referral to the Commission.* Where the Director, Office of Federal Operations, is unable to obtain satisfactory compliance with the final decision, the Director shall submit appropriate findings and recommendations for enforcement to the Commission, or, as directed by the Commission, refer the matter to another appropriate agency.

(e) *Commission notice to show cause.* The Commission may issue a notice to the head of any Federal agency that has failed to comply with a decision to show cause why there is noncompliance. Such notice may request the head of the agency or a representative to appear before the Commission or to respond to the notice in writing with adequate evidence of compliance or with compelling reasons for non-compliance.

(f) *Certification to the Office of Special Counsel.* Where appropriate and pursuant to the terms of a memorandum of understanding, the Commission may refer the matter to the Office of Special Counsel for enforcement action.

(g) *Notification to complainant of completion of administrative efforts.* Where the Commission has determined that an agency is not complying with a prior decision, or where an agency has failed or refused to submit any required report of compliance, the Commission shall notify the complainant of the right to file a civil action for enforcement of the decision pursuant to Title VII, the ADEA, the Equal Pay Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, or the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and to seek judicial review of the agency's refusal to implement the ordered relief pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 701 *et seq.*, and the mandamus statute, 28 U.S.C. 1361, or to commence de novo proceedings pursuant to the appropriate statutes.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 89 FR 11172, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1614.504 Compliance with settlement agreements and final action.

(a) Any settlement agreement knowingly and voluntarily agreed to by the parties, reached at any stage of the complaint process, shall be binding on both parties. Final action that has not been the subject of an appeal or civil action shall be binding on the agency. If the complainant believes that the agency has failed to comply with the terms of a settlement agreement or decision, the complainant shall notify the EEO Director, in writing, of the alleged noncompliance within 30 days of when the complainant knew or should have known of the alleged noncompliance. The complainant may request that the terms of settlement agreement be specifically implemented or, alternatively, that the complaint be reinstated for further processing from the point processing ceased.

(b) The agency shall resolve the matter and respond to the complainant, in writing. If the agency has not responded to the complainant, in writing, or if the complainant is not satisfied with the agency's attempt to resolve the matter, the complainant may appeal to the Commission for a determination as to whether the agency has complied with the terms of the settlement agreement or decision. The complainant may file such an appeal 35 days after he or she has served the agency with the allegations of noncompliance, but must file an appeal within 30 days of his or her receipt of an agency's determination. The complainant must serve a copy of the appeal on the agency and the agency may submit a response to the Commission within 30 days of receiving notice of the appeal.

(c) Prior to rendering its determination, the Commission may request that parties submit whatever additional information or documentation it deems

necessary or may direct that an investigation or hearing on the matter be conducted. If the Commission determines that the agency is not in compliance with a decision or settlement agreement, and the noncompliance is not attributable to acts or conduct of the complainant, it may order such compliance with the decision or settlement agreement, or, alternatively, for a settlement agreement, it may order that the complaint be reinstated for further processing from the point processing ceased. Allegations that subsequent acts of discrimination violate a settlement agreement shall be processed as separate complaints under §1614.106 or §1614.204, as appropriate, rather than under this section.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37660, July 12, 1999; 77 FR 43506, July 25, 2012]

§1614.505 Interim relief.

(a)(1) When the agency appeals and the case involves removal, separation, or suspension continuing beyond the date of the appeal, and when the administrative judge's decision orders retroactive restoration, the agency shall comply with the decision to the extent of the temporary or conditional restoration of the employee to duty status in the position specified in the decision, pending the outcome of the agency appeal. The employee may decline the offer of interim relief.

(2) Service under the temporary or conditional restoration provisions of paragraph (a)(1) of this section shall be credited toward the completion of a probationary or trial period, eligibility for a within-grade increase, or the completion of the service requirement for career tenure, if the Commission upholds the decision on appeal. Such service shall not be credited toward the completion of any applicable probationary or trial period or the completion of the service requirement for career tenure if the Commission reverses the decision on appeal.

(3) When the agency appeals, it may delay the payment of any amount, other than prospective pay and benefits, ordered to be paid to the complainant until after the appeal is resolved. If the agency delays payment of any amount pending the outcome of the appeal and the resolution of the appeal requires the agency to make the payment, then the agency shall pay interest from the date of the original decision until payment is made.

(4) The agency shall notify the Commission and the employee in writing at the same time it appeals that the relief it provides is temporary or conditional and, if applicable, that it will delay the payment of any amounts owed but will pay interest as specified in paragraph (a)(3) of this section. Failure of the agency to provide notification will result in the dismissal of the agency's appeal.

(5) The agency may, by notice to the complainant, decline to return the complainant to his or her place of employment if it determines that the return or presence of the complainant will be unduly disruptive to the work environment. However, prospective pay and benefits must be provided. The determination not to return the complainant to his or her place of employment is not reviewable. A grant of interim relief does not insulate a complainant from subsequent disciplinary or adverse action.

(b) If the agency files an appeal and has not provided required interim relief, the complainant may request dismissal of the agency's appeal. Any such request must be filed with the Office of Federal Operations within 25 days of the date of service of the agency's appeal. A copy of the request must be served on the agency at the same time it is filed with EEOC. The agency may respond with evidence and argument to the complainant's request to dismiss within 15 days of the date of service of the request.

[64 FR 37660, July 12, 1999, as amended at 85 FR 35562, June 11, 2020]

Subpart F—Matters of General Applicability

§1614.601 EEO group statistics.

(a) Each agency shall establish a system to collect and maintain accurate employment information on the race, national origin, sex and disability of its employees.

(b) Data on race, national origin and sex shall be collected by voluntary self-

identification. If an employee does not voluntarily provide the requested information, the agency shall advise the employee of the importance of the data and of the agency's obligation to report it. If the employee still refuses to provide the information, the agency must make visual identification and inform the employee of the data it will be reporting. If an agency believes that information provided by an employee is inaccurate, the agency shall advise the employee about the solely statistical purpose for which the data is being collected, the need for accuracy, the agency's recognition of the sensitivity of the information and the existence of procedures to prevent its unauthorized disclosure. If, thereafter, the employee declines to change the apparently inaccurate self-identification, the agency must accept it.

(c) The information collected under paragraph (b) of this section shall be disclosed only in the form of gross statistics. An agency shall not collect or maintain any information on the race, national origin or sex of individual employees except when an automated data processing system is used in accordance with standards and requirements prescribed by the Commission to insure individual privacy and the separation of that information from personnel record.

(d) Each system is subject to the following controls:

(1) Only those categories of race and national origin prescribed by the Commission may be used;

(2) Only the specific procedures for the collection and maintenance of data that are prescribed or approved by the Commission may be used;

(3) The Commission shall review the operation of the agency system to insure adherence to Commission procedures and requirements. An agency may make an exception to the prescribed procedures and requirements only with the advance written approval of the Commission.

(e) The agency may use the data only in studies and analyses which contribute affirmatively to achieving the objectives of the equal employment opportunity program. An agency shall not establish a quota for the employment of persons on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

(f) Data on disabilities shall be collected using a method permitted under §1614.203(d)(6)(ii) and §1614.203(d)(6)(iii).

(g) An agency shall report to the Commission on employment by race, national origin, sex and disability in the form and at such times as the Commission may require.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009; 82 FR 681, Jan. 3, 2017]

§1614.602 Reports to the Commission.

(a) Each agency shall report to the Commission information concerning pre-complaint counseling and the status, processing and disposition of complaints under this part at such times and in such manner as the Commission prescribes.

(b) Each agency shall advise the Commission whenever it is served with a Federal court complaint based upon a complaint that is pending on appeal at the Commission.

(c) Each agency shall submit annually for the review and approval of the Commission written national and regional equal employment opportunity plans of action. Plans shall be submitted in a format prescribed by the Commission and shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) Provision for the establishment of training and education programs designed to provide maximum opportunity for employees to advance so as to perform at their highest potential;

(2) Description of the qualifications, in terms of training and experience relating to equal employment opportunity, of the principal and operating officials concerned with administration of the agency's equal employment opportunity program; and

(3) Description of the allocation of personnel and resources proposed by the agency to carry out its equal employment opportunity program.

§1614.603 Voluntary settlement attempts.

Each agency shall make reasonable efforts to voluntarily settle complaints of discrimination as early as possible in, and throughout, the administrative processing of complaints, including the pre-complaint counseling stage. Any

settlement reached shall be in writing and signed by both parties and shall identify the claims resolved.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37661, July 12, 1999]

§ 1614.604 Filing and computation of time.

(a) All time periods in this part that are stated in terms of days are calendar days unless otherwise stated.

(b) A document shall be deemed timely if it is received or postmarked before the expiration of the applicable filing period, or, in the absence of a legible postmark, if it is received by mail within five days of the expiration of the applicable filing period.

(c) A hearing request, appeal, brief, or other document filed by a complainant using the EEOC Public Portal, or filed by an agency using FedSEP, shall be deemed filed on the date the document is uploaded to the Public Portal or FedSEP. The timeliness of documents submitted through the Public Portal and FedSEP will be determined based on the time zone from which the document was submitted.

(d) An EEOC decision that is transmitted to a complainant through the Public Portal or by email shall be deemed to be received when the decision is accessed on the Portal or when received if transmitted via email, or within five days of when the decision is uploaded to the Portal or emailed, whichever occurs first.

(e) For the purposes of §§ 1614.108, 1614.109, 1614.204(i), and 1614.401 through 1614.405, the terms *accept*, *file*, *filed*, *filing*, *issue*, *issuance*, *issuing*, *notify*, *notified*, *receive*, *receipt*, *send*, *serve*, *served*, *service*, *submit*, *submission*, *submitted*, *transmit*, and *transmitted*, shall include digital transmissions made through FedSEP, the EEOC Public Portal, or by email.

(f) The time limits in this part are subject to waiver, estoppel and equitable tolling.

(g) The first day counted shall be the day after the event from which the time period begins to run and the last day of the period shall be included, unless it falls on a Saturday, Sunday or Federal holiday, in which case the period shall be extended to include the next business day.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37661, July 12, 1999; 88 FR 57881, Aug. 24, 2023]

§ 1614.605 Representation and official time.

(a) At any stage in the processing of a complaint, including the counseling stage § 1614.105, the complainant shall have the right to be accompanied, represented, and advised by a representative of complainant's choice.

(b) If the complainant is an employee of the agency, he or she shall have a reasonable amount of official time, if otherwise on duty, to prepare the complaint and to respond to agency and EEOC requests for information. If the complainant is an employee of the agency and he designates another employee of the agency as his or her representative, the representative shall have a reasonable amount of official time, if otherwise on duty, to prepare the complaint and respond to agency and EEOC requests for information. The agency is not obligated to change work schedules, incur overtime wages, or pay travel expenses to facilitate the choice of a specific representative or to allow the complainant and representative to confer. The complainant and representative, if employed by the agency and otherwise in a pay status, shall be on official time, regardless of their tour of duty, when their presence is authorized or required by the agency or the Commission during the investigation, informal adjustment, or hearing on the complaint.

(c) In cases where the representation of a complainant or agency would conflict with the official or collateral duties of the representative, the Commission or the agency may, after giving the representative an opportunity to respond, disqualify the representative.

(d) Unless the complainant states otherwise in writing, after the agency has received written notice of the name, address and telephone number of a representative for the complainant, all official correspondence shall be with the representative with copies to

the complainant. When the complainant designates an attorney as representative, service of all official correspondence shall be made on the attorney and the complainant, but time frames for receipt of materials shall be computed from the time of receipt by the attorney. The complainant must serve all official correspondence on the designated representative of the agency.

(e) The Complainant shall at all times be responsible for proceeding with the complaint whether or not he or she has designated a representative.

(f) Witnesses who are Federal employees, regardless of their tour of duty and regardless of whether they are employed by the respondent agency or some other Federal agency, shall be in a duty status when their presence is authorized or required by Commission or agency officials in connection with a complaint.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37661, July 12, 1999]

§ 1614.606 Joint processing and consolidation of complaints.

Complaints of discrimination filed by two or more complainants consisting of substantially similar allegations of discrimination or relating to the same matter may be consolidated by the agency or the Commission for joint processing after appropriate notification to the parties. Two or more complaints of discrimination filed by the same complainant shall be consolidated by the agency for joint processing after appropriate notification to the complainant. When a complaint has been consolidated with one or more earlier filed complaints, the agency shall complete its investigation within the earlier of 180 days after the filing of the last complaint or 360 days after the filing of the original complaint, except that the complainant may request a hearing from an administrative judge on the consolidated complaints any time after 180 days from the date of the first filed complaint. Administrative judges or the Commission may, in their discretion, consolidate two or more complaints of discrimination filed by the same complainant.

[64 FR 37661, July 12, 1999]

§ 1614.607 Delegation of authority.

An agency head may delegate authority under this part, to one or more designees.

Subpart G—Procedures Under the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act)

AUTHORITY: Sec. 303, Pub. L. 107–174, 116 Stat. 574.

SOURCE: 71 FR 43650, Aug. 2, 2006, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1614.701 Purpose and scope.

This subpart implements Title III of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Pub. L. 107–174. It sets forth the basic responsibilities of Federal agencies and the Commission to post certain information on their public Web sites.

§ 1614.702 Definitions.

The following definitions apply for purposes of this subpart.

(a) The term *Federal agency* or *agency* means an Executive agency (as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105), the United States Postal Service, and the Postal Rate Commission.

(b) The term *Commission* means the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and any subdivision thereof authorized to act on its behalf.

(c) The term *investigation* refers to the step of the federal sector EEO process described in 29 CFR 1614.108 and 1614.106(e)(2) and, for purposes of this subpart, it commences when the complaint is filed and ceases when the complainant is given notice under §1614.108(f) of the right to request a hearing or to receive an immediate final decision without a hearing.

(d) The term *hearing* refers to the step of the federal sector EEO process described in 29 CFR 1614.109 and, for purposes of §1614.704(l)(2)(ii), it commences on the date the agency is informed by the complainant or EEOC, whichever occurs first, that the complainant has requested a hearing and ends on the date the agency receives from the EEOC notice that the EEOC

Administrative Judge (AJ) is returning the case to the agency to take final action. For all other purposes under this subpart, a hearing commences when the AJ receives the complaint file from the agency and ceases when the AJ returns the case to the agency to take final action.

(e) For purposes of §1614.704(i), (j), and (k) the phrase without a hearing refers to a final action by an agency that is rendered:

(1) When an agency does not receive a reply to a notice issued under §1614.108(f);

(2) After a complainant requests an immediate final decision;

(3) After a complainant withdraws a request for a hearing; and

(4) After an administrative judge cancels a hearing and remands the matter to the agency.

(f) For purposes of §1614.704(i), (j), and (k), the term *after a hearing* refers to a final action by an agency that is rendered following a decision by an administrative judge under §1614.109(f)(3)(iv), (g) or (i).

(g) The phrase *final action by an agency* refers to the step of the federal sector EEO process described in 29 CFR 1614.110 and, for purposes of this subpart, it commences when the agency receives a decision by an Administrative Judge (AJ), receives a request from the complainant for an immediate final decision without a hearing or fails to receive a response to a notice issued under §1614.108(f) and ceases when the agency issues a final order or final decision on the complaint.

(h) The phrase *final action by an agency involving a finding of discrimination* means:

(1) A final order issued by an agency pursuant to §1614.110(a) following a finding of discrimination by an administrative judge; and

(2) A final decision issued by an agency pursuant to §1614.110(b) in which the agency finds discrimination.

(i) The term *appeal* refers to the step of the federal sector EEO process described in 29 CFR 1614.401 and, for purposes of this subpart, it commences when the appeal is received by the Commission and ceases when the appellate decision is issued.

(j) The term basis of alleged discrimination refers to the individual's protected status (*i.e.*, race; color; religion; reprisal; sex; national origin; Equal Pay Act; age; disability; genetic information; or pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions). Only those bases protected by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, 29 U.S.C. 206(d), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 621 *et seq.*, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 791 *et seq.*, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000ff *et seq.*, and the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg *et seq.*, are covered by the Federal EEO process.

(k) The term *issue of alleged discrimination* means one of the following challenged agency actions affecting a term or condition of employment as listed on EEOC Standard Form 462 (''Annual Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Statistical Report of Discrimination Complaints''): Appointment/hire; assignment of duties; awards; conversion to full time; disciplinary action/demotion; disciplinary action/reprimand; disciplinary action/suspension; disciplinary action/removal; duty hours; evaluation/appraisal; examination/test; harassment/non-sexual; harassment/sexual; medical examination; pay/overtime; promotion/non-selection; reassignment/denied; reassignment/directed; reasonable accommodation; reinstatement; retirement; termination; terms/conditions of employment; time and attendance; training; and, other.

(l) The term *subordinate component* refers to any organizational sub-unit directly below the agency or department level which has 1,000 or more employees and is required to submit EEOC Form 715–01 to EEOC pursuant to EEOC Equal Employment Opportunity Management Directive 715.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009; 89 FR 11172, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1614.703 Manner and format of data.

(a) Agencies shall post their statistical data in the following two formats: Portable Document Format (PDF); and an accessible text format that complies

with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

(b) Agencies shall prominently post the date they last updated the statistical information on the Web site location containing the statistical data.

(c) In addition to providing aggregate agency-wide data, an agency shall include separate data for each subordinate component. Such data shall be identified as pertaining to the particular subordinate component.

(d) Data posted under this subpart will be titled ''Equal Employment Opportunity Data Posted Pursuant to Title III of the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), Pub. L. 107–174,'' and a hyperlink to the data, entitled ''No FEAR Act Data'' will be posted on the homepage of an agency's public Web site. In the case of agencies with subordinate components, the data shall be made available by hyperlinks from the homepages of the Web sites (if any exist) of the subordinate components as well as the homepage of the Web site of the parent agency.

(e) Agencies shall post cumulative data pursuant to §1614.704 for the current fiscal year. Agencies may not post separate quarterly statistics for the current fiscal year.

(f) Data posted pursuant to §1614.704 by agencies having 100 or more employees, and all subordinate component data posted pursuant to subsection 1614.703(c), shall be presented in the manner and order set forth in the template EEOC has placed for this purpose on its public Web site.

(1) Cumulative quarterly and fiscal year data shall appear in vertical columns. The oldest fiscal year data shall be listed first, reading left to right, with the other fiscal years appearing in the adjacent columns in chronological order. The current cumulative quarterly or year-end data shall appear in the last, or far-right, column.

(2) The categories of data as set forth in §1614.704(a) through (m) of this subpart shall appear in horizontal rows. When reading from top to bottom, the order of the categories shall be in the same order as those categories appear in §1614.704(a) through (m).

(3) When posting data pursuant to §1614.704(d) and (j), bases of discrimination shall be arranged in the order in which they appear in §1614.702(j). The category ''non-EEO basis'' shall be posted last, after the basis of ''disability.''

(4) When posting data pursuant to §1614.704(e) and (k), issues of discrimination shall be arranged in the order in which they appear in §1614.702(k). Only those issues set forth in §1614.702(k) shall be listed.

(g) Agencies shall ensure that the data they post under this subpart can be readily accessed through one or more commercial search engines.

(h) Within 60 days of the effective date of this rule, an agency shall provide the Commission the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the data it posts under this subpart. Thereafter, new or changed URLs shall be provided within 30 days.

(i) Processing times required to be posted under this subpart shall be recorded using number of days.

§1614.704 Information to be posted—all Federal agencies.

Commencing on January 31, 2004 and thereafter no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal quarter beginning on or after January 1, 2004, each Federal agency shall post the following current fiscal year statistics on its public Internet Web site regarding EEO complaints filed under 29 CFR part 1614.

(a) The number of complaints filed in such fiscal year.

(b) The number of individuals filing those complaints (including as the agent of a class).

(c) The number of individuals who filed two or more of those complaints.

(d) The number of those complaints, whether initially or through amendment, raising each of the various bases of alleged discrimination and the number of complaints in which a non-EEO basis is alleged.

(e) The number of those complaints, whether initially or through amendment, raising each of the various issues of alleged discrimination.

(f) The average length of time it has taken an agency to complete, respectively, investigation and final action by an agency for:

(1) All complaints pending for any length of time during such fiscal year;

(2) All complaints pending for any length of time during such fiscal year in which a hearing was not requested; and

(3) All complaints pending for any length of time during such fiscal year in which a hearing was requested.

(g) The number of complaints dismissed by an agency pursuant to 29 CFR 1614.107(a), and the average length of time such complaints had been pending prior to dismissal.

(h) The number of complaints withdrawn by complainants.

(i)(1) The total number of final actions by an agency rendered in such fiscal year involving a finding of discrimination and, of that number,

(2) The number and percentage that were rendered without a hearing, and

(3) The number and percentage that were rendered after a hearing.

(j) Of the total number of final actions by an agency rendered in such fiscal year involving a finding of discrimination,

(1) The number and percentage of those based on each respective basis,

(2) The number and percentage for each respective basis that were rendered without a hearing, and

(3) The number and percentage for each respective basis that were rendered after a hearing.

(k) Of the total number of final actions by an agency rendered in such fiscal year involving a finding of discrimination,

(1) The number and percentage for each respective issue,

(2) The number and percentage for each respective issue that were rendered without a hearing, and

(3) The number and percentage for each respective issue that were rendered after a hearing.

(l) Of the total number of complaints pending for any length of time in such fiscal year,

(1) The number that were first filed before the start of the then current fiscal year,

(2) Of those complaints falling within subsection (l)(1),

(i) The number of individuals who filed those complaints, and

(ii) The number that are pending, respectively, at the investigation, hearing, final action by an agency, and appeal step of the process.

(m) Of the total number of complaints pending for any length of time in such fiscal year, the total number of complaints in which the agency has not completed its investigation within the time required by 29 CFR 1614.106(e)(2) plus any extensions authorized by that section or §1614.108(e).

§1614.705 Comparative data—all Federal agencies.

Commencing on January 31, 2004 and no later than January 31 of each year thereafter, each Federal agency shall post year-end data corresponding to that required to be posted by §1614.704 for each of the five immediately preceding fiscal years (or, if not available for all five fiscal years, for however many of those five fiscal years for which data are available). For each category of data, the agency shall post a separate figure for each fiscal year.

§1614.706 Other data.

Agencies shall not include or otherwise post with the data required to be posted under §1614.704 and 1614.705 of this subpart any other data, whether or not EEO related, but may post such other data on another, separate, Web page.

§1614.707 Data to be posted by EEOC.

(a) Commencing on January 31, 2004 and thereafter no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal quarter beginning on or after January 1, 2004, the Commission shall post the following current fiscal year statistics on its public Internet Web site regarding hearings requested under this part 1614.

(1) The number of hearings requested in such fiscal year.

(2) The number of individuals filing those requests.

(3) The number of individuals who filed two or more of those requests.

(4) The number of those hearing requests involving each of the various bases of alleged discrimination.

(5) The number of those hearing requests involving each of the various issues of alleged discrimination.

(6) The average length of time it has taken EEOC to complete the hearing step for all cases pending at the hearing step for any length of time during such fiscal year.

(7)(i) The total number of administrative judge (AJ) decisions rendered in such fiscal year involving a finding of discrimination and, of that number,

(ii) The number and percentage that were rendered without a hearing, and

(iii) The number and percentage that were rendered after a hearing.

(8) Of the total number of AJ decisions rendered in such fiscal year involving a finding of discrimination,

(i) The number and percentage of those based on each respective basis,

(ii) The number and percentage for each respective basis that were rendered without a hearing, and

(iii) The number and percentage for each respective basis that were rendered after a hearing.

(9) Of the total number of AJ decisions rendered in such fiscal year involving a finding of discrimination,

(i) The number and percentage for each respective issue,

(ii) The number and percentage for each respective issue that were rendered without a hearing, and

(iii) The number and percentage for each respective issue that were rendered after a hearing.

(10) Of the total number of hearing requests pending for any length of time in such fiscal year,

(i) The number that were first filed before the start of the then current fiscal year, and

(ii) The number of individuals who filed those hearing requests in earlier fiscal years.

(11) Of the total number of hearing requests pending for any length of time in such fiscal year, the total number in which the Commission failed to complete the hearing step within the time required by §1614.109(i).

(b) Commencing on January 31, 2004 and thereafter no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal quarter beginning on or after January 1, 2004, the Commission shall post the following current fiscal year statistics on its public Internet Web site regarding EEO appeals filed under part 1614.

(1) The number of appeals filed in such fiscal year.

(2) The number of individuals filing those appeals (including as the agent of a class).

(3) The number of individuals who filed two or more of those appeals.

(4) The number of those appeals raising each of the various bases of alleged discrimination.

(5) The number of those appeals raising each of the various issues of alleged discrimination.

(6) The average length of time it has taken EEOC to issue appellate decisions for:

(i) All appeals pending for any length of time during such fiscal year;

(ii) All appeals pending for any length of time during such fiscal year in which a hearing was not requested; and

(iii) All appeals pending for any length of time during such fiscal year in which a hearing was requested.

(7)(i) The total number of appellate decisions rendered in such fiscal year involving a finding of discrimination and, of that number,

(ii) The number and percentage that involved a final action by an agency rendered without a hearing, and

(iii) The number and percentage that involved a final action by an agency after a hearing.

(8) Of the total number of appellate decisions rendered in such fiscal year involving a finding of discrimination,

(i) The number and percentage of those based on each respective basis of discrimination,

(ii) The number and percentage for each respective basis that involved a final action by an agency rendered without a hearing, and

(iii) The number and percentage for each respective basis that involved a final action by an agency rendered after a hearing.

(9) Of the total number of appellate decisions rendered in such fiscal year involving a finding of discrimination,

(i) The number and percentage for each respective issue of discrimination,

(ii) The number and percentage for each respective issue that involved a

final action by an agency rendered without a hearing, and

(iii) The number and percentage for each respective issue that involved a final action by an agency rendered after a hearing.

(10) Of the total number of appeals pending for any length of time in such fiscal year,

(i) The number that were first filed before the start of the then current fiscal year, and

(ii) The number of individuals who filed those appeals in earlier fiscal years.

PART 1615—ENFORCEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY IN PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION AND IN ACCESSIBILITY OF COMMISSION ELECTRONIC AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: 29 U.S.C. 794 and 29 U.S.C. 794d(f)(2).

SOURCE: 54 FR 22749, May 26, 1989, unless otherwise noted.

EDITORIAL NOTE: Nomenclature changes to part 1615 appear at 73 FR 39866, July 11, 2008.

§ 1615.101 Purpose.

(a) The purpose of this part is to effectuate section 119 of the Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments of 1978, which amended section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in programs or activities conducted by Executive agencies or the United States Postal Service.

(b) The purpose of this part is also to effectuate section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, which requires that when Federal departments and agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology, they shall ensure accessibility by individuals with disabilities who are Federal employees or applicants, or members of the public.

[54 FR 22749, May 26, 1989, as amended at 73 FR 39866, July 11, 2008]

§ 1615.102 Application.

This part applies to all programs or activities conducted by the Commission and to its development, procurement, maintenance, and use of electronic and information technology.

[73 FR 39866, July 11, 2008]

§ 1615.103 Definitions.

For purposes of this part, the term—

Assistant Attorney General means the Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, United States Department of Justice.

Auxiliary aids means services or devices that enable persons with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills to have an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, programs or activities conducted by the Commission. For example, auxiliary aids useful for persons with impaired vision include readers, Brailled materials, audio recordings, and other similar services and devices. Auxiliary aids useful for persons with impaired hearing include telephone handset amplifiers, telephones compatible with hearing aids, telecommunication devices for deaf persons (TDD's), interpreters, notetakers, written materials, and other similar services and devices. Auxiliary aids useful for persons with

impaired ability to reach or grasp include goose neck telephone headsets, mechanical page turners, and raised or lowered furniture. These examples are not intended to be exclusive either as to the persons who are entitled to such aids or as to the type of aids that may be required. Although auxiliary aids are required explicitly only by §1615.160(a)(1), they may also be necessary to meet other requirements of this part.

Commission means the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Complete complaint means a written statement that contains the complainant's name and address and describes the Commission's actions in sufficient detail to inform the Commission of the nature and date of the alleged violation of section 504 or section 508. It shall be signed by the complainant or by someone authorized to do so on his or her behalf. Complaints filed on behalf of classes or third parties shall describe or identify (by name, if possible) the alleged victims of discrimination.

Electronic and Information technology. Includes information technology and any equipment or interconnected system or subsystem of equipment that is used in the creation, conversion, or duplication of data or information. The term electronic and information technology includes, but is not limited to, telecommunications products (such as telephones), information kiosks and transaction machines, World Wide Web sites, multimedia, and office equipment such as copiers and fax machines. The term does not include any equipment that contains embedded information technology that is used as an integral part of the product, but the principal function of which is not the acquisition, storage, manipulation, management, movement, control, display, switching, interchange, transmission, or reception of data or information. For example, HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) equipment such as thermostats or temperature control devices, and medical equipment where information technology is integral to its operation, are not information technology.

Facility means all or any portion of buildings, structures, equipment, roads, walks, parking lots, rolling stock or other conveyances, or other real or personal property.

Individual with disabilities means any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. As used in this definition, the phrase:

(1) *Physical or mental impairment* includes—(i) Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: Neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genitourinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or

(ii) Any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. The term ''physical or mental impairment'' includes, but is not limited to, such diseases and conditions as orthopedic. visual, speech, and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental retardation, emotional illness, and drug addiction and alcoholism.

(2) *Major life activities* includes functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

(3) *Has a record of such an impairment* means has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

(4) *Is regarded as having such an impairment* means—(i) Has a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit major life activities but is treated by the agency as constituting such a limitation;

(ii) Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities only as a result of the attitudes of others toward such impairment; or

(iii) Has none of the impairments defined in paragraph (1) of this definition

but is treated by the agency as having an impairment.

Qualified individual with a disability means:

(1) With respect to any Commission program or activity (except employment), an individual with a disability who, with or without modifications or aids required by this part, meets the essential eligibility requirements for participation in, or receipt of benefits from, that program or activity.

(2) With respect to employment, a qualified individual with a disability as defined in 29 CFR 1630.2(m), which is made applicable to this part by §1615.140.

Section 504 means section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. 93–112, 87 Stat. 394 (29 U.S.C. 794)), as amended by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1974 (Pub. L. 93–516, 88 Stat. 1617), the Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments of 1978 (Pub. L. 95–602, 92 Stat. 2955) and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 (Pub. L. 99–506, 100 Stat. 1810). As used in this part, section 504 applies only to programs or activities conducted by Executive agencies and not to federally assisted programs.

Section 508 means section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Pub. L. 93–112, Title V, §508, as added Pub. L. 99–506, Title VI, §603(a), Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1830, and amended Pub. L. 100–630, Title II, §206(f), Nov. 7, 1988, 102 Stat. 3312; Pub. L. 102–569, Title V, §509(a), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4430; Pub. L. 105–220, Title IV, §408(b), Aug. 7, 1998, 112 Stat. 1203.

[54 FR 22749, May 26, 1989, as amended at 73 FR 39866, July 11, 2008]

§§1615.104–1615.110 [Reserved]

§1615.111 Notice.

The Commission shall make available to employees, applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons such information regarding the provisions of this part and its applicability to the programs or activities conducted by the Commission, and make such information available to them in such manner as the Chair of the Commission finds necessary to apprise such persons of the protections against discrimination assured them by section 504 and this regulation.

[54 FR 22749, May 26, 1989, as amended at 73 FR 39866, July 11, 2008]

§§1615.112–1615.129 [Reserved]

§1615.130 General prohibitions against discrimination.

(a) No qualified individual with disabilities shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by the Commission.

(b)(1) The Commission, in providing any aid, benefit, or service, may not, directly or through contractual, certifying, or other arrangements, on the basis of disability —

(i) Deny a qualified individual with disabilities the opportunity to participate in or benefit from the aid, benefit, or service;

(ii) Afford a qualified individual with disabilities an opportunity to participate in or benefit from the aid, benefit, or service that is not equal to that afforded others;

(iii) Provide a qualified individual with disabilities with an aid, benefit, or service that is not as effective in affording equal opportunity to obtain the same result, to gain the same benefit, or to reach the same level of achievement as that provided to others;

(iv) Provide different or separate aid, benefits, or services to individuals with disabilities or to any class of individuals with disabilities than is provided to others unless such action is necessary to provide qualified individuals with disabilities with aid, benefits, or services that are as effective as those provided to others;

(v) Deny a qualified individual with disabilities the opportunity to participate as a member of planning or advisory boards; or

(vi) Otherwise limit a qualified individual with disabilities in the enjoyment of any right, privilege, advantage, or opportunity enjoyed by others receiving the aid, benefit, or service.

(2) The Commission may not deny a qualified individual with disabilities

the opportunity to participate in programs or activities that are not separate or different, despite the existence of permissibly separate or different programs or activities.

(3) The Commission may not, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, utilize criteria or methods of administration the purpose or effect of which would—(i) Subject qualified individuals with disabilities to discrimination on the basis of disability; or

(ii) Defeat or substantially impair accomplishment of the objectives of a program or activity with respect to individuals with disabilities.

(4) The Commission may not, in determining the site or location of a facility, make selections the purpose or effect of which would—(i) Exclude individuals with disabilities from, deny them the benefits of, or otherwise subject them to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by the Commission; or

(ii) Defeat or substantially impair the accomplishment of the objectives of a program or activity with respect to individuals with disabilities.

(5) The Commission, in the selection of procurement contractors, may not use criteria that subject qualified individuals with disabilities to discrimination on the basis of disability.

(c) The exclusion of individuals without disabilities from the benefits of a program limited by Federal statute or Executive order to individuals with disabilities or the exclusion of a specific class of individuals with disabilities from a program limited by Federal statute or Executive order to a different class of individuals with disabilities is not prohibited by this part.

(d) The Commission shall administer programs and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with disabilities.

[54 FR 22749, May 26, 1989, as amended at 73 FR 39866, July 11, 2008]

§§ 1615.131–1615.134 [Reserved]

§ 1615.135 Electronic and information technology requirements.

(a) Development, procurement, maintenance, or use of electronic and information technology.—When developing, procuring, maintaining, or using electronic and information technology, the Commission shall ensure, unless an undue burden would be imposed on it, that the electronic and information technology allows, regardless of the type of medium of the technology—

(1) Individuals with disabilities who are Commission employees to have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access to and use of the information and data by Commission employees who are not individuals with disabilities; and

(2) Individuals with disabilities who are members of the public seeking information or services from the Commission to have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access to and use of the information and data by such members of the public who are not individuals with disabilities.

(b) Alternative means of access when undue burden is imposed.—When development, procurement, maintenance, or use of electronic and information technology that meets the standards published by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board at 36 CFR part 1194 would impose an undue burden, the Commission shall provide individuals with disabilities covered by this section with the information and data involved by an alternative means of access that allows the individual to use the information and data.

[73 FR 39866, July 11, 2008]

§§ 1615.136–1615.139 [Reserved]

§ 1615.140 Employment.

No qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination in employment under any program or activity conducted by the Commission. The definitions, requirements, and procedures of section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791), as established by this Commission in 29 CFR part 1614, shall apply to employment in federally conducted programs or activities. As noted in 29 CFR 1614.203(b), the standards used to determine whether section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act

has been violated in a complaint alleging non-affirmative action employment discrimination under part 1614 shall be the standards applied under Title I and Title V (sections 501 through 504 and 510) of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (42 U.S.C. 12101, 12111, 12201) as such sections relate to employment. These standards are set forth in the Commission's ADA regulations at 29 CFR part 1630. If a section 501 complaint is filed against the Commission in the part 1614 process and it is found to include a separate section 508 claim, the part 1614 process will be used to process the section 501 claim. The section 508 claim will be processed separately in accordance with the procedures set forth at §1615.170.

[73 FR 39866, July 11, 2008]

§§ 1615.141–1615.148 [Reserved]

§ 1615.149 Program accessibility: Discrimination prohibited.

Except as otherwise provided in §1615.150, no qualified individual with disabilities shall, because the Commission's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by the Commission.

§ 1615.150 Program accessibility: Existing facilities.

(a) *General.* The Commission shall operate each program or activity so that the program or activity, when viewed in its entirety, is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. This paragraph does not—

(1) Necessarily require the Commission to make each of its existing facilities accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities;

(2) Require the Commission to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a program or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. In those circumstances where Commission personnel believe that the proposed action would fundamentally alter the program or activity or would result in undue financial and administrative burdens, the Commission has the burden of proving that compliance with §1615.150(a) would result in such alteration or burdens. The decision that compliance would result in such alteration or burdens must be made by the Chair of the Commission after considering all Commission resources available for use in the funding and operation of the conducted program or activity, and must be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion. If an action would result in such an alteration or such burdens, the Commission shall take any other action that would not result in such an alteration or such burdens but would nevertheless ensure that individuals with disabilities receive the benefits and services of the program or activity.

(b) *Methods.* The Commission may comply with the requirements of this section through such means as redesign of equipment, reassignment of services to accessible buildings, assignment of aides to beneficiaries, home visits, delivery of services at alternate accessible sites, alteration of existing facilities and construction of new facilities, use of accessible rolling stock, or any other methods that result in making its programs or activities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. The Commission is not required to make structural changes in existing facilities where other methods are effective in achieving compliance with this section. The Commission, in making alterations to existing buildings, shall meet accessibility requirements to the extent compelled by the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151–4157), and any regulations implementing it. In choosing among available methods for meeting the requirements of this section, the Commission shall give priority to those methods that offer programs and activities to qualified individuals with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate.

[54 FR 22749, May 26, 1989, as amended at 73 FR 39868, July 11, 2008]

§ 1615.151 Program accessibility: New construction and alterations.

Each building or part of a building that is constructed or altered by, on behalf of, or for the use of the Commission shall be designed, constructed, or altered so as to be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. The definitions, requirements, and standards of the Architectural Barriers Act (42 U.S.C. 4151–4157), as established in 41 CFR subpart 101–19.6, apply to buildings covered by this section.

§§ 1615.152–1615.159 [Reserved]

§ 1615.160 Communications.

(a) The Commission shall take appropriate steps to ensure effective communication with applicants, participants, personnel of other Federal entities, and members of the public.

(1) The Commission shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids where necessary to afford an individual with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a program or activity conducted by the Commission.

(i) In determining what type of auxiliary aid is necessary, the Commission shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individual with disabilities.

(ii) The Commission need not provide individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices of a personal nature.

(2) Where the Commission communicates with applicants and beneficiaries by telephone, telecommunication devices for deaf persons (TDD's) or equally effective telecommunication systems shall be used.

(b) The Commission shall ensure that interested persons, including persons with impaired vision or hearing, can obtain information as to the existence and location of accessible services, activities, and facilities.

(c) The Commission shall provide signs at a primary entrance to each of its inaccessible facilities, directing users to a location at which they can obtain information about accessible facilities. The international symbol for accessibility shall be used at each primary entrance of an accessible facility.

(d) This section does not require the Commission to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a program or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. In those circumstances where Commission personnel believe that the proposed action would fundamentally alter the program or activity or would result in undue financial and administrative burdens, the Commission has the burden of proving that compliance with § 1615.160 would result in such alteration or burdens. The decision that compliance would result in such alteration or burdens must be made by the Chair of the Commission after considering all Commission resources available for use in the funding and operation of the conducted program or activity, and must be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion. If an action required to comply with this section would result in such an alteration or such burdens, the Commission shall take any other action that would not result in such an alteration or such burdens but would nevertheless ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, individuals with disabilities receive the benefits and services of the program or activity.

[54 FR 22749, May 26, 1989, as amended at 73 FR 39866, July 11, 2008]

§§ 1615.161–1615.169 [Reserved]

§ 1615.170 Compliance procedures.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, this section applies to all allegations of discrimination on the basis of disability in programs or activities conducted by the Commission in violation of section 504. This section also applies to all complaints alleging a violation of the agency's responsibility to procure electronic and information technology under section 508 whether filed by members of the public or EEOC employees or applicants.

(b) The Commission shall process complaints alleging violations of section 504 with respect to employment according to the procedures established by EEOC in 29 CFR part 1614 pursuant to section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act

of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791). With regard to employee claims concerning agency procurements made in violation of section 508, the procedures set out in paragraphs (d) through (m) of this section shall be used.

(c) Responsibility for implementation and operation of this section shall be vested in the Director, Office of Equal Opportunity (Director of OEO).

(d) *Filing a complaint.* (1) Any person who believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by this part or that the agency's procurement of electronic and information technology has violated section 508, or authorized representative of such person, may file a complaint with the Director of OEO. Any person who believes that any specific class of persons has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by this part and who is a member of that class or the authorized representative of a member of that class may file a complaint with the Director. A charge on behalf of a person or member of a class of persons claiming to be aggrieved may be made by any person, agency or organization.

(2) *Where and when to file.* Complaints shall be filed with the Director of OEO within one hundred and eighty calendar days of the alleged acts of discrimination. A complaint shall be deemed filed on the date it is postmarked, or, in the absence of a postmark, on the date it is received in the Office of the Director. The Commission shall extend the time period for filing a complaint upon a showing of good cause. For example, the Commission shall extend this time limit if a complainant shows that he or she was not notified of the time limits and was not otherwise aware of them, or that he or she was prevented by circumstances beyond his or her control from submitting the matter within the time limits. A technically incomplete complaint shall be deemed timely if the complainant cures any defect upon request.

(e) *Acceptance of complaint.* (1) The Commission shall accept a complete complaint that is filed in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section and over which it has jurisdiction. The Director, Office of Equal Opportunity shall notify the complainant and the respondent of receipt and acceptance of the complaint.

(2) If the Director, Office of Equal Opportunity receives a complaint that is not complete, he or she shall notify the complainant, within 30 days of receipt of the incomplete complaint, that additional information is needed. If the complainant fails to complete the complaint within 30 days of receipt of this notice, the Director shall dismiss the complaint without prejudice and shall so inform the complainant.

(f) If the Commission receives a complaint over which it does not have jurisdiction, it shall promptly notify the complainant and shall make reasonable efforts to refer the complaint to the appropriate government entity.

(g) The Commission shall notify the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board upon receipt of any complaint alleging that a building or facility that is subject to the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151–4157), is not readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

(h) Within 180 days of the receipt of a complete complaint for which it has jurisdiction, the Commission shall notify the complainant of the results of the investigation in a letter containing—

(1) Findings of fact and conclusions of law;

(2) A description of a remedy for each violation found; and

(3) A notice of the right to appeal.

(i) Appeals of the findings of fact and conclusions of law or remedies must be filed with the Chair of the Commission by the complainant within ninety calendar days of receipt from the Commission of the letter required by §1615.170(h). The Commission shall extend this time for good cause when a complainant shows that he or she was not notified of the prescribed time limit and was not otherwise aware of it or that circumstances beyond his or her control prevented the filing of an appeal within the prescribed time limit. An appeal shall be deemed filed on the date it is postmarked, or, in the absence of a postmark, on the date it is received by the Chair at EEOC headquarters. It should be clearly marked ''Appeal of section 504 decision'' or ''Appeal of section 508 decision'' and

should contain specific objections explaining why the person believes the initial decision was factually or legally wrong. Attached to the appeal letter should be a copy of the initial decision being appealed.

(j) Timely appeals shall be decided by the Chair of the Commission unless the Commission determines that an appeal raises a policy issue which should be addressed by the full Commission.

(1) The Chair will draft a decision within 30 days of receipt of an appeal and circulate it to the Commission.

(2) If a Commissioner believes an appeal raises a policy issue that should be addressed by the full Commission, he or she shall so inform the Chair by notice in writing within ten calendar days of the circulation of the draft decision on appeal.

(3) If the Chair does not receive such written notice, the decision on appeal shall be issued.

(4) If the Chair receives written notice as described in subparagraph (2), the Commission shall resolve the appeal through a vote.

(k) The Commission shall notify the complainant of the results of the appeal within ninety calendar days of the receipt of the appeal from the complainant. If the Commission determines that it needs additional information from the complainant, it shall have sixty days from the date it receives the additional information to make its determination on the appeal.

(l) The time limits cited in paragraphs (h) and (k) of this section may be extended with the permission of the Assistant Attorney General.

(m) The Commission may delegate its authority for conducting complaint investigations to other Federal agencies, or may contract with non-Federal entities to conduct such investigations except that the authority for making the final determination may not be delegated.

(n) *Civil actions.* The remedies, procedures, and rights set forth in sections 505(a)(2) and 505(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. 794a(a)(2) and 794a(b) shall be the remedies, procedures, and rights available to any individual with a disability filing a complaint under this section.

[54 FR 22749, May 26, 1989, as amended at 71 FR 26830, May 9, 2006; 73 FR 39868, July 11, 2008]

§§ 1615.171–1615.999 [Reserved]

PART 1620—THE EQUAL PAY ACT

Sec.

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1620.34 Rules to be liberally construed.

AUTHORITY: Sec. 1–19, 52 Stat. 1060, as amended; sec. 10, 61 Stat. 84; Pub. L. 88–38, 77 Stat. 56 (29 U.S.C. 201 *et seq.*); sec. 1, Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1978, 43 FR 19807; E.O. 12144, 44 FR 37193.

SOURCE: 51 FR 29819, Aug. 20, 1986, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1620.1 Basic applicability of the Equal Pay Act.

(a) Since the Equal Pay Act, 29 U.S.C. 206(d) (hereinafter referred to as the EPA), is a part of the Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. 201, *et seq.* (hereinafter referred to as the FLSA), it has the same basic coverage as the FLSA with two principal exceptions:

(1) The EPA applies to executive, administrative, and professional employees who are normally exempted from the FLSA for most purposes by section 13(a)(1) of that statute, and

(2) The EPA covers all State and local government employees unless they are specifically exempted under section 3(e)(2)(C) of the FLSA.

(b) The EPA does not apply where the employer has no employees who are engaged in commerce or in the handling of goods that have moved in commerce and the employer is not an enterprise engaged in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce.

(c) Men are protected under the Act equally with women. While the EPA was motivated by concern for the weaker bargaining position of women, the Act by its express terms applies to both sexes.

(d) Most employees of the United States Government, as described in section 3(e)(2) (A) and (B) of the FLSA, are covered by the EPA. Accordingly, these interpretations and principles may generally be applied to Federal sector employment.

§ 1620.2 General coverage of employees "engaged in commerce."

(a) Like the FLSA, the EPA applies to employees ''engaged in commerce.'' ''Commerce'' is broadly defined in section 3(b) of the FLSA. It includes both interstate and foreign commerce and is not limited to transportation across State lines, or to activity of a commercial character. All parts of the movement among the several States, or between any State and any place outside thereof, of persons or things, tangibles or intangibles, including communication of information and intelligence, constitute movement in ''commerce'' within the statutory definition. This includes those parts of any such activity which take place wholly within a single State. In addition, the instrumentalities for carrying on such commerce are so inseparable from the commerce itself that employees working on such instrumentalities within the borders of a single State, by virtue of the contribution made by their work to the movement of the commerce, are ''engaged in commerce'' within the meaning of the FLSA.

(b) Consistent with the purpose of the FLSA to apply Federal standards ''throughout the farthest reaches of the channels of interstate commerce,'' the courts have made it clear that the employees ''engaged in commerce'' include every employee employed in the channels of such commerce or in activities so closely related to such commerce as to be considered a part of it as a practical matter. Engaging ''in commerce'' includes activities connected therewith such as management and control of the various physical processes, together with the accompanying accounting and clerical activities. Thus, employees engaged in interstate or foreign commerce will typically include, among others, employees in distributing industries such as wholesaling or retailing who sell, transport, handle, or otherwise work on goods moving in interstate or foreign commerce as well as workers who order, receive, guard, pack, ship or keep records of such goods; employees who handle payroll or personnel functions for workers engaged in such activities; clerical and other workers who regularly use the mails, telephone, or telegraph for communication across State lines; and employees who regularly travel across State lines while working. For other examples, see 29 CFR part 776.

§ 1620.3 General coverage of employees "engaged in * * * the production of goods for commerce."

(a) Like the FLSA, the EPA applies to employees ''engaged in * * * the production of goods for commerce.'' The broad meaning of ''commerce'' as defined in section 3(b) of the FLSA has been outlind in §1620.2. ''Goods'' is also comprehensively defined in section 3(i) of the FLSA and includes ''articles or subjects of commerce of any character, or any part or ingredient thereof'' not expressly excepted by the statute. The activities constituting ''production'' of the goods for commerce are defined in section 3(j) of the FLSA. These are not limited to such work as manufacturing but include handling or otherwise working on goods intended for shipment out of the State either directly or indirectly or for use within the State to serve the needs of the instrumentalities or facilities by which interstate or foreign commerce is carried on. Employees engaged in any closely related process or occupation directly essential to such production of any goods, whether employed by the producer or by an independent employer, are also engaged, by definition, in ''production.'' Thus, employees engaged in the administration, planning, management, and control of the various physical processes together with the accompanying clerical and accounting activities are, from a productive standpoint and for purposes of the FLSA, ''engaged in the production of goods for commerce.''

(b) Employees engaged in the production of goods for interstate or foreign commerce include those who work in manufacturing, processing, and distributing establishments, including wholesale and retail establishments that ''produce'' (including handling or working on) goods for such commerce. This includes everyone employed in such establishments, or elsewhere in the enterprises by which they are operated, whose activities constitute ''production'' of such goods under the principles outlined in paragraph (a) of this section. Thus, employees who sell, process, load, pack, or otherwise handle or work on goods which are to be shipped or delivered outside the State either by their employer or by another firm, and either in the same form or as a part or ingredient of other goods, are engaged in the production of goods for commerce within the coverage of the FLSA. So also are the office, management, sales, and shipping personnel, and maintenance, custodial, and protective employees who perform as a part of the integrated effort for the production of the goods for commerce, services related to such production or to such goods or to the plant, equipment, or personnel by which the production is accomplished.

§ 1620.4 "Closely related" and "directly essential" activities.

An employee is engaged in the production of goods for interstate or foreign commerce within the meaning of the FLSA even if the employees's work is not an actual and direct part of such production, so long as the employee is engaged in a process or occupation which is ''closely related'' and ''directly essential'' to it. This is true whether the employee is employed by the producer of the goods or by someone else who provides goods or services to the producer. Typical of employees covered under these principles are computer operators, bookkeepers, stenographers, clerks, accountants, and auditors and other office and whitecollar workers, and employees doing payroll, timekeeping, and time study work for the producer of goods; employees in the personnel, labor relations, employee benefits, safety and health, advertising, promotion, and public relations activities of the producing enterprise; work instructors for the producers; employees maintaining, servicing, repairing or improving the buildings, machinery, equipment, vehicles or other facilities used in the production of goods for commerce, and such custodial and productive employees as watchmen, guards, firemen, patrolmen, caretakers, stockroom workers and warehousemen; and transportation workers bringing supplies, materials, or equipment to the producer's premises, removing waste materials therefrom, or transporting materials or other goods, or performing such other transportation activities, as the needs of production may require. These examples

are illustrative, rather than exhaustive, of the employees who are ''engaged in the production of goods for commerce'' by reason of performing activities closely related and directly essential to such production.

§ 1620.5 What goods are considered as "produced for commerce."

Goods (as defined in section 3(i) of the FLSA) are ''produced for commerce'' if they are ''produced, manufactured, mined, handled or in any other manner worked on'' in any State for sale, trade, transportation, transmission, shipment, or delivery, to any place outside thereof. Goods are produced for commerce where the producer intends, hopes, expects, or has reason to believe that the goods or any unsegregated part of them will move (in the same or in an altered form or as a part of ingredient of other goods) in interstate or foreign commerce. If such movement of the goods in commerce can reasonably be anticipated by the producer when the goods are produced, it makes no difference whether the producer or the person to whom the goods are transferred puts the goods in interstate or foreign commerce. The fact that goods do move in interstate or foreign commerce is strong evidence that the producer intended, hoped, expected, or had reason to believe that they would so move. Goods may also be produced ''for commerce'' where they are to be used within the State and not transported in any form across State lines. This is true where the goods are used to serve the needs of the instrumentalities or facilities by which interstate or foreign commerce is carried on within the State. For examples, see 29 CFR 776.20.

§ 1620.6 Coverage is not based on amount of covered activity.

The FLSA makes no distinction as to the percentage, volume, or amount of activities of either the employee or the employer which constitute engaged in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce. Every employee whose activities in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce, even though small in amount, are regular and recurring, is considered ''engaged in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce''.

§ 1620.7 "Enterprise" coverage.

(a) The terms ''enterprise'' and ''enterprise engaged in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce'' are defined in subsections 3(r) and 3(s) of the FLSA. Under the enterprise concept, if a business is an ''enterprise engaged in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce,'' every employee employed in such enterprise or by such enterprise is within the coverage of the EPA unless specifically exempted in the FLSA, regardless of whether the individual employee is actually engaged in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce. The term ''enterprise'' is not synonymous with the terms ''employer'' or ''establishment'' although on occasion the three terms may apply to the same business entity. An enterprise may consist of a single establishment operated by one or more employers. (See definitions of ''employer'' and ''establishment'' in §§ 1620.8 and 1620.9.)

(b) In order to constitute an enterprise, the activities sought to be aggregated must be related to each other, they must be performed under a unified operation or common control, and they must be performed for a common business purpose. Activities are related when they are the same or similar, or when they are auxiliary services necessary to the operation and maintenance of the particular business. Activities constitute a unified operation when the activities are operated as a single business unit or economic entity. Activities are performed under common control when the power to direct, restrict, regulate, govern or administer the performance of the activities resides in a single person or entity or when it is shared by a group of persons or entities. Activities are performed for a common business purpose when they are directed to the same or similar business objectives. A determination whether the statutory characteristics of an enterprise are present in any particular case must be made on a case-by-case basis. See generally, subpart C of 29 CFR part 779 for a detailed discussion of the term ''enterprise'' under the FLSA.

§ 1620.8 "Employer," "employee," and "employ" defined.

The words ''employer,'' ''employee,'' and ''employ'' as used in the EPA are defined in the FLSA. Economic reality rather than technical concepts determines whether there is employment within the meaning of the EPA. The common law test based upon the power to control the manner of performance is not applicable to the determination of whether an employment relationship subject to the EPA exists. An ''employer,'' as defined in section 3(d) of the FLSA, means ''any person acting directly or indirectly in the interest of an employer in relation to an employee'' and includes a ''public agency,'' as defined in section 3(x). An ''employee,'' as defined in section 3(e) of the FLSA, ''means any individual employed by an employer.'' ''Employ,'' as used in the EPA, is defined in section 3(g) of the FLSA to include ''to suffer or permit to work.'' Two or more employers may be both jointly or severally responsible for compliance with the statutory requirements applicable to employment of a particular employee.

§ 1620.9 Meaning of "establishment."

(a) Although not expressly defined in the FLSA, the term ''establishment'' had acquired a well settled meaning by the time of enactment of the Equal Pay Act. It refers to a distinct physical place of business rather than to an entire business or ''enterprise'' which may include several separate places of business. Accordingly, each physically separate place of business is ordinarily considered a separate establishment.

(b) In unusual circumstances, two or more portions of a business enterprise, even though located in a single physical place of business, may constitute more than one establishment. For example, the facts might reveal that these portions of the enterprise are physically segregated, engaged in functionally separate operations, and have separate employees and maintain separate records. Conversely, unusual circumstances may call for two or more distinct physical portions of a business enterprise being treated as a single establishment. For example, a central administrative unit may hire all employees, set wages, and assign the location of employment; employees may frequently interchange work locations; and daily duties may be virtually identical and performed under similar working conditions. Barring unusual circumstances, however, the term ''establishment'' will be applied as described in paragraph (a) of this section.

§ 1620.10 Meaning of "wages."

Under the EPA, the term ''wages'' generally includes all payments made to [or on behalf of] an employee as remuneration for employment. The term includes all forms of compensation irrespective of the time of payment, whether paid periodically or deferred until a later date, and whether called wages, salary, profit sharing, expense account, monthly minimum, bonus, uniform cleaning allowance, hotel accommodations, use of company car, gasoline allowance, or some other name. Fringe benefits are deemed to be remuneration for employment. ''Wages'' as used in the EPA (the purpose of which is to assure men and women equal remuneration for equal work) will therefore include payments which may not be counted under section 3(m) of the FLSA toward the minimum wage (the purpose of which is to assure employees a minimum amount of remuneration unconditionally available in cash or in board, lodging or other facilities). Similarly, the provisions of section 7(e) of the FLSA under which some payments may be excluded in computing an employee's ''regular rate'' of pay for purposes of section 7 do not authorize the exclusion of any such remuneration from the ''wages'' of an employee in applying the EPA. Thus, vacation and holiday pay, and premium payments for work on Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, regular days of rest or other days or hours in excess or outside of the employee's regular days or hours of work are deemed remuneration for employment and therefore wage payments that must be considered in applying the EPA, even though not a part of the employee's ''regular rate.''

§ 1620.11 Fringe benefits.

(a) ''Fringe benefits'' includes, e.g., such terms as medical, hospital, accident, life insurance and retirement benefits; profit sharing and bonus plans; leave; and other such concepts.

(b) It is unlawful for an employer to discriminate between men and women performing equal work with regard to fringe benefits. Differences in the application of fringe benefit plans which are based upon sex-based actuarial studies cannot be justified as based on ''any other factor other than sex.''

(c) Where an employer conditions benefits available to employees and their spouses and families on whether the employee is the ''head of the household'' or ''principal wage earner'' in the family unit, the overall implementation of the plan will be closely scrutinized.

(d) It is unlawful for an employer to make available benefits for the spouses or families of employees of one gender where the same benefits are not made available for the spouses or families of opposite gender employees.

(e) It shall not be a defense under the EPA to a charge of sex discrimination in benefits that the cost of such benefits is greater with respect to one sex than the other.

(f) It is unlawful for an employer to have a pension or retirement plan which, with respect to benefits, establishes different optional or compulsory retirement ages based on sex or which otherwise differentiates in benefits on the basis of sex.

[51 FR 29816, Aug. 20, 1986; 51 FR 32636, Sept. 15, 1986]

§ 1620.12 Wage "rate."

(a) The term wage ''rate,'' as used in the EPA, refers to the standard or measure by which an employee's wage is determined and is considered to encompass all rates of wages whether calculated on a time, commission, piece, job incentive, profit sharing, bonus, or other basis. The term includes the rate at which overtime compensation or other special remuneration is paid as well as the rate at which straight time compensation for ordinary work is paid. It further includes the rate at which a draw, advance, or guarantee is paid against a commission settlement.

(b) Where a higher wage rate is paid to one gender than the other for the performance of equal work, the higher rate serves as a wage standard. When a violation of the Act is established, the higher rate paid for equal work is the standard to which the lower rate must be raised to remedy a violation of the Act.

§ 1620.13 "Equal Work"—What it means.

(a) *In general.* The EPA prohibits discrimination by employers on the basis of sex in the wages paid for ''equal work on jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, effort and responsibility and which are performed under similar working conditions * * *.'' The word ''requires'' does not connote that an employer must formally assign the equal work to the employee; the EPA applies if the employer knowingly allows the employee to perform the equal work. The equal work standard does not require that compared jobs be identical, only that they be substantially equal.

(b) *''Male jobs'' and ''female jobs.''* (1) Wage classification systems which designate certain jobs as ''male jobs'' and other jobs as ''female jobs'' frequently specify markedly lower rates for the ''females jobs.'' Such practices indicate a pay practice of discrimination based on sex. It should also be noted that it is an unlawful employment practice under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to classify a job as ''male'' or ''female'' unless sex is a bona fide occupational qualification for the job.

(2) The EPA prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in the payment of wages to employees for work on jobs which are equal under the standards which the Act provides. For example, where an employee of one sex is hired or assigned to a particular job to replace an employee of the opposite sex but receives a lower rate of pay than the person replaced, a prima facie violation of the EPA exists. When a prima facie violation of the EPA exists, it is incumbent on the employer to show that the wage differential is justified under one or more of the Act's four affirmative defenses.

(3) The EPA applies when all employees of one sex are removed from a particular job (by transfer or discharge) so as to retain employees of only one sex in a job previously performed interchangeably or concurrently by employees of both sexes. If a prohibited sex-based wage differential had been established or maintained in violation of the EPA when the job was being performed by employees of both sexes, the employer's obligation to pay the higher rate for the job cannot be avoided or evaded by the device of later confining the job to members of the lower paid sex.

(4) If a person of one sex succeeds a person of the opposite sex on a job at a higher rate of pay than the predecessor, and there is no reason for the higher rate other than difference in gender, a violation as to the predecessor is established and that person is entitled to recover the difference between his or her pay and the higher rate paid the successor employee.

(5) It is immaterial that a member of the higher paid sex ceased to be employed prior to the period covered by the applicable statute of limitations period for filing a timely suit under the EPA. The employer's continued failure to pay the member of the lower paid sex the wage rate paid to the higher paid predecessor constitutes a prima facie continuing violation. Also, it is no defense that the unequal payments began prior to the statutory period.

(c) *Standards for determining rate of pay.* The rate of pay must be equal for persons performing equal work on jobs requiring equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and performed under similar working conditions. When factors such as seniority, education, or experience are used to determine the rate of pay, then those standards must be applied on a sex neutral basis.

(d) *Inequalities in pay that raise questions under the Act.* It is necessary to scrutinize those inequalities in pay between employees of opposite sexes which may indicate a pattern of discrimination in wage payment that is based on sex. Thus, a serious question would be raised where such an inequality, allegedly based on a difference in job content, is in fact one in which the employee occupying the job purportedly requiring the higher degree of skill, effort, or responsibility receives the lower wage rate. Likewise, because the EPA was designed to eliminate wage rate differentials which are based on sex, situations will be carefully scrutinized where employees of only one sex are concentrated in the lower levels of the wage scale, and where there does not appear to be any material relationship other than sex between the lower wage rates paid to such employees and the higher rates paid to employees of the opposite sex.

(e) *Job content controlling.* Application of the equal pay standard is not dependent on job classifications or titles but depends rather on actual job requirements and performance. For example, the fact that jobs performed by male and female employees may have the same total point value under an evaluation system in use by the employer does not in itself mean that the jobs concerned are equal according to the terms of the statute. Conversely, although the point values allocated to jobs may add up to unequal totals, it does not necessarily follow that the work being performed in such jobs is unequal when the statutory tests of the equal pay standard are applied. Job titles are frequently of such a general nature as to provide very little guidance in determining the application of the equal pay standard. For example, the job title ''clerk'' may be applied to employees who perform a variety of duties so dissimilar as to place many of them beyond the scope of comparison under the Act. Similarly, jobs included under the title ''stock clerk'' may include an employee of one sex who spends all or most of his or her working hours in shifting and moving goods in the establishment whereas another employee, of the opposite sex, may also be described as a ''stock clerk'' but be engaged entirely in checking inventory. In the case of jobs identified by the general title ''retail clerk'', the facts may show that equal skill, effort, and responsibility are required in the jobs of male and female employees notwithstanding that they are engaged in selling different kinds of merchandise. In all such situations, the application of the equal pay standard will have to

be determined by applying the terms of the Act to the specific facts involved.

§ 1620.14 Testing equality of jobs.

(a) *In general.* What constitutes equal skill, equal effort, or equal responsibility cannot be precisely defined. In interpreting these key terms of the statute, the broad remedial purpose of the law must be taken into consideration. The terms constitute separate tests, each of which must be met in order for the equal pay standard to apply. It should be kept in mind that ''equal'' does not mean ''identical.'' Insubstantial or minor differences in the degree or amount of skill, or effort, or responsibility required for the performance of jobs will not render the equal pay standard inapplicable. On the other hand, substantial differences, such as those customarily associated with differences in wage levels when the jobs are performed by persons of one sex only, will ordinarily demonstrate an inequality as between the jobs justifying differences in pay. However, differences in skill, effort or responsibility which might be sufficient to justify a finding that two jobs are not equal within the meaning of the EPA if the greater skill, effort, or responsibility has been required of the higher paid sex, do not justify such a finding where the greater skill, effort, or responsibility is required of the lower paid sex. In determining whether job differences are so substantial as to make jobs unequal, it is pertinent to inquire whether and to what extent significance has been given to such differences in setting the wage levels for such jobs. Such an inquiry may, for example, disclose that apparent differences between jobs have not been recognized as relevant for wage purposes and that the facts as a whole support the conclusion that the differences are too insubstantial to prevent the jobs from being equal in all significant respects under the law.

(b) *Illustrations of the concept.* Where employees of opposite sexes are employed in jobs in which the duties they are required to perform and the working conditions are substantially the same, except that an employee of one sex is required to perform some duty or duties involving a higher skill which an employee of the other sex is not required to perform, the fact that the duties are different in this respect is insufficient to remove the jobs from the application of the equal pay standard if it also appears that the employer is paying a lower wage rate to the employee performing the additional duties notwithstanding the additional skill which they involve. In other situations, where employees of the opposite sex are employed in jobs which are equal in the levels of skill, effort, and responsibility required for their performance, it may be alleged that the assignment to employees of one sex but not the other of certain duties requiring less skill makes the jobs too different for comparison under the equal pay provisions. But so long as the higher level of skill is required for the performance of the jobs occupied by employees of both sexes, the fact that some of the duties assigned to employees of one sex require less skill than the employee must have for the job as a whole does not warrant any conclusion that the jobs are outside the purview of the equal pay standard.

(c) *Determining equality of job content in general.* In determining whether employees are performing equal work within the meaning of the EPA, the amounts of time which employees spend in the performance of different duties are not the sole criteria. It is also necessary to consider the degree of difference in terms of skill, effort, and responsibility. These factors are related in such a manner that a general standard to determine equality of jobs cannot be set up solely on the basis of a percentage of time. Consequently, a finding that one job requires employees to expend greater effort for a certain percentage of their working time than employees performing another job, would not in itself establish that the two jobs do not constitute equal work. Similarly, the performance of jobs on different machines or equipment would not necessarily result in a determination that the work so performed is unequal within the meaning of the statute if the equal pay provisions otherwise apply. If the difference in skill or effort required for the operation of such equipment is inconsequential,

payment of a higher wage rate to employees of one sex because of a difference in machines or equipment would constitute a prohibited wage rate differential. Where greater skill or effort is required from the lower paid sex, the fact that the machines or equipment used to perform substantially equal work are different does not defeat a finding that the EPA has been violated. Likewise, the fact that jobs are performed in different departments or locations within the establishment would not necessarily be sufficient to demonstrate that unequal work is involved where the equal pay standard otherwise applies. This is particularly true in the case of retail establishments, and unless a showing can be made by the employer that the sale of one article requires such higher degree of skill or effort than the sale of another article as to render the equal pay standard inapplicable, it will be assumed that the salesmen and saleswomen concerned are performing equal work. Although the equal pay provisions apply on an establishment basis and the jobs to be compared are those in the particular establishment, all relevant evidence that may demonstrate whether the skill, effort, and responsibility required in the jobs in the particular establishment are equal should be considered, whether this relates to the performance of like jobs in other establishments or not.

§ 1620.15 Jobs requiring equal skill in performance.

(a) *In general.* The jobs to which the equal pay standard is applicable are jobs requiring equal skill in their performance. Where the amount or degree of skill required to perform one job is substantially greater than that required to perform another job, the equal pay standard cannot apply even though the jobs may be equal in all other respects. Skill includes consideration of such factors as experience, training, education, and ability. *It must be measured in terms of the performance requirements of the job.* If an employee must have essentially the same skill in order to perform either of two jobs, the jobs will qualify under the EPA as jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, even though the employee in one of the jobs may not exercise the required skill as frequently or during as much of his or her working time as the employee in the other job. *Possession of a skill not needed to meet the requirements of the job cannot be considered in making a determination regarding equality of skill.* The efficiency of the employee's performance in the job is not in itself an appropriate factor to consider in evaluating skill.

(b) *Comparing skill requirements of jobs.* As a simple illustration of the principle of equal skill, suppose that a man and a woman have jobs classified as administrative assistants. Both jobs require them to spend two-thirds of their working time facilitating and supervising support-staff duties, and the remaining one-third of their time in diversified tasks, not necessarily the same. Since there is no difference in the skills required for the vast majority of their work, whether or not these jobs require equal skill in performance will depend upon the nature of the work performed during the latter period to meet the requirements of the jobs.

§ 1620.16 Jobs requiring equal effort in performance.

(a) *In general.* The jobs to which the equal pay standard is applicable are jobs that require equal effort to perform. Where substantial differences exist in the amount or degree of effort required to be expended in the performance of jobs, the equal pay standard cannot apply even though the jobs may be equal in all other respects. Effort is concerned with the measurement of the physical or mental exertion needed for the performance of a job. Job factors which cause mental fatigue and stress, as well as those which alleviate fatigue, are to be considered in determining the effort required by the job. ''Effort'' encompasses the total requirements of a job. Where jobs are otherwise equal under the EPA, and there is no substantial difference in the amount or degree of effort which must be expended in performing the jobs under comparison, the jobs may require equal effort in their performance even though the effort may be exerted

in different ways on the two jobs. Differences only in the kind of effort required to be expended in such a situation will not justify wage differentials.

(b) *Comparing effort requirements of jobs.* To illustrate the principle of equal effort exerted in different ways, suppose that a male checker employed by a supermarket is required to spend part of his time carrying out heavy packages or replacing stock involving the lifting of heavy items whereas a female checker is required to devote an equal degree of effort during a similar portion of her time to performing fill-in work requiring greater dexterity—such as rearranging displays of spices or other small items. The difference in kind of effort required of the employees does not appear to make their efforts unequal in any respect which would justify a wage differential, where such differences in kind of effort expended to perform the job are not ordinarily considered a factor in setting wage levels. Further, the occasional or sporadic performance of an activity which may require extra physical or mental exertion is not alone sufficient to justify a finding of unequal effort. Suppose, however, that men and women are working side by side on a line assembling parts. Suppose further that one of the men who performs the operations at the end of the line must also lift the assembly, as he completes his part of it, and places it on a waiting pallet. In such a situation, a wage rate differential might be justified for the person (but only for the person) who is required to expend the extra effort in the performance of his job, provided that the extra effort so expended is substantial and is performed over a considerable portion of the work cycle. In general, a wage rate differential based on differences in the degree or amount of effort required for performance of jobs must be applied uniformly to men and women. For example, if all women and some men performing a particular type of job never perform heavy lifting, but some men do, payment of a higher wage rate to all of the men would constitute a prohibited wage rate differential if the equal pay provisions otherwise apply.

§ 1620.17 Jobs requiring equal responsibility in performance.

(a) *In general.* The equal pay standard applies to jobs the performance of which requires equal responsibility. Responsibility is concerned with the degree of accountability required in the performance of the job, with emphasis on the importance of the job obligation. Differences in the degree of responsibility required in the performance of otherwise equal jobs cover a wide variety of situations. The following illustrations in subsection (b), while by no means exhaustive, may suggest the nature or degree of differences in responsibility which will constitute unequal work.

(b) *Comparing responsibility requirements of jobs.* (1) There are many situations where one employee of a group performing jobs which are equal in other respects is required from time to time to assume supervisory duties for reasons such as the absence of the regular supervisor. Suppose, for instance, that it is the employer's practice to pay a higher wage rate to such a ''relief'' supervisor with the understanding that during the intervals in which the employee performs supervisory duties the employee is in training for a supervisory position. In such a situation, payment of the higher rate to the employee might well be based solely on the additional responsibility required to perform the job and the equal pay provisions would not require the same rates to be paid to an employee of the opposite sex in the group who does not have an equal responsibility. There would clearly be no question concerning such a wage rate differential if the employer pays the higher rate to both men and women who are called upon from time to time to assume such supervisory responsibilities.

(2) Other differences in responsibilities of employees in generally similar jobs may require similar conclusions. Sales clerks, for example, who are engaged primarily in selling identical or similar merchandise may be given different responsibilities. Suppose that one employee of such a group (who may be either a man or a woman) is authorized and required to determine whether to accept payment for purchases by

personal checks of customers. The person having this authority to accept personal checks may have a considerable, additional degree of responsibility which may materially affect the business operations of the employer. In this situation, payment of a higher wage rate to this employee would be permissible.

(3) On the other hand, there are situations where one employee of the group may be given some minor responsibility which the others do not have (e.g., turning out the lights in his or her department at the end of the business day) but which is not of sufficient consequence or importance to justify a finding of unequal responsibility. As another example of a minor difference in responsibility, suppose that office employees of both sexes work in jobs essentially alike but at certain intervals a male and female employee performing otherwise equal work within the meaning of the statute are responsible for the office payroll. One of these employees may be assigned the job of checking time cards and compiling the payroll list. The other, of the opposite sex, may be required to make out paychecks, or divide up cash and put the proper amounts into pay envelopes after drawing a payroll check. In such circumstances, although some of the employees' duties are occasionally dissimilar, the difference in responsibility involved would not appear to be of a kind that is recognized in wage administration as a significant factor in determining wage rates. Under such circumstances, this difference would seem insufficient to justify a wage rate differential between the man's and woman's job if the equal pay provisions otherwise apply.

§ 1620.18 Jobs performed under similar working conditions.

(a) *In general.* In order for the equal pay standard to apply, the jobs are required to be performed under similar working conditions. It should be noted that the EPA adopts the flexible standard of similarity as a basis for testing this requirement. In determining whether the requirement is met, a practical judgment is required in light of whether the differences in working conditions are the kind customarily taken into consideration in setting wage levels. The mere fact that jobs are in different departments of an establishment will not necessarily mean that the jobs are performed under dissimilar working conditions. This may or may not be the case. The term ''similar working conditions'' encompasses two subfactors: ''surroundings'' and ''hazards.'' ''Surroundings'' measure the elements, such as toxic chemicals or fumes, regularly encountered by a worker, their intensity and their frequency. ''Hazards'' take into account the physical hazards regularly encountered, their frequency and the severity of injury they can cause. The phrase ''working conditions'' does not encompass shift differentials.

(b) *Determining similarity of working conditions.* Generally, employees performing jobs requiring equal skill, effort, and responsibility are likely to be performing them under similar working conditions. However, in situations where some employees performing work meeting these standards have working conditions substantially different from those required for the performance of other jobs, the equal pay principle would not apply. On the other hand, slight or inconsequential differences in working conditions which are not usually taken into consideration by employers or in collective bargaining in setting wage rates would not justify a differential in pay.

§ 1620.19 Equality of wages—application of the principle.

Equal wages must be paid in the same medium of exchange. In addition, an employer would be prohibited from paying higher hourly rates to all employees of one sex and then attempting to equalize the differential by periodically paying employees of the opposite sex a bonus. Comparison can be made for equal pay purposes between employees employed in equal jobs in the same establishment although they work in different departments.

§ 1620.20 Pay differentials claimed to be based on extra duties.

Additional duties may not be a defense to the payment of higher wages to one sex where the higher pay is not

related to the extra duties. The Commission will scrutinize such a defense to determine whether it is bona fide. For example, an employer cannot successfully assert an extra duties defense where:

(a) Employees of the higher paid sex receive the higher pay without doing the extra work;

(b) Members of the lower paid sex also perform extra duties requiring equal skill, effort, and responsibility;

(c) The proffered extra duties do not in fact exist;

(d) The extra task consumes a minimal amount of time and is of peripheral importance; or

(e) Third persons (i.e., individuals who are not in the two groups of employees being compared) who do the extra task as their primary job are paid less than the members of the higher paid sex for whom there is an attempt to justify the pay differential.

§ 1620.21 Head of household.

Since a ''head of household'' or ''head of family'' status bears no relationship to the requirements of the job or to the individual's performance on the job, such a claimed defense to an alleged EPA violation will be closely scrutinized as stated in §1620.11(c).

§ 1620.22 Employment cost not a "factor other than sex."

A wage differential based on claimed differences between the average cost of employing workers of one sex as a group and the average cost of employing workers of the opposite sex as a group is discriminatory and does not qualify as a differential based on any ''factor other than sex,'' and will result in a violation of the equal pay provisions, if the equal pay standard otherwise applies.

§ 1620.23 Collective bargaining agreements not a defense.

The establishment by collective bargaining or inclusion in a collective bargaining agreement of unequal rates of pay does not constitute a defense available to either an employer or to a labor organization. Any and all provisions in a collective bargaining agreement which provide unequal rates of pay in conflict with the requirements of the EPA are null and void and of no effect.

§ 1620.24 Time unit for determining violations.

In applying the various tests of equality to the requirements for the performance of particular jobs, it is necessary to scrutinize each job as a whole and to look at the characteristics of the jobs being compared over a full work cycle. For the purpose of such a comparison, the appropriate work cycle to be determined would be that performed by members of the lower paid sex and a comparison then made with job duties performed by members of the higher paid sex during a similar work cycle. The appropriate work cycle will be determined by an examination of the facts of each situation. For example, where men and women custodial workers in a school system perform equal work during the academic year, but the men perform additional duties in the summer months, the appropriate work cycle for EPA purposes would be the academic year. In that instance, the additional summer duties would not preclude the application of the equal pay standard or justify the higher wage rate for men for the period when the work was equal.

§ 1620.25 Equalization of rates.

Under the express terms of the EPA, when a prohibited sex-based wage differential has been proved, an employer can come into compliance only by raising the wage rate of the lower paid sex. The rate-reduction provision of the EPA prohibits an employer from attempting to cure a violation by hiring or transferring employees to perform the previously lower-paid job at the lower rate. Similarly, the departure of the higher paid sex from positions where a violation occurred, leaving only members of the lower paid sex being paid equally among themselves, does not cure the EPA violations.

§ 1620.26 Red circle rates.

(a) The term ''red circle'' rate is used to describe certain unusual, higher than normal, wage rates which are maintained for reasons unrelated to sex. An example of bona fide use of a

''red circle'' rate might arise in a situation where a company wishes to transfer a long-service employee, who can no longer perform his or her regular job because of ill health, to different work which is now being performed by opposite gender-employees. Under the ''red circle'' principle the employer may continue to pay the employee his or her present salary, which is greater than that paid to the opposite gender employees, for the work both will be doing. Under such circumstances, maintaining an employee's established wage rate, despite a reassignment to a less demanding job, is a valid reason for the differential even though other employees performing the less demanding work would be paid at a lower rate, since the differential is based on a factor other than sex. However, where wage rate differentials have been or are being paid on the basis of sex to employees performing equal work, rates of the higher paid employees may not be ''red circled'' in order to comply with the EPA. To allow this would only continue the inequities which the EPA was intended to cure.

(b) For a variety of reasons an employer may require an employee, for a short period, to perform the work of a job classification other than the employee's regular classification. If the employee's rate for his or her regular job is higher than the rate usually paid for the work to which the employee is temporarily reassigned, the employer may continue to pay the higher rate under the ''red circle'' principle. For instance, an employer who must reduce help in a skilled job may transfer employees to less demanding work without reducing their pay, in order to have them available when they are again needed for their former jobs. Although employees traditionally engaged in performing the less demanding work would be paid at a lower rate than those employees transferred from the more skilled jobs, the resultant wage differential would not constitute a violation of the equal pay provisions since the differential is based on factors other than sex. This would be true during the period of time for which the ''red circle'' rate is bona fide. Temporary reassignments may also involve the opposite relationship of wage rates. Thus, an employee may be required, during the period of temporary reassignment, to perform work for which employees of the opposite sex are paid a higher wage rate than that paid for the duties of the employee's regular job classification. In such a situation, the employer may continue to pay the reassigned employee at the lower rate, if the rate is not based on quality or quantity of production , and if the reassignment is in fact a temporary one. If, however, a piece rate is paid employees of the opposite sex who perform the work to which the employee in question is reassigned, failure to pay the reassigned employee the same piece rate paid such other employees would raise questions of discrimination based on sex. Also, failure to pay the higher rate to a reassigned employee after it becomes known that the reassignment will not be of a temporary nature would raise a question whether sex rather than the temporary nature of the assignment is the real basis for the wage differential. Generally, failure to pay the higher rate to an employee reassigned for a period longer than one month will raise questions as to whether the reassignment was in fact intended to be temporary.

§ 1620.27 Relationship to the Equal Pay Act of title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

(a) In situations where the jurisdictional prerequisites of both the EPA and title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 200e *et seq.*, are satisfied, any violation of the Equal Pay Act is also a violation of title VII. However, title VII covers types of wage discrimination not actionable under the EPA. Therefore, an act or practice of an employer or labor organization that is not a violation of the EPA may nevertheless be a violation of title VII.

(b) Recovery for the same period of time may be had under both the EPA and title VII so long as the same individual does not receive duplicative relief for the same wrong. Relief is computed to give each individual the highest benefit which entitlement under either statute would provide. (e.g., liquidated damages may be available under the EPA but not under title VII.)

Relief for the same individual may be computed under one statute for one or more periods of the violation and under the other statute for other periods of the violation.

(c) The right to equal pay under the Equal Pay Act has no relationship to whether the employee is in the lower paying job as a result of discrimination in violation of title VII. Under the EPA a prima facie violation is established upon a showing that an employer pays different wages to employees of opposite sexes for equal work on jobs requiring equal skill, effort and responsibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions. Thus, the availability of a remedy under title VII which would entitle the lower paid employee to be hired into, or to transfer to, the higher paid job does not defeat the right of each person employed on the lower paid job to the same wages as are paid to a member of the opposite sex who receives higher pay for equal work.

§ 1620.28 Relationship to other equal pay laws.

The provisions of various State or local laws may differ from the equal pay provisions set forth in the FLSA. No provisions of the EPA will excuse noncompliance with any State or other law establishing fewer defenses or more liberal work criteria than those of the EPA. On the other hand, compliance with other applicable legislation will not excuse violations of the EPA.

§ 1620.29 Relationship to other labor laws.

If a higher minimum wage than that required under the FLSA is applicable to a particular sex pursuant to State law, and the employer pays the higher State minimum wage to male or female employees, it must also pay the higher rate to employees of the opposite sex for equal work in order to comply with the EPA. Similarly, if overtime premiums are paid to members of one sex because of a legal requirement, such premiums must also be paid to employees of the other sex.

§ 1620.30 Investigations and compliance assistance.

(a) As provided in sections 9, 11, 16, and 17 of the FLSA, the Commission and its authorized representatives under the Act may (1) investigate and gather data; (2) enter and inspect establishments and records, and make transcriptions thereof, and interview individuals; (3) advise employers regarding any changes necessary or desirable to comply with the Act; (4) subpoena witnesses and order production of documents and other evidence; (5) supervise the payment of amounts owing pursuant to section 16(c) of the FLSA; (6) initiate and conduct litigation.

(b) The General Counsel, District Directors, Washington Field Office Director, and the Program Director, Office of Program Operations, or the designees of any of them are hereby delegated authority to exercise the powers enumerated in paragraphs (a) (1), (2), (3), and (5) of this section and to serve subpoenas. The General Counsel is delegated authority to seek preliminary relief under the Act. The General Counsel is hereby delegated authority to initiate other litigation at the direction of the Commission and to conduct such litigation.

(c) The identity or identifying details of persons giving information in confidence as to violations of the Act shall not be disclosed unless necessary in a court proceeding.

[46 FR 4888, Jan. 19, 1981, as amended at 47 FR 46276, Oct. 18, 1982; 50 FR 30700, July 29, 1985. Redesignated at 51 FR 29819, Aug. 20, 1986, and amended at 54 FR 32063, Aug. 4, 1989]

§ 1620.31 Issuance of subpoenas.

(a) With respect to the enforcement of the Equal Pay Act, any member of the Commission shall have the authority to sign a subpoena requiring:

(1) The attendance and testimony of witnesses;

(2) The production of evidence including, but not limited to, books, records, correspondence, or documents, in the possession or under the control of the person subpoenaed; and

(3) Access to evidence for the purposes of examination and the right to copy.

(b) There is no right of appeal to the Commission from the issuance of such a subpoena.

(c) Upon the failure of any person to comply with a subpoena issued under this section, the Commission may utilize the provisions of sections 49 and 50 of title 15 of the United States Code to compel enforcement of the subpoena.

[46 FR 4888, Jan. 19, 1981. Redesignated at 51 FR 29819, Aug. 20, 1986]

§ 1620.32 Recordkeeping requirements.

(a) Employers having employees subject to the Act are required to keep records in accordance with U.S. Department of Labor regulations found at 29 CFR part 516 (Records To Be Kept by Employers Under the FLSA). The regulations of that part are adopted herein by reference.

(b) Every employer subject to the equal pay provisions of the Act shall maintain and preserve all records required by the applicable sections of 29 CFR part 516 and in addition, shall preserve any records which he makes in the regular course of his business operation which relate to the payment of wages, wage rates, job evaluations, job descriptions, merit systems, seniority systems, collective bargaining agreements, description of practices or other matters which describe or explain the basis for payment of any wage differential to employees of the opposite sex in the same establishment, and which may be pertinent to a determination whether such differential is based on a factor other than sex.

(c) Each employer shall preserve for at least two years the records he makes of the kind described in §1620.32(b) which explain the basis for payment of any wage differential to employees of the opposite sex in the same establishment.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0019)

(Pub. L. 96–511, 94 Stat. 2812 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*))

[46 FR 4888, Jan. 19, 1981, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981. Redesignated at 51 FR 29819, Aug. 20, 1986]

§ 1620.33 Recovery of wages due; injunctions; penalties for willful violations.

(a) Wages withheld in violation of the Act have the status of unpaid minimum wages or unpaid overtime compensation under the FLSA. This is true both of the additional wages required by the Act to be paid to an employee to meet the equal pay standard, and of any wages that the employer should have paid an employee whose wages he reduced in violation of the Act in an attempt to equalize his or her pay with that of an employee of the opposite sex performing equal work, on jobs subject to the Act.

(b) The following methods are provided under sections 16 and 17 of the FLSA for recovery of unpaid wages: The Commission may supervise payment of the back wages and may bring suit for back pay and an equal amount as liquidated damages. The employee may sue for back pay and an additional sum, up to the amount of back pay, as liquidated damages, plus attorney's fees and court costs. The employee may not bring suit if he or she has been paid back wages in full under supervision of the Commission, or if the Commission has filed suit under the Act to collect the wages due the employee. The Commission may also obtain a court injunction to restrain any person from violating the law, including the unlawful withholding by an employer of proper compensation. A 2-year statute of limitations applies to the recovery of unpaid wages, except that an action on a cause of action arising out of a willful violation may be commenced within 3 years after the cause of action accrued.

(c) Willful violations of the Act may be prosecuted criminally and the violator fined up to $10,000. A second conviction for such a violation may result in imprisonment.

(d) Violation of any provision of the Act by any person, including any labor organization or agent thereof, is unlawful, as provided in section 15(a) of the FLSA. Accordingly, any labor organization, or agent thereof, who violates any provision of the Act is subject to injunction proceedings in accordance with the applicable provisions of section 17 of the FLSA. Any such

labor organization, or agent thereof, who willfully violates the provisions of section 15 is liable to the penalties set forth in section 16(a) of the FLSA.

[46 FR 4888, Jan. 19, 1981. Redesignated at 51 FR 29819, Aug. 20, 1986]

§ 1620.34 Rules to be liberally construed.

(a) These rules and regulations shall be liberally construed to effectuate the purpose and provisions of this Act and any other Act administered by the Commission.

(b) Any person claiming to be aggrieved or the agent for such person may advise the Commission of the statute or statutes under which he or she wishes the Commission to commence its inquiry.

(c) Whenever the Commission is investigating a charge or allegation relating to a possible violation of one of the statutes which it administers and finds a violation of one or more of the other statutes which it administers, the Commission may seek to remedy such violation in accordance with the procedures of all relevant statutes.

[46 FR 4888, Jan. 19, 1981. Redesignated at 51 FR 29819, Aug. 20, 1986]

PART 1621—PROCEDURES—THE EQUAL PAY ACT

Sec.

1621.1 Purpose.
1621.2 Definitions.
1621.3 Procedure for requesting an opinion letter.
1621.4 Effect of opinions and interpretations of the Commission.

AUTHORITY: Secs. 1–19, 52 Stat. 1060, as amended, secs. 10–16, 61 Stat. 84, Pub. L. 88–38, 77 Stat. 56 (29 U.S.C. 201 *et seq.*); sec. 1, Reorgan. Plan No. 1 of 1978, 43 FR 19807; E. O. 12144, 44 FR 37193.

SOURCE: 49 FR 31411, Aug. 7, 1984, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1621.1 Purpose.

The regulations set forth in this part contain the procedures established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for issuing opinion letters under the Equal Pay Act.

§ 1621.2 Definitions.

For purposes of this part, the term *the Act* shall mean the Equal Pay Act the *Commission* shall mean the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or any of its designated representatives.

§ 1621.3 Procedure for requesting an opinion letter.

(a) A request for an opinion letter should be submitted in writing to the Chairman, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 131 M Street, NE., Washington, DC 20507, and shall contain:

(1) A concise statement of the issues for which an opinion is requested;

(2) A full statement of the relevant facts and law; and

(3) The names and addresses of the person(s) making the request and other interested persons.

(b) Issuance of an opinion letter by the Commission is discretionary.

(c) Informal advice: When the Commission, at its discretion, determines that it will not issue an opinion letter as defined in §1621.4, the Commission may provide informal advice or guidance to the requestor. An informal letter of advice does not represent the formal position of the Commission and does not commit the Commission to the views expressed therein. Any letter other than those defined in §1621.4 will be considered a letter of advice and may not be relied upon by any employer within the meaning of section 10 of the Portal to Portal Act of 1947, 29 U.S.C. 255.

[49 FR 31411, Aug. 7, 1984, as amended at 71 FR 26831, May 9, 2006; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009]

§ 1621.4 Effect of opinions and interpretations of the Commission.

(a) Section 10 of the Portal to Portal Act of 1947, 29 U.S.C. 255, which applies to the Equal Pay Act of 1963, 29 U.S.C. 206(d), provides that:

> In any action or proceeding based on any act or omission on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, no employer shall be subject to any liability or punishment * * * if he pleads and proves that the act or omission complained of was in good faith in conformity with and in reliance on any written

administrative regulation, order, ruling, approval or interpretation * * * or any administrative practice or enforcement policy of [the Commission].

The Commission has determined that only the following documents may be relied upon by any employer as a ''ruling, approval or interpretation'' or as ''evidence of any administrative practice or enforcement policy'' of the Commission within the meaning of the statutory provisions quoted above.

(1) A written document, entitled ''opinion letter,'' signed by the Legal Counsel on behalf of and as approved by the Commission;

(2) A written document issued in the conduct of litigation, entitled ''opinion letter,'' signed by the General Counsel on behalf of and as approved by the Commission;

(3) A matter published and specifically designated as such in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(b) An opinion letter issued pursuant to paragraph (a)(1) or (a)(2) of this section, when issued to a specific addressee, has no effect upon circumstances beyond the situation of the specific addressee.

PART 1625—AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT

Subpart A—Interpretations

Sec.

1625.1 Definitions.
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1625.30 Administrative exemptions; procedures.
1625.31 Special employment programs.
1625.32 Coordination of retiree health benefits with Medicare and State health benefits.

AUTHORITY: 29 U.S.C. 621–634; 5 U.S.C. 301; Pub. L. 99–502, 100 Stat. 3342; Secretary's Order No. 10–68; Secretary's Order No. 11–68; sec. 2, Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1978, 43 FR 19807; Executive Order 12067, 43 FR 28967.

SOURCE: 46 FR 47726, Sept. 29, 1981, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Interpretations

§ 1625.1 Definitions.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is hereinafter referred to as the *Commission*. The terms *person*, *employer*, *employment agency*, *labor organization*, and *employee* shall have the meanings set forth in section 11 of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 621 *et seq.*, hereinafter referred to as the *Act*. References to *employers* in this part state principles that are applicable not only to employers but also to labor organizations and to employment agencies.

§ 1625.2 Discrimination prohibited by the Act.

It is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against an individual in any aspect of employment because that individual is 40 years old or older, unless one of the statutory exceptions applies. Favoring an older individual over a younger individual because of age is not unlawful discrimination under the ADEA, even if the younger individual is at least 40 years old. However, the ADEA does not require employers to prefer older individuals and does not affect applicable state, municipal, or local laws that prohibit such preferences.

[72 FR 36875, July 6, 2007]

§ 1625.3 Employment agency.

(a) As long as an employment agency regularly procures employees for at least one covered employer, it qualifies

under section 11(c) of the Act as an employment agency with respect to all of its activities whether or not such activities are for employers covered by the act.

(b) The prohibitions of section 4(b) of the Act apply not only to the referral activities of a covered employment agency but also to the agency's own employment practices, regardless of the number of employees the agency may have.

§ 1625.4 Help wanted notices or advertisements.

(a) Help wanted notices or advertisements may not contain terms and phrases that limit or deter the employment of older individuals. Notices or advertisements that contain terms such as *age 25 to 35*, *young*, *college student*, *recent college graduate*, *boy*, *girl*, or others of a similar nature violate the Act unless one of the statutory exceptions applies. Employers may post help wanted notices or advertisements expressing a preference for older individuals with terms such as *over age 60*, *retirees*, or *supplement your pension*.

(b) Help wanted notices or advertisements that ask applicants to disclose or state their age do not, in themselves, violate the Act. But because asking applicants to state their age may tend to deter older individuals from applying, or otherwise indicate discrimination against older individuals, employment notices or advertisements that include such requests will be closely scrutinized to assure that the requests were made for a lawful purpose.

[72 FR 36875, July 6, 2007]

§ 1625.5 Employment applications.

A request on the part of an employer for information such as *Date of Birth* or *age* on an employment application form is not, in itself, a violation of the Act. But because the request that an applicant state his age may tend to deter older applicants or otherwise indicate discrimination against older individuals, employment application forms that request such information will be closely scrutinized to assure that the request is for a permissible purpose and not for purposes proscribed by the Act. That the purpose is not one proscribed by the statute should be made known to the applicant by a reference on the application form to the statutory prohibition in language to the following effect:

> The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40 years of age,'' or by other means. The term ''employment applications,'' refers to all written inquiries about employment or applications for employment or promotion including, but not limited to, résumés or other summaries of the applicant's background. It relates not only to written preemployment inquiries, but to inquiries by employees concerning terms, conditions, or privileges of employment as specified in section 4 of the Act.

[46 FR 47726, Sept. 29, 1981, as amended at 53 FR 5972, Feb. 29, 1988; 72 FR 36875, July 6, 2007]

§ 1625.6 Bona fide occupational qualifications.

(a) Whether occupational qualifications will be deemed to be ''bona fide'' to a specific job and ''reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the particular business,'' will be determined on the basis of all the pertinent facts surrounding each particular situation. It is anticipated that this concept of a bona fide occupational qualification will have limited scope and application. Further, as this is an exception to the Act it must be narrowly construed.

(b) An employer asserting a BFOQ defense has the burden of proving that (1) the age limit is reasonably necessary to the essence of the business, and either (2) that all or substantially all individuals excluded from the job involved are in fact disqualified, or (3) that some of the individuals so excluded possess a disqualifying trait that cannot be ascertained except by reference to age. If the employer's objective in asserting a BFOQ is the goal of public safety, the employer must prove that the challenged practice does indeed effectuate that goal and that there is no acceptable alternative which would better advance it or equally advance it with less discriminatory impact.

(c) Many State and local governments have enacted laws or administrative regulations which limit employment opportunities based on age. Unless these laws meet the standards for the establishment of a valid bona fide occupational qualification under section 4(f)(1) of the Act, they will be considered in conflict with and effectively superseded by the ADEA.

§ 1625.7 Differentiations based on reasonable factors other than age.

(a) Section 4(f)(1) of the Act provides that

> * * * it shall not be unlawful for an employer, employment agency, or labor organization * * * to take any action otherwise prohibited under paragraphs (a), (b), (c), or (e) of this section * * * where the differentiation is based on reasonable factors other than age * * *.

(b) When an employment practice uses age as a limiting criterion, the defense that the practice is justified by a reasonable factor other than age is unavailable.

(c) Any employment practice that adversely affects individuals within the protected age group on the basis of older age is discriminatory unless the practice is justified by a ''reasonable factor other than age.'' An individual challenging the allegedly unlawful practice is responsible for isolating and identifying the specific employment practice that allegedly causes any observed statistical disparities.

(d) Whenever the ''reasonable factors other than age'' defense is raised, the employer bears the burdens of production and persuasion to demonstrate the defense. The ''reasonable factors other than age'' provision is not available as a defense to a claim of disparate treatment.

(e)(1) A reasonable factor other than age is a non-age factor that is objectively reasonable when viewed from the position of a prudent employer mindful of its responsibilities under the ADEA under like circumstances. Whether a differentiation is based on reasonable factors other than age must be decided on the basis of all the particular facts and circumstances surrounding each individual situation. To establish the RFOA defense, an employer must show that the employment practice was both reasonably designed to further or achieve a legitimate business purpose and administered in a way that reasonably achieves that purpose in light of the particular facts and circumstances that were known, or should have been known, to the employer.

(2) Considerations that are relevant to whether a practice is based on a reasonable factor other than age include, but are not limited to:

(i) The extent to which the factor is related to the employer's stated business purpose;

(ii) The extent to which the employer defined the factor accurately and applied the factor fairly and accurately, including the extent to which managers and supervisors were given guidance or training about how to apply the factor and avoid discrimination;

(iii) The extent to which the employer limited supervisors' discretion to assess employees subjectively, particularly where the criteria that the supervisors were asked to evaluate are known to be subject to negative age-based stereotypes;

(iv) The extent to which the employer assessed the adverse impact of its employment practice on older workers; and

(v) The degree of the harm to individuals within the protected age group, in terms of both the extent of injury and the numbers of persons adversely affected, and the extent to which the employer took steps to reduce the harm, in light of the burden of undertaking such steps.

(3) No specific consideration or combination of considerations need be present for a differentiation to be based on reasonable factors other than age. Nor does the presence of one of these considerations automatically establish the defense.

(f) A differentiation based on the average cost of employing older employees as a group is unlawful except with respect to employee benefit plans which qualify for the section 4(f)(2) exception to the Act.

[46 FR 47726, Sept. 29, 1981, as amended at 77 FR 19095, Mar. 30, 2012]

§ 1625.8 Bona fide seniority systems.

Section 4(f)(2) of the Act provides that

* * * It shall not be unlawful for an employer, employment agency, or labor organization * * * to observe the terms of a bona fide seniority system * * * which is not a subterfuge to evade the purposes of this Act except that no such seniority system * * * shall require or permit the involuntary retirement of any individual specified by section 12(a) of this Act because of the age of such individual. * * *

(a) Though a seniority system may be qualified by such factors as merit, capacity, or ability, any bona fide seniority system must be based on length of service as the primary criterion for the equitable allocation of available employment opportunities and prerogatives among younger and older workers.

(b) Adoption of a purported seniority system which gives those with longer service lesser rights, and results in discharge or less favored treatment to those within the protection of the Act, may, depending upon the circumstances, be a ''subterfuge to evade the purposes'' of the Act.

(c) Unless the essential terms and conditions of an alleged seniority system have been communicated to the affected employees and can be shown to be applied uniformly to all of those affected, regardless of age, it will not be considered a bona fide seniority system within the meaning of the Act.

(d) It should be noted that seniority systems which segregate, classify, or otherwise discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, are prohibited under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, where that Act otherwise applies. The ''bona fides'' of such a system will be closely scrutinized to ensure that such a system is, in fact, bona fide under the ADEA.

[53 FR 15673, May 3, 1988]

§ 1625.9 Prohibition of involuntary retirement.

(a)(1) As originally enacted in 1967, section 4(f)(2) of the Act provided:

It shall not be unlawful * * * to observe the terms of a bona fide seniority system or any bona fide employee benefit plan such as a retirement, pension, or insurance plan, which is not a subterfuge to evade the purposes of this Act, except that no such employee benefit plan shall excuse the failure to hire any individual * * *.

The Department of Labor interpreted the provision as ''Authoriz[ing] involuntary retirement irrespective of age: *Provided*, That such retirement is pursuant to the terms of a retirement or pension plan meeting the requirements of section 4(f)(2).'' See 34 FR 9709 (June 21, 1969). The Department took the position that in order to meet the requirements of section 4(f)(2), the involuntary retirement provision had to be (i) contained in a bona fide pension or retirement plan, (ii) required by the terms of the plan and not optional, and (iii) essential to the plan's economic survival or to some other legitimate business purpose—i.e., the provision was not in the plan as the result of arbitrary discrimination on the basis of age.

(2) As revised by the 1978 amendments, section 4(f)(2) was amended by adding the following clause at the end:

and no such seniority system or employee benefit plan shall require or permit the involuntary retirement of any individual specified by section 12(a) of this Act because of the age of such individual * * *.

The Conference Committee Report expressly states that this amendment is intended ''to make absolutely clear one of the original purposes of this provision, namely, that the exception does not authorize an employer to require or permit involuntary retirement of an employee within the protected age group on account of age'' (H.R. Rept. No. 95–950, p. 8).

(b)(1) The amendment applies to all new and existing seniority systems and employee benefit plans. Accordingly, any system or plan provision requiring or permitting involuntary retirement is unlawful, regardless of whether the provision antedates the 1967 Act or the 1978 amendments.

(2) Where lawsuits pending on the date of enactment (April 6, 1978) or filed thereafter challenge involuntary retirements which occurred either before or after that date, the amendment applies.

(c)(1) The amendment protects all individuals covered by section 12(a) of the Act. Section 12(a) was amended in October of 1986 by the Age Discrimination in Employment Amendments of 1986, Pub. L. 99–592, 100 Stat. 3342 (1986),

which removed the age 70 limit. Section 12(a) provides that the Act's prohibitions shall be limited to individuals who are at least forty years of age. Accordingly, unless a specific exemption applies, an employer can no longer force retirement or otherwise discriminate on the basis of age against an individual because (s)he is 70 or older.

(2) The amendment to section 12(a) of the Act became effective on January 1, 1987, except with respect to any employee subject to a collective bargaining agreement containing a provision that would be superseded by such amendment that was in effect on June 30, 1986, and which terminates after January 1, 1987. In that case, the amendment is effective on the termination of the agreement or January 1, 1990, whichever comes first.

(d) Neither section 4(f)(2) nor any other provision of the Act makes it unlawful for a plan to permit individuals to elect early retirement at a specified age at their own option. Nor is it unlawful for a plan to require early retirement for reasons other than age.

[46 FR 47726, Sept. 29, 1981, as amended at 52 FR 23811, June 25, 1987; 53 FR 5973, Feb. 29, 1988]

§ 1625.10 Costs and benefits under employee benefit plans.

(a)(1) *General.* Section 4(f)(2) of the Act provides that it is not unlawful for an employer, employment agency, or labor organization

> to observe the terms of * * * any bona fide employee benefit plan such as a retirement, pension, or insurance plan, which is not a subterfuge to evade the purposes of this Act, except that no such employee benefit plan shall excuse the failure to hire any individual, and no such * * * employee benefit plan shall require or permit the involuntary retirement of any individual specified by section 12(a) of this Act because of the age of such individuals.

The legislative history of this provision indicates that its purpose is to permit age-based reductions in employee benefit plans where such reductions are justified by significant cost considerations. Accordingly, section 4(f)(2) does not apply, for example, to paid vacations and uninsured paid sick leave, since reductions in these benefits would not be justified by significant cost considerations. Where employee benefit plans do meet the criteria in section 4(f)(2), benefit levels for older workers may be reduced to the extent necessary to achieve approximate equivalency in cost for older and younger workers. A benefit plan will be considered in compliance with the statute where the actual amount of payment made, or cost incurred, in behalf of an older worker is equal to that made or incurred in behalf of a younger worker, even though the older worker may thereby receive a lesser amount of benefits or insurance coverage. Since section 4(f)(2) is an exception from the general non-discrimination provisions of the Act, the burden is on the one seeking to invoke the exception to show that every element has been clearly and unmistakably met. The exception must be narrowly construed. The following sections explain three key elements of the exception:

(i) What a ''bona fide employee benefit plan'' is;

(ii) What it means to ''observe the terms'' of such a plan; and

(iii) What kind of plan, or plan provision, would be considered ''a subterfuge to evade the purposes of [the] Act.''

There is also a discussion of the application of the general rules governing all plans with respect to specific kinds of employee benefit plans.

(2) *Relation of section 4(f)(2) to sections 4(a), 4(b) and 4(c).* Sections 4(a), 4(b) and 4(c) prohibit specified acts of discrimination on the basis of age. Section 4(a) in particular makes it unlawful for an employer to ''discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's age * * *.'' Section 4(f)(2) is an exception to this general prohibition. Where an employer under an employee benefit plan provides the same level of benefits to older workers as to younger workers, there is no violation of section 4(a), and accordingly the practice does not have to be justified under section 4(f)(2).

(b) *Bona fide employee benefit plan.* Section 4(f)(2) applies only to bona fide employee benefit plans. A plan is considered ''bona fide'' if its terms (including cessation of contributions or accruals in the case of retirement income

plans) have been accurately described in writing to all employees and if it actually provides the benefits in accordance with the terms of the plan. Notifying employees promptly of the provisions and changes in an employee benefit plan is essential if they are to know how the plan affects them. For these purposes, it would be sufficient under the ADEA for employers to follow the disclosure requirements of ERISA and the regulations thereunder. The plan must actually provide the benefits its provisions describe, since otherwise the notification of the provisions to employees is misleading and inaccurate. An ''employee benefit plan'' is a plan, such as a retirement, pension, or insurance plan, which provides employees with what are frequently referred to as ''fringe benefits.'' The term does not refer to wages or salary in cash; neither section 4(f)(2) nor any other section of the Act excuses the payment of lower wages or salary to older employees on account of age. Whether or not any particular employee benefit plan may lawfully provide lower benefits to older employees on account of age depends on whether all of the elements of the exception have been met. An ''employee-pay-all'' employee benefit plan is one of the ''terms, conditions, or privileges of employment'' with respect to which discrimination on the basis of age is forbidden under section 4(a)(1). In such a plan, benefits for older workers may be reduced only to the extent and according to the same principles as apply to other plans under section 4(f)(2).

(c) *''To observe the terms'' of a plan.* In order for a bona fide employee benefit plan which provides lower benefits to older employees on account of age to be within the section 4(f)(2) exception, the lower benefits must be provided in ''observ[ance of] the terms of'' the plan. As this statutory text makes clear, the section 4(f)(2) exception is limited to otherwise discriminatory actions which are actually prescribed by the terms of a bona fide employee benefit plan. Where the employer, employment agency, or labor organization is not required by the express provisions of the plan to provide lesser benefits to older workers, section 4(f)(2) does not apply. Important purposes are served by this requirement. Where a discriminatory policy is an express term of a benefit plan, employees presumably have some opportunity to know of the policy and to plan (or protest) accordingly. Moreover, the requirement that the discrimination actually be prescribed by a plan assures that the particular plan provision will be equally applied to all employees of the same age. Where a discriminatory provision is an optional term of the plan, it permits individual, discretionary acts of discrimination, which do not fall within the section 4(f)(2) exception.

(d) *Subterfuge.* In order for a bona fide employee benefit plan which prescribes lower benefits for older employees on account of age to be within the section 4(f)(2) exception, it must not be ''a subterfuge to evade the purposes of [the] Act.'' In general, a plan or plan provision which prescribes lower benefits for older employees on account of age is not a ''subterfuge'' within the meaning of section 4(f)(2), provided that the lower level of benefits is justified by age-related cost considerations. (The only exception to this general rule is with respect to certain retirement plans. See paragraph (f)(4) of this section.) There are certain other requirements that must be met in order for a plan not to be a subterfuge. These requirements are set forth below.

(1) *Cost data—general.* Cost data used in justification of a benefit plan which provides lower benefits to older employees on account of age must be valid and reasonable. This standard is met where an employer has cost data which show the actual cost to it of providing the particular benefit (or benefits) in question over a representative period of years. An employer may rely in cost data for its own employees over such a period, or on cost data for a larger group of similarly situated employees. Sometimes, as a result of experience rating or other causes, an employer incurs costs that differ significantly from costs for a group of similarly situated employees. Such an employer may not rely on cost data for the similarly situated employees where such reliance would result in significantly lower benefits for its own older employees. Where reliable cost information is not available, reasonable projections made

from existing cost data meeting the standards set forth above will be considered acceptable.

(2) *Cost data—Individual benefit basis and ''benefit package'' basis.* Cost comparisons and adjustments under section 4(f)(2) must be made on a benefit-by-benefit basis or on a ''benefit package'' basis, as described below.

(i) *Benefit-by-benefit basis.* Adjustments made on a benefit-by-benefit basis must be made in the amount or level of a specific form of benefit for a specific event or contingency. For example, higher group term life insurance costs for older workers would justify a corresponding reduction in the amount of group term life insurance coverage for older workers, on the basis of age. However, a benefit-by-benefit approach would not justify the substitution of one form of benefit for another, even though both forms of benefit are designed for the same contingency, such as death. See paragraph (f)(1) of this section.

(ii) *''Benefit package'' basis.* As an alternative to the benefit-by-benefit basis, cost comparisons and adjustments under section 4(f)(2) may be made on a limited ''benefit package'' basis. Under this approach, subject to the limitations described below, cost comparisons and adjustments can be made with respect to section 4(f)(2) plans in the aggregate. This alternative basis provides greater flexibility than a benefit-by-benefit basis in order to carry out the declared statutory purpose ''to help employers and workers find ways of meeting problems arising from the impact of age on employment.'' A ''benefit package'' approach is an alternative approach consistent with this purpose and with the general purpose of section 4(f)(2) only if it is not used to reduce the cost to the employer or the favorability to the employees of overall employee benefits for older employees. A ''benefit package'' approach used for either of these purposes would be a subterfuge to evade the purposes of the Act. In order to assure that such a ''benefit package'' approach is not abused and is consistent with the legislative intent, it is subject to the limitations described in paragraph (f), which also includes a general example.

(3) *Cost data—five year maximum basis.* Cost comparisons and adjustments under section 4(f)(2) may be made on the basis of age brackets of up to 5 years. Thus a particular benefit may be reduced for employees of any age within the protected age group by an amount no greater than that which could be justified by the additional cost to provide them with the same level of the benefit as younger employees within a specified five-year age group immediately preceding theirs. For example, where an employer chooses to provide unreduced group term life insurance benefits until age 60, benefits for employees who are between 60 and 65 years of age may be reduced only to the extent necessary to achieve approximate equivalency in costs with employees who are 55 to 60 years old. Similarly, any reductions in benefit levels for 65 to 70 year old employees cannot exceed an amount which is proportional to the additional costs for their coverage over 60 to 65 year old employees.

(4) *Employee contributions in support of employee benefit plans*—(i) *As a condition of employment.* An older employee within the protected age group may not be required as a condition of employment to make greater contributions than a younger employee in support of an employee benefit plan. Such a requirement would be in effect a mandatory reduction in take-home pay, which is never authorized by section 4(f)(2), and would impose an impediment to employment in violation of the specific restrictions in section 4(f)(2).

(ii) *As a condition of participation in a voluntary employee benefit plan.* An older employee within the protected age group may be required as a condition of participation in a voluntary employee benefit plan to make a greater contribution than a younger employee only if the older employee is not thereby required to bear a greater proportion of the total premium cost (employer-paid and employee-paid) than the younger employee. Otherwise the requirement would discriminate against the older employee by making compensation in the form of an employer contribution available on less favorable terms than for the younger

employee and denying that compensation altogether to an older employee unwilling or unable to meet the less favorable terms. Such discrimination is not authorized by section 4(f)(2). This principle applies to three different contribution arrangements as follows:

(A) *Employee-pay-all plans.* Older employees, like younger employees, may be required to contribute as a condition of participation up to the full premium cost for their age.

(B) *Non-contributory (''employer-pay-all'') plans.* Where younger employees are not required to contribute any portion of the total premium cost, older employees may not be required to contribute any portion.

(C) *Contributory plans.* In these plans employers and participating employees share the premium cost. The required contributions of participants may increase with age so long as the *proportion* of the total premium required to be paid by the participants does not increase with age.

(iii) *As an option in order to receive an unreduced benefit.* An older employee may be given the option, as an individual, to make the additional contribution necessary to receive the same level of benefits as a younger employee (provided that the contemplated reduction in benefits is otherwise justified by section 4(f)(2)).

(5) *Forfeiture clauses.* Clauses in employee benefit plans which state that litigation or participation in any manner in a formal proceeding by an employee will result in the forfeiture of his rights are unlawful insofar as they may be applied to those who seek redress under the Act. This is by reason of section 4(d) which provides that it is unlawful for an employer, employment agency, or labor organization to discriminate against any individual because such individual ''has made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or litigation under this Act.''

(6) *Refusal to hire clauses.* Any provision of an employee benefit plan which requires or permits the refusal to hire an individual specified in section 12(a) of the Act on the basis of age is a subterfuge to evade the purposes of the Act and cannot be excused under section 4(f)(2).

(7) *Involuntary retirement clauses.* Any provision of an employee benefit plan which requires or permits the involuntary retirement of any individual specified in section 12(a) of the Act on the basis of age is a subterfuge to evade the purpose of the Act and cannot be excused under section 4(f)(2).

(e) *Benefits provided by the Government.* An employer does not violate the Act by permitting certain benefits to be provided by the Government, even though the availability of such benefits may be based on age. For example, it is not necessary for an employer to provide health benefits which are otherwise provided to certain employees by Medicare. However, the availability of benefits from the Government will not justify a reduction in employer-provided benefits if the result is that, taking the employer-provided and Government-provided benefits together, an older employee is entitled to a lesser benefit of any type (including coverage for family and/or dependents) than a similarly situated younger employee. For example, the availability of certain benefits to an older employee under Medicare will not justify denying an older employee a benefit which is provided to younger employees and is not provided to the older employee by Medicare.

(f) *Application of section 4(f)(2) to various employee benefit plans*—(1) *Benefit-by-benefit approach.* This portion of the interpretation discusses how a benefit-by-benefit approach would apply to four of the most common types of employee benefit plans.

(i) *Life insurance.* It is not uncommon for life insurance coverage to remain constant until a specified age, frequently 65, and then be reduced. This practice will not violate the Act (even if reductions start before age 65), provided that the reduction for an employee of a particular age is no greater than is justified by the increased cost of coverage for that employee's specific age bracket encompassing no more than five years. It should be noted that a total denial of life insurance, on the basis of age, would not be justified under a benefit-by-benefit analysis.

However, it is not unlawful for life insurance coverage to cease upon separation from service.

(ii) *Long-term disability.* Under a benefit-by-benefit approach, where employees who are disabled at younger ages are entitled to long-term disability benefits, there is no cost—based justification for denying such benefits altogether, on the basis of age, to employees who are disabled at older ages. It is not unlawful to cut off long-term disability benefits and coverage on the basis of some non-age factor, such as recovery from disability. Reductions on the basis of age in the level or duration of benefits available for disability are justifiable only on the basis of age-related cost considerations as set forth elsewhere in this section. An employer which provides long-term disability coverage to all employees may avoid any increases in the cost to it that such coverage for older employees would entail by reducing the level of benefits available to older employees. An employer may also avoid such cost increases by reducing the duration of benefits available to employees who become disabled at older ages, without reducing the level of benefits. In this connection, the Department would not assert a violation where the level of benefits is not reduced and the duration of benefits is reduced in the following manner:

(A) With respect to disabilities which occur at age 60 or less, benefits cease at age 65.

(B) With respect to disabilities which occur after age 60, benefits cease 5 years after disablement. Cost data may be produced to support other patterns of reduction as well.

(iii) *Retirement plans*—(A) *Participation.* No employee hired prior to normal retirement age may be excluded from a defined contribution plan. With respect to defined benefit plans not subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), Pub. L. 93–406, 29 U.S.C. 1001, 1003 (a) and (b), an employee hired at an age more than 5 years prior to normal retirement age may not be excluded from such a plan unless the exclusion is justifiable on the basis of cost considerations as set forth elsewhere in this section. With respect to defined benefit plans subject to ERISA, such an exclusion would be unlawful in any case. An employee hired less than 5 years prior to normal retirement age may be excluded from a defined benefit plan, regardless of whether or not the plan is covered by ERISA. Similarly, any employee hired after normal retirement age may be excluded from a defined benefit plan.

(2) *''Benefit package'' approach.* A ''benefit package'' approach to compliance under section 4(f)(2) offers greater flexibility than a benefit-by-benefit approach by permitting deviations from a benefit-by-benefit approach so long as the overall result is no lesser cost to the employer *and* no less favorable benefits for employees. As previously noted, in order to assure that such an approach is used for the benefit of older workers and not to their detriment, and is otherwise consistent with the legislative intent, it is subject to limitations as set forth below:

(i) A benefit package approach shall apply only to employee benefit plans which fall within section 4(f)(2).

(ii) A benefit package approach shall not apply to a retirement or pension plan. The 1978 legislative history sets forth specific and comprehensive rules governing such plans, which have been adopted above. These rules are not tied to actuarially significant cost considerations but are intended to deal with the special funding arrangements of retirement or pension plans. Variations from these special rules are therefore not justified by variations from the cost-based benefit-by-benefit approach in other benefit plans, nor may variations from the special rules governing pension and retirement plans justify variations from the benefit-by-benefit approach in other benefit plans.

(iii) A benefit package approach shall not be used to justify reductions in health benefits greater than would be justified under a benefit-by-benefit approach. Such benefits appear to be of particular importance to older workers in meeting ''problems arising from the impact of age'' and were of particular concern to Congress. Therefore, the ''benefit package'' approach may not be used to reduce health insurance benefits by more than is warranted by the increase in the cost to the employer of

those benefits alone. Any greater reduction would be a subterfuge to evade the purpose of the Act.

(iv) A benefit reduction greater than would be justified under a benefit-by-benefit approach must be offset by another benefit available to the same employees. No employees may be deprived because of age of one benefit without an offsetting benefit being made available to them.

(v) Employers who wish to justify benefit reductions under a benefit package approach must be prepared to produce data to show that those reductions are fully justified. Thus employers must be able to show that deviations from a benefit-by-benefit approach do not result in lesser cost to them or less favorable benefits to their employees. A general example consistent with these limitations may be given. Assume two employee benefit plans, providing Benefit ''A'' and Benefit ''B.'' Both plans fall within section 4(f)(2), and neither is a retirement or pension plan subject to special rules. Both benefits are available to all employees. Age-based cost increases would justify a 10% decrease in both benefits on a benefit-by-benefit basis. The affected employees would, however, find it more favorable—that is, more consistent with meeting their needs—for no reduction to be made in Benefit ''A'' and a greater reduction to be made in Benefit ''B.'' This ''trade-off'' would not result in a reduction in health benefits. The ''trade-off'' may therefore be made. The details of the ''trade-off'' depend on data on the relative cost to the employer of the two benefits. If the data show that Benefit ''A'' and Benefit ''B'' cost the same, Benefit ''B'' may be reduced up to 20% if Benefit ''A'' is unreduced. If the data show that Benefit ''A'' costs only half as much as Benefit ''B'', however, Benefit ''B'' may be reduced up to only 15% if Benefit ''A'' is unreduced, since a greater reduction in Benefit ''B'' would result in an impermissible reduction in total benefit costs.

(g) *Relation of ADEA to State laws.* The ADEA does not preempt State age discrimination in employment laws. However, the failure of the ADEA to preempt such laws does not affect the issue of whether section 514 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) preempts State laws which related to employee benefit plans.

[44 FR 30658, May 25, 1979, as amended at 52 FR 8448, Mar. 18, 1987. Redesignated and amended at 52 FR 23812, June 25, 1987; 53 FR 5973, Feb. 29, 1988]

§ 1625.11 Exemption for employees serving under a contract of unlimited tenure.

(a)(1) Section 12(d) of the Act, added by the 1986 amendments, provides:

> Nothing in this Act shall be construed to prohibit compulsory retirement of any employee who has attained 70 years of age, and who is serving under a contract of unlimited tenure (or similar arrangement providing for unlimited tenure) at an institution of higher education (as defined by section 1201(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965).

(2) This exemption from the Act's protection of covered individuals took effect on January 1, 1987, and is repealed on December 31, 1993 (see section 6 of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act Amendments of 1986, Pub. L. 99–592, 100 Stat. 3342). The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is required to enter into an agreement with the National Academy of Sciences, for the conduct of a study to analyze the potential consequences of the elimination of mandatory retirement on institutions of higher education.

(b) Since section 12(d) is an exemption from the nondiscrimination requirements of the Act, the burden is on the one seeking to invoke the exemption to show that every element has been clearly and unmistakably met. Moreover, as with other exemptions from the ADEA, this exemption must be narrowly construed.

(c) Section 1201(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, and set forth in 20 U.S.C. 1141(a), provides in pertinent part:

> The term *institution of higher education* means an educational institution in any State which (1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate, (2) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education, (3) provides an educational program for which it awards a

bachelor's degree or provides not less than a two-year program which is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree, (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution, and (5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association or, if not so accredited, (A) is an institution with respect to which the Commissioner has determined that there is satisfactory assurance, considering the resources available to the institution, the period of time, if any, during which it has operated, the effort it is making to meet accreditation standards, and the purpose for which this determination is being made, that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time, or (B) is an institution whose credits are accepted, on transfer, by not less than three institutions which are so accredited, for credit on the same basis as if transferred from an institution so accredited.

The definition encompasses almost all public and private universities and two and four year colleges. The omitted portion of the text of section 1201(a) refers largely on one-year technical schools which generally do not grant tenure to employees but which, if they do, are also eligible to claim the exemption.

(d)(1) Use of the term *any employee* indicates that application of the exemption is not limited to teachers, who are traditional recipients of tenure. The exemption may also be available with respect to other groups, such as academic deans, scientific researchers, professional librarians and counseling staff, who frequently have tenured status.

(2) The Conference Committee Report on the 1978 amendments expressly states that the exemption does not apply to Federal employees covered by section 15 of the Act (H.R. Rept. No. 95–950, p. 10).

(e)(1) The phrase *unlimited tenure* is not defined in the Act. However, the almost universally accepted definition of academic ''tenure'' is an arrangement under which certain appointments in an institution of higher education are continued until retirement for age of physical disability, subject to dismissal for adequate cause or under extraordinary circumstances on account of financial exigency or change of institutional program. Adopting that definition, it is evident that the word *unlimited* refers to the duration of tenure. Therefore, a contract (or other similar arrangement) which is limited to a specific term (for example, one year or 10 years) will not meet the requirements of the exemption.

(2) The legislative history shows that Congress intented the exemption to apply only where the minimum rights and privileges traditionally associated with tenure are guaranteed to an employee by contract or similar arrangement. While tenure policies and practices vary greatly from one institution to another, the minimum standards set forth in the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, jointly developed by the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors, have enjoyed widespread adoption or endorsement. The 1940 Statement of Principles on academic tenure provides as follows:

(a) After the expiration of a probationary period, teachers or investigators should have permanent or continuous tenure, and their service should be terminated only for adequate cause, except in the case of retirement for age, or under extraordinary circumstances because of financial exigencies.

In the interpretation of this principle it is understood that the following represents acceptable academic practice:

(1) The precise terms and conditions of every appointment should be stated in writing and be in the possession of both institution and teacher before the appointment is consumated.

(2) Beginning with appointment to the rank of full-time instructor or a higher rank, the probationary period should not exceed seven years, including within this period full-time service in all institutions of higher education; but subject to the proviso that when, after a term of probationary service of more than three years in one or more institutions, a teacher is called to another institution it may be agreed in writing that his new appointment is for a probationary period of not more than four years, even though thereby the person's total probationary period in the academic profession is extended beyond the normal maximum of seven years. Notice should be given at least one year prior to the expiration of the probationary period if the teacher is not to be continued in service after the expiration of that period.

(3) During the probationary period a teacher should have the academic freedom that all other members of the faculty have.

(4) Termination for cause of a continuous appointment, or the dismissal for cause of a

teacher previous to the expiration of a term appointment, should, if possible, be considered by both a faculty committee and the governing board of the institution. In all cases where the facts are in dispute, the accused teacher should be informed before the hearing in writing of the charges against him and should have the opportunity to be heard in his own defense by all bodies that pass judgment upon his case. He should be permitted to have with him an advisor of his own choosing who may act as counsel. There should be a full stenographic record of the hearing available to the parties concerned. In the hearing of charges of incompetence the testimony should include that of teachers and other scholars, either from his own or from other institutions. Teachers on continuous appointment who are dismissed for reasons not involving moral turpitude should receive their salaries for at least a year from the date of notification of dismissal whether or not they are continued in their duties at the institution.

(5) Termination of a continuous appointment because of financial exigency should be demonstrably bona fide.

(3) A contract or similar arrangement which meets the standards in the 1940 Statement of Principles will satisfy the tenure requirements of the exemption. However, a tenure arrangement will not be deemed inadequate solely because it fails to meet these standards in every respect. For example, a tenure plan will not be deemed inadequate solely because it includes a probationary period somewhat longer than seven years. Of course, the greater the deviation from the standards in the 1940 Statement of Principles, the less likely it is that the employee in question will be deemed subject to ''unlimited tenure'' within the meaning of the exemption. Whether or not a tenure arrangement is adequate to satisfy the requirements of the exemption must be determined on the basis of the facts of each case.

(f) Employees who are not assured of a continuing appointment either by contract of unlimited tenure or other similar arrangement (such as a State statute) would not, of course, be exempted from the prohibitions against compulsory retirement, even if they perform functions identical to those performed by employees with appropriate tenure.

(g) An employee within the exemption can lawfully be forced to retire on account of age at age 70 (see paragraph (a)(1) of this section). In addition, the employer is free to retain such employees, either in the same position or status or in a different position or status: *Provided*, That the employee voluntarily accepts this new position or status. For example, an employee who falls within the exemption may be offered a nontenured position or part-time employment. An employee who accepts a nontenured position or part-time employment, however, may not be treated any less favorably, on account of age, than any similarly situated younger employee (unless such less favorable treatment is excused by an exception to the Act).

[44 FR 66799, Nov. 21, 1979; 45 FR 43704, June 30, 1980, as amended at 53 FR 5973, Feb. 29, 1988]

§ 1625.12 Exemption for bona fide executive or high policymaking employees.

(a) Section 12(c)(1) of the Act, added by the 1978 amendments and as amended in 1984 and 1986, provides:

> Nothing in this Act shall be construed to prohibit compulsory retirement of any employee who has attained 65 years of age, and who, for the 2-year period immediately before retirement, is employed in a bona fide executive or higher policymaking position, if such employee is entitled to an immediate nonforfeitable annual retirement benefit from a pension, profit-sharing, savings, or deferred compensation plan, or any combination of such plans, of the employer of such employee which equals, in the aggregate, at least $44,000.

(b) Since this provision is an exemption from the non-discrimination requirements of the Act, the burden is on the one seeking to invoke the exemption to show that every element has been clearly and unmistakably met. Moreover, as with other exemptions from the Act, this exemption must be narrowly construed.

(c) An employee within the exemption can lawfully be forced to retire on account of age at age 65 or above. In addition, the employer is free to retain such employees, either in the same position or status or in a different position or status. For example, an employee who falls within the exemption may be offered a position of lesser status or a part-time position. An employee who accepts such a new status

or position, however, may not be treated any less favorably, on account of age, than any similarly situated younger employee.

(d)(1) In order for an employee to qualify as a ''bona fide executive,'' the employer must initially show that the employee satisfies the definition of a bona fide executive set forth in §541.1 of this chapter. Each of the requirements in paragraphs (a) through (e) of §541.1 must be satisfied, regardless of the level of the employee's salary or compensation.

(2) Even if an employee qualifies as an executive under the definition in §541.1 of this chapter, the exemption from the ADEA may not be claimed unless the employee also meets the further criteria specified in the Conference Committee Report in the form of examples (see H.R. Rept. No. 95–950, p. 9). The examples are intended to make clear that the exemption does not apply to middle-management employees, no matter how great their retirement income, but only to a very few top level employees who exercise substantial executive authority over a significant number of employees and a large volume of business. As stated in the Conference Report (H.R. Rept. No. 95–950, p. 9):

> Typically the head of a significant and substantial local or regional operation of a corporation [or other business organization], such as a major production facility or retail establishment, but not the head of a minor branch, warehouse or retail store, would be covered by the term ''bona fide executive.'' Individuals at higher levels in the corporate organizational structure who possess comparable or greater levels of responsibility and authority as measured by established and recognized criteria would also be covered.
>
> The heads of major departments or divisions of corporations [or other business organizations] are usually located at corporate or regional headquarters. With respect to employees whose duties are associated with corporate headquarters operations, such as finance, marketing, legal, production and manufacturing (or in a corporation organized on a product line basis, the management of product lines), the definition would cover employees who head those divisions.
>
> In a large organization the immediate subordinates of the heads of these divisions sometimes also exercise executive authority, within the meaning of this exemption. The conferees intend the definition to cover such employees if they possess responsibility which is comparable to or greater than that possessed by the head of a significant and substantial local operation who meets the definition.

(e) The phrase ''high policymaking position,'' according to the Conference Report (H.R. Rept. No. 95–950, p. 10), is limited to ''* * * certain top level employees who are not 'bona fide executives' * * *.'' Specifically, these are:

> * * * individuals who have little or no line authority but whose position and responsibility are such that they play a significant role in the development of corporate policy and effectively recommend the implementation thereof.
>
> For example, the chief economist or the chief research scientist of a corporation typically has little line authority. His duties would be primarily intellectual as opposed to executive or managerial. His responsibility would be to evaluate significant economic or scientific trends and issues, to develop and recommend policy direction to the top executive officers of the corporation, and he would have a significant impact on the ultimate decision on such policies by virtue of his expertise and direct access to the decisionmakers. Such an employee would meet the definition of a ''high policymaking'' employee.

On the other hand, as this description makes clear, the support personnel of a ''high policymaking'' employee would not be subject to the exemption even if they supervise the development, and draft the recommendation, of various policies submitted by their supervisors.

(f) In order for the exemption to apply to a particular employee, the employee must have been in a ''bona fide executive or high policymaking position,'' as those terms are defined in this section, for the two-year period immediately before retirement. Thus, an employee who holds two or more different positions during the two-year period is subject to the exemption only if each such job is an executive or high policymaking position.

(g) The Conference Committee Report expressly states that the exemption is not applicable to Federal employees covered by section 15 of the Act (H.R. Rept. No. 95–950, p. 10).

(h) The ''annual retirement benefit,'' to which covered employees must be entitled, is the sum of amounts payable during each one-year period from the

date on which such benefits first become receivable by the retiree. Once established, the annual period upon which calculations are based may not be changed from year to year.

(i) The annual retirement benefit must be immediately available to the employee to be retired pursuant to the exemption. For purposes of determining compliance, ''immediate'' means that the payment of plan benefits (in a lump sum or the first of a series of periodic payments) must occur not later than 60 days after the effective date of the retirement in question. The fact that an employee will receive benefits only after expiration of the 60-day period will not preclude his retirement pursuant to the exemption, if the employee could have elected to receive benefits within that period.

(j)(1) The annual retirement benefit must equal, in the aggregate, at least $44,000. The manner of determining whether this requirement has been satisfied is set forth in §1627.17(c).

(2) In determining whether the aggregate annual retirement benefit equals at least $44,000, the only benefits which may be counted are those authorized by and provided under the terms of a pension, profit-sharing, savings, or deferred compensation plan. (Regulations issued pursuant to section 12(c)(2) of the Act, regarding the manner of calculating the amount of qualified retirement benefits for purposes of the exemption, are set forth in §1627.17 of this chapter.)

(k)(1) The annual retirement benefit must be ''nonforfeitable.'' Accordingly, the exemption may not be applied to any employee subject to plan provisions which could cause the cessation of payments to a retiree or result in the reduction of benefits to less than $44,000 in any one year. For example, where a plan contains a provision under which benefits would be suspended if a retiree engages in litigation against the former employer, or obtains employment with a competitor of the former employer, the retirement benefit will be deemed to be forfeitable. However, retirement benefits will not be deemed forfeitable solely because the benefits are discontinued or suspended for reasons permitted under section 411(a)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

(2) An annual retirement benefit will not be deemed forfeitable merely because the minimum statutory benefit level is not guaranteed against the possibility of plan bankruptcy or is subject to benefit restrictions in the event of early termination of the plan in accordance with Treasury Regulation 1.401–4(c). However, as of the effective date of the retirement in question, there must be at least a reasonable expectation that the plan will meet its obligations.

(Sec. 12(c)(1) of the Age Discrimination In Employment Act of 1967, as amended by sec. 802(c)(1) of the Older Americans Act Amendments of 1984, Pub. L. 98–459, 98 Stat. 1792))

[44 FR 66800, Nov. 21, 1979; 45 FR 43704, June 30, 1980, as amended at 50 FR 2544, Jan. 17, 1985; 53 FR 5973, Feb. 29, 1988]

Subpart B—Substantive Regulations

§ 1625.21 Apprenticeship programs.

All apprenticeship programs, including those apprenticeship programs created or maintained by joint labor-management organizations, are subject to the prohibitions of sec. 4 of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 623. Age limitations in apprenticeship programs are valid only if excepted under sec. 4(f)(1) of the Act, 29 U.S.C. 623(f)(1), or exempted by the Commission under sec. 9 of the Act, 29 U.S.C. 628, in accordance with the procedures set forth in 29 CFR 1625.30.

[80 FR 60540, Oct. 7, 2015]

§ 1625.22 Waivers of rights and claims under the ADEA.

(a) *Introduction.* (1) Congress amended the ADEA in 1990 to clarify the prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of age. In Title II of OWBPA, Congress addressed waivers of rights and claims under the ADEA, amending section 7 of the ADEA by adding a new subsection (f).

(2) Section 7(f)(1) of the ADEA expressly provides that waivers may be valid and enforceable under the ADEA only if the waiver is ''knowing and voluntary''. Sections 7(f)(1) and 7(f)(2) of

the ADEA set out the minimum requirements for determining whether a waiver is knowing and voluntary.

(3) Other facts and circumstances may bear on the question of whether the waiver is knowing and voluntary, as, for example, if there is a material mistake, omission, or misstatement in the information furnished by the employer to an employee in connection with the waiver.

(4) The rules in this section apply to all waivers of ADEA rights and claims, regardless of whether the employee is employed in the private or public sector, including employment by the United States Government.

(b) *Wording of Waiver Agreements.* (1) Section 7(f)(1)(A) of the ADEA provides, as part of the minimum requirements for a knowing and voluntary waiver, that:

> The waiver is part of an agreement between the individual and the employer that is written in a manner calculated to be understood by such individual, or by the average individual eligible to participate.

(2) The entire waiver agreement must be in writing.

(3) Waiver agreements must be drafted in plain language geared to the level of understanding of the individual party to the agreement or individuals eligible to participate. Employers should take into account such factors as the level of comprehension and education of typical participants. Consideration of these factors usually will require the limitation or elimination of technical jargon and of long, complex sentences.

(4) The waiver agreement must not have the effect of misleading, misinforming, or failing to inform participants and affected individuals. Any advantages or disadvantages described shall be presented without either exaggerating the benefits or minimizing the limitations.

(5) Section 7(f)(1)(H) of the ADEA, relating to exit incentive or other employment termination programs offered to a group or class of employees, also contains a requirement that information be conveyed ''in writing in a manner calculated to be understood by the average participant.'' The same standards applicable to the similar language in section 7(f)(1)(A) of the ADEA apply here as well.

(6) Section 7(f)(1)(B) of the ADEA provides, as part of the minimum requirements for a knowing and voluntary waiver, that ''the waiver specifically refers to rights or claims under this Act.'' Pursuant to this subsection, the waiver agreement must refer to the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) by name in connection with the waiver.

(7) Section 7(f)(1)(E) of the ADEA requires that an individual must be ''advised in writing to consult with an attorney prior to executing the agreement.''

(c) *Waiver of future rights.* (1) Section 7(f)(1)(C) of the ADEA provides that:

> A waiver may not be considered knowing and voluntary unless at a minimum . . . the individual does not waive rights or claims that may arise after the date the waiver is executed.

(2) The waiver of rights or claims that arise following the execution of a waiver is prohibited. However, section 7(f)(1)(C) of the ADEA does not bar, in a waiver that otherwise is consistent with statutory requirements, the enforcement of agreements to perform future employment-related actions such as the employee's agreement to retire or otherwise terminate employment at a future date.

(d) *Consideration.* (1) Section 7(f)(1)(D) of the ADEA states that:

> A waiver may not be considered knowing and voluntary unless at a minimum * * * the individual waives rights or claims only in exchange for consideration in addition to anything of value to which the individual already is entitled.

(2) ''Consideration in addition'' means anything of value in addition to that to which the individual is already entitled in the absence of a waiver.

(3) If a benefit or other thing of value was eliminated in contravention of law or contract, express or implied, the subsequent offer of such benefit or thing of value in connection with a waiver will not constitute ''consideration'' for purposes of section 7(f)(1) of the ADEA. Whether such elimination as to one employee or group of employees is in contravention of law or contract as to other employees, or to that

individual employee at some later time, may vary depending on the facts and circumstances of each case.

(4) An employer is not required to give a person age 40 or older a greater amount of consideration than is given to a person under the age of 40, solely because of that person's membership in the protected class under the ADEA.

(e) *Time periods.* (1) Section 7(f)(1)(F) of the ADEA states that:

> A waiver may not be considered knowing and voluntary unless at a minimum * * *
>
> (i) The individual is given a period of at least 21 days within which to consider the agreement; or
>
> (ii) If a waiver is requested in connection with an exit incentive or other employment termination program offered to a group or class of employees, the individual is given a period of at least 45 days within which to consider the agreement.

(2) Section 7(f)(1)(G) of the ADEA states:

> A waiver may not be considered knowing and voluntary unless at a minimum . . . the agreement provides that for a period of at least 7 days following the execution of such agreement, the individual may revoke the agreement, and the agreement shall not become effective or enforceable until the revocation period has expired.

(3) The term ''exit incentive or other employment termination program'' includes both voluntary and involuntary programs.

(4) The 21 or 45 day period runs from the date of the employer's final offer. Material changes to the final offer restart the running of the 21 or 45 day period; changes made to the final offer that are not material do not restart the running of the 21 or 45 day period. The parties may agree that changes, whether material or immaterial, do not restart the running of the 21 or 45 day period.

(5) The 7 day revocation period cannot be shortened by the parties, by agreement or otherwise.

(6) An employee may sign a release prior to the end of the 21 or 45 day time period, thereby commencing the mandatory 7 day revocation period. This is permissible as long as the employee's decision to accept such shortening of time is knowing and voluntary and is not induced by the employer through fraud, misrepresentation, a threat to withdraw or alter the offer prior to the expiration of the 21 or 45 day time period, or by providing different terms to employees who sign the release prior to the expiration of such time period. However, if an employee signs a release before the expiration of the 21 or 45 day time period, the employer may expedite the processing of the consideration provided in exchange for the waiver.

(f) *Informational requirements.* (1) Introduction. (i) Section 7(f)(1)(H) of the ADEA provides that:

> A waiver may not be considered knowing and voluntary unless at a minimum . . . if a waiver is requested in connection with an exit incentive or other employment termination program offered to a group or class of employees, the employer (at the commencement of the period specified in subparagraph (F)) [which provides time periods for employees to consider the waiver] informs the individual in writing in a manner calculated to be understood by the average individual eligible to participate, as to—
>
> (i) Any class, unit, or group of individuals covered by such program, any eligibility factors for such program, and any time limits applicable to such program; and
>
> (ii) The job titles and ages of all individuals eligible or selected for the program, and the ages of all individuals in the same job classification or organizational unit who are not eligible or selected for the program.

(ii) Section 7(f)(1)(H) of the ADEA addresses two principal issues: to whom information must be provided, and what information must be disclosed to such individuals.

(iii)(A) Section 7(f)(1)(H) of the ADEA references two types of ''programs'' under which employers seeking waivers must make written disclosures: ''exit incentive programs'' and ''other employment termination programs.'' Usually an ''exit incentive program'' is a voluntary program offered to a group or class of employees where such employees are offered consideration in addition to anything of value to which the individuals are already entitled (hereinafter in this section, ''additional consideration'') in exchange for their decision to resign voluntarily and sign a waiver. Usually ''other employment termination program'' refers to a group or class of employees who were involuntarily terminated and who are offered additional consideration in return for their decision to sign a waiver.

(B) The question of the existence of a ''program'' will be decided based upon the facts and circumstances of each case. A ''program'' exists when an employer offers additional consideration for the signing of a waiver pursuant to an exit incentive or other employment termination (e.g., a reduction in force) to two or more employees. Typically, an involuntary termination program is a standardized formula or package of benefits that is available to two or more employees, while an exit incentive program typically is a standardized formula or package of benefits designed to induce employees to sever their employment voluntarily. In both cases, the terms of the programs generally are not subject to negotiation between the parties.

(C) Regardless of the type of program, the scope of the terms ''class,'' ''unit,'' ''group,'' ''job classification,'' and ''organizational unit'' is determined by examining the ''decisional unit'' at issue. (See paragraph (f)(3) of this section, ''The Decisional Unit.'')

(D) A ''program'' for purposes of the ADEA need not constitute an ''employee benefit plan'' for purposes of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). An employer may or may not have an ERISA severance plan in connection with its OWBPA program.

(iv) The purpose of the informational requirements is to provide an employee with enough information regarding the program to allow the employee to make an informed choice whether or not to sign a waiver agreement.

(2) To whom must the information be given. The required information must be given to each person in the decisional unit who is asked to sign a waiver agreement.

(3) The decisional unit. (i)(A) The terms ''class,'' ''unit,'' or ''group'' in section 7(f)(1)(H)(i) of the ADEA and ''job classification or organizational unit'' in section 7(f)(1)(H)(ii) of the ADEA refer to examples of categories or groupings of employees affected by a program within an employer's particular organizational structure. The terms are not meant to be an exclusive list of characterizations of an employer's organization.

(B) When identifying the scope of the ''class, unit, or group,'' and ''job classification or organizational unit,'' an employer should consider its organizational structure and decision-making process. A ''decisional unit'' is that portion of the employer's organizational structure from which the employer chose the persons who would be offered consideration for the signing of a waiver and those who would not be offered consideration for the signing of a waiver. The term ''decisional unit'' has been developed to reflect the process by which an employer chose certain employees for a program and ruled out others from that program.

(ii)(A) The variety of terms used in section 7(f)(1)(H) of the ADEA demonstrates that employers often use differing terminology to describe their organizational structures. When identifying the population of the decisional unit, the employer acts on a case-by-case basis, and thus the determination of the appropriate class, unit, or group, and job classification or organizational unit for purposes of section 7(f)(1)(H) of the ADEA also must be made on a case-by-case basis.

(B) The examples in paragraph (f)(3)(iii), of this section demonstrate that in appropriate cases some subgroup of a facility's work force may be the decisional unit. In other situations, it may be appropriate for the decisional unit to comprise several facilities. However, as the decisional unit is typically no broader than the facility, in general the disclosure need be no broader than the facility. ''Facility'' as it is used throughout this section generally refers to place or location. However, in some circumstances terms such as ''school,'' ''plant,'' or ''complex'' may be more appropriate.

(C) Often, when utilizing a program an employer is attempting to reduce its workforce at a particular facility in an effort to eliminate what it deems to be excessive overhead, expenses, or costs from its organization at that facility. If the employer's goal is the reduction of its workforce at a particular facility and that employer undertakes a decision-making process by which certain employees of the facility are selected for a program, and others are not selected for a program, then that

facility generally will be the decisional unit for purposes of section 7(f)(1)(H) of the ADEA.

(D) However, if an employer seeks to terminate employees by exclusively considering a particular portion or subgroup of its operations at a specific facility, then that subgroup or portion of the workforce at that facility will be considered the decisional unit.

(E) Likewise, if the employer analyzes its operations at several facilities, specifically considers and compares ages, seniority rosters, or similar factors at differing facilities, and determines to focus its workforce reduction at a particular facility, then by the nature of that employer's decision-making process the decisional unit would include all considered facilities and not just the facility selected for the reductions.

(iii) The following examples are not all-inclusive and are meant only to assist employers and employees in determining the appropriate decisional unit. Involuntary reductions in force typically are structured along one or more of the following lines:

(A) *Facility-wide:* Ten percent of the employees in the Springfield facility will be terminated within the next ten days;

(B) *Division-wide:* Fifteen of the employees in the Computer Division will be terminated in December;

(C) *Department-wide:* One-half of the workers in the Keyboard Department of the Computer Division will be terminated in December;

(D) *Reporting:* Ten percent of the employees who report to the Vice President for Sales, wherever the employees are located, will be terminated immediately;

(E) *Job Category:* Ten percent of all accountants, wherever the employees are located, will be terminated next week.

(iv) In the examples in paragraph (f)(3)(iii) of this section, the decisional units are, respectively:

(A) The Springfield facility;

(B) The Computer Division;

(C) The Keyboard Department;

(D) All employees reporting to the Vice President for Sales; and

(E) All accountants.

(v) While the particular circumstances of each termination program will determine the decisional unit, the following examples also may assist in determining when the decisional unit is other than the entire facility:

(A) A number of small facilities with interrelated functions and employees in a specific geographic area may comprise a single decisional unit;

(B) If a company utilizes personnel for a common function at more than one facility, the decisional unit for that function (i.e., accounting) may be broader than the one facility;

(C) A large facility with several distinct functions may comprise a number of decisional units; for example, if a single facility has distinct internal functions with no employee overlap (i.e., manufacturing, accounting, human resources), and the program is confined to a distinct function, a smaller decisional unit may be appropriate.

(vi)(A) For purposes of this section, higher level review of termination decisions generally will not change the size of the decisional unit unless the reviewing process alters its scope. For example, review by the Human Resources Department to monitor compliance with discrimination laws does not affect the decisional unit. Similarly, when a regional manager in charge of more than one facility reviews the termination decisions regarding one of those facilities, the review does not alter the decisional unit, which remains the one facility under consideration.

(B) However, if the regional manager in the course of review determines that persons in other facilities should also be considered for termination, the decisional unit becomes the population of all facilities considered. Further, if, for example, the regional manager and his three immediate subordinates jointly review the termination decisions, taking into account more than one facility, the decisional unit becomes the populations of all facilities considered.

(vii) This regulatory section is limited to the requirements of section 7(f)(1)(H) and is not intended to affect the scope of discovery or of substantive

proceedings in the processing of charges of violation of the ADEA or in litigation involving such charges.

(4) Presentation of information. (i) The information provided must be in writing and must be written in a manner calculated to be understood by the average individual eligible to participate.

(ii) Information regarding ages should be broken down according to the age of each person eligible or selected for the program and each person not eligible or selected for the program. The use of age bands broader than one year (such as ''age 20–30'') does not satisfy this requirement.

(iii) In a termination of persons in several established grade levels and/or other established subcategories within a job category or job title, the information shall be broken down by grade level or other subcategory.

(iv) If an employer in its disclosure combines information concerning both voluntary and involuntary terminations, the employer shall present the information in a manner that distinguishes between voluntary and involuntary terminations.

(v) If the terminees are selected from a subset of a decisional unit, the employer must still disclose information for the entire population of the decisional unit. For example, if the employer decides that a 10% RIF in the Accounting Department will come from the accountants whose performance is in the bottom one-third of the Division, the employer still must disclose information for all employees in the Accounting Department, even those who are the highest rated.

(vi) An involuntary termination program in a decisional unit may take place in successive increments over a period of time. Special rules apply to this situation. Specifically, information supplied with regard to the involuntary termination program should be cumulative, so that later terminees are provided ages and job titles or job categories, as appropriate, for all persons in the decisional unit at the beginning of the program and all persons terminated to date. There is no duty to supplement the information given to earlier terminees so long as the disclosure, at the time it is given, conforms to the requirements of this section.

(vii) The following example demonstrates one way in which the required information could be presented to the employees. (This example is not presented as a prototype notification agreement that automatically will comply with the ADEA. Each information disclosure must be structured based upon the individual case, taking into account the corporate structure, the population of the decisional unit, and the requirements of section 7(f)(1)(H) of the ADEA): Example: Y Corporation lost a major construction contract and determined that it must terminate 10% of the employees in the Construction Division. Y decided to offer all terminees $20,000 in severance pay in exchange for a waiver of all rights. The waiver provides the section 7(f)(1)(H) of the ADEA information as follows:

(A) The decisional unit is the Construction Division.

(B) All persons in the Construction Division are eligible for the program. All persons who are being terminated in our November RIF are selected for the program.

(C) All persons who are being offered consideration under a waiver agreement must sign the agreement and return it to the Personnel Office within 45 days after receiving the waiver. Once the signed waiver is returned to the Personnel Office, the employee has 7 days to revoke the waiver agreement.

(D) The following is a listing of the ages and job titles of persons in the Construction Division who were and were not selected for termination and the offer of consideration for signing a waiver:

Job Title	Age	No. Selected	No. not selected
(1) Mechanical Engineers, I	25	21	48
	26	11	73
	63	4	18
	64	3	11
(2) Mechanical Engineers, II	28	3	10
	29	11	17

Job Title	Age	No. Selected	No. not selected
	Etc., for all ages		
(3) Structural Engineers, I	21	5	8
	Etc., for all ages		
(4) Structural Engineers, II	23	2	4
	Etc., for all ages		
(5) Purchasing Agents	26	10	11
	Etc., for all ages		

(g) *Waivers settling charges and lawsuits.* (1) Section 7(f)(2) of the ADEA provides that:

> A waiver in settlement of a charge filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or an action filed in court by the individual or the individual's representative, alleging age discrimination of a kind prohibited under section 4 or 15 may not be considered knowing and voluntary unless at a minimum—
>
> (A) Subparagraphs (A) through (E) of paragraph (1) have been met; and
>
> (B) The individual is given a reasonable period of time within which to consider the settlement agreement.

(2) The language in section 7(f)(2) of the ADEA, ''discrimination of a kind prohibited under section 4 or 15'' refers to allegations of age discrimination of the type prohibited by the ADEA.

(3) The standards set out in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section for complying with the provisions of section 7(f)(1)(A)–(E) of the ADEA also will apply for purposes of complying with the provisions of section 7(f)(2)(A) of the ADEA.

(4) The term ''reasonable time within which to consider the settlement agreement'' means reasonable under all the circumstances, including whether the individual is represented by counsel or has the assistance of counsel.

(5) However, while the time periods under section 7(f)(1) of the ADEA do not apply to subsection 7(f)(2) of the ADEA, a waiver agreement under this subsection that provides an employee the time periods specified in section 7(f)(1) of the ADEA will be considered ''reasonable'' for purposes of section 7(f)(2)(B) of the ADEA.

(6) A waiver agreement in compliance with this section that is in settlement of an EEOC charge does not require the participation or supervision of EEOC.

(h) *Burden of proof.* In any dispute that may arise over whether any of the requirements, conditions, and circumstances set forth in section 7(f) of the ADEA, subparagraph (A), (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), or (H) of paragraph (1), or subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (2), have been met, the party asserting the validity of a waiver shall have the burden of proving in a court of competent jurisdiction that a waiver was knowing and voluntary pursuant to paragraph (1) or (2) of section 7(f) of the ADEA.

(i) *EEOC's enforcement powers.* (1) Section 7(f)(4) of the ADEA states:

> No waiver agreement may affect the Commission's rights and responsibilities to enforce [the ADEA]. No waiver may be used to justify interfering with the protected right of an employee to file a charge or participate in an investigation or proceeding conducted by the Commission.

(2) No waiver agreement may include any provision prohibiting any individual from:

(i) Filing a charge or complaint, including a challenge to the validity of the waiver agreement, with EEOC, or

(ii) Participating in any investigation or proceeding conducted by EEOC.

(3) No waiver agreement may include any provision imposing any condition precedent, any penalty, or any other limitation adversely affecting any individual's right to:

(i) File a charge or complaint, including a challenge to the validity of the waiver agreement, with EEOC, or

(ii) Participate in any investigation or proceeding conducted by EEOC.

(j) *Effective date of this section.* (1) This section is effective July 6, 1998.

(2) This section applies to waivers offered by employers on or after the effective date specified in paragraph (j)(1) of this section.

(3) No inference is to be drawn from this section regarding the validity of waivers offered prior to the effective date.

(k) *Statutory authority.* The regulations in this section are legislative regulations issued pursuant to section 9 of the ADEA and Title II of OWBPA.

[63 FR 30628, June 5, 1998, as amended at 79 FR 13547, Mar. 11, 2014]

§ 1625.23 Waivers of rights and claims: Tender back of consideration.

(a) An individual alleging that a waiver agreement, covenant not to sue, or other equivalent arrangement was not knowing and voluntary under the ADEA is not required to tender back the consideration given for that agreement before filing either a lawsuit or a charge of discrimination with EEOC or any state or local fair employment practices agency acting as an EEOC referral agency for purposes of filing the charge with EEOC. Retention of consideration does not foreclose a challenge to any waiver agreement, covenant not to sue, or other equivalent arrangement; nor does the retention constitute the ratification of any waiver agreement, covenant not to sue, or other equivalent arrangement.

(b) No ADEA waiver agreement, covenant not to sue, or other equivalent arrangement may impose any condition precedent, any penalty, or any other limitation adversely affecting any individual's right to challenge the agreement. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, provisions requiring employees to tender back consideration received, and provisions allowing employers to recover attorneys' fees and/or damages because of the filing of an ADEA suit. This rule is not intended to preclude employers from recovering attorneys' fees or costs specifically authorized under federal law.

(c) *Restitution, recoupment, or setoff.* (1) Where an employee successfully challenges a waiver agreement, covenant not to sue, or other equivalent arrangement, and prevails on the merits of an ADEA claim, courts have the discretion to determine whether an employer is entitled to restitution, recoupment or setoff (hereinafter, ''reduction'') against the employee's monetary award. A reduction never can exceed the amount recovered by the employee, or the consideration the employee received for signing the waiver agreement, covenant not to sue, or other equivalent arrangement, whichever is less.

(2) In a case involving more than one plaintiff, any reduction must be applied on a plaintiff-by-plaintiff basis. No individual's award can be reduced based on the consideration received by any other person.

(d) No employer may abrogate its duties to any signatory under a waiver agreement, covenant not to sue, or other equivalent arrangement, even if one or more of the signatories or the EEOC successfully challenges the validity of that agreement under the ADEA.

[65 FR 77446, Dec. 11, 2000]

Subpart C—Administrative Exemptions

SOURCE: 44 FR 38459, July 2, 1979, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 72 FR 72944, Dec. 26, 2007.

§ 1625.30 Administrative exemptions; procedures.

(a) Section 9 of the Act provides that,

> In accordance with the provisions of subchapter II of chapter 5, of title 5, United States Code, the Secretary of Labor * * * may establish such reasonable exemptions to and from any or all provisions of this Act as he may find necessary and proper in the public interest.

(b) The authority conferred on the Commission by section 9 of the Act to establish reasonable exemptions will be exercised with caution and due regard for the remedial purpose of the statute to promote employment of older persons based on their ability rather than age and to prohibit arbitrary age discrimination in employment. Administrative action consistent with this statutory purpose may be taken under this section, with or without a request therefor, when found necessary and proper in the public interest in accordance with the statutory standards. No formal procedures have been prescribed for requesting such action. However, a reasonable exemption from the Act's provisions will be granted only if it is decided, after notice published in the FEDERAL REGISTER giving all interested persons an opportunity to present data, views, or arguments, that

a strong and affirmative showing has been made that such exemption is in fact necessary and proper in the public interest. Request for such exemption shall be submitted in writing to the Commission.

§ 1625.31 Special employment programs.

(a) Pursuant to the authority contained in section 9 of the Act and in accordance with the procedure provided therein and in §1625.30(b) of this part, it has been found necessary and proper in the public interest to exempt from all prohibitions of the Act all activities and programs under Federal contracts or grants, or carried out by the public employment services of the several States, designed exclusively to provide employment for, or to encourage the employment of, persons with special employment problems, including employment activities and programs under the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962, Pub. L. No. 87–415, 76 Stat. 23 (1962), as amended, and the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Pub. L. No. 88–452, 78 Stat. 508 (1964), as amended, for persons among the long-term unemployed, individuals with disabilities, members of minority groups, older workers, or youth. Questions concerning the application of this exemption shall be referred to the Commission for decision.

(b) Any employer, employment agency, or labor organization the activities of which are exempt from the prohibitions of the Act under paragraph (a) of this section shall maintain and preserve records containing the same information and data that is required of employers, employment agencies, and labor organizations under §§1627.3, 1627.4, and 1627.5, respectively.

[44 FR 38459, July 2, 1979, as amended at 52 FR 32296, Aug. 27, 1987; 55 FR 24078, June 14, 1990; 57 FR 4158, Feb. 4, 1992; 72 FR 72944, Dec. 26, 2007; 74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009]

§ 1625.32 Coordination of retiree health benefits with Medicare and State health benefits.

(a) *Definitions.* (1) *Employee benefit plan* means an employee benefit plan as defined in 29 U.S.C. 1002(3).

(2) *Medicare* means the health insurance program available pursuant to Title XVIII of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 1395 *et seq.*

(3) *Comparable State health benefit plan* means a State-sponsored health benefit plan that, like Medicare, provides retired participants who have attained a minimum age with health benefits, whether or not the type, amount or value of those benefits is equivalent to the type, amount or value of the health benefits provided under Medicare.

(b) *Exemption.* Some employee benefit plans provide health benefits for retired participants that are altered, reduced or eliminated when the participant is eligible for Medicare health benefits or for health benefits under a comparable State health benefit plan, whether or not the participant actually enrolls in the other benefit program. Pursuant to the authority contained in section 9 of the Act, and in accordance with the procedures provided therein and in §1625.30(b) of this part, it is hereby found necessary and proper in the public interest to exempt from all prohibitions of the Act such coordination of retiree health benefits with Medicare or a comparable State health benefit plan.

(c) *Scope of exemption.* This exemption shall be narrowly construed. No other aspects of ADEA coverage or employment benefits other than those specified in paragraph (b) of this section are affected by the exemption. Thus, for example, the exemption does not apply to the use of eligibility for Medicare or a comparable State health benefit plan in connection with any act, practice or benefit of employment not specified in paragraph (b) of this section. Nor does it apply to the use of the age of eligibility for Medicare or a comparable State health benefit plan in connection with any act, practice or benefit of employment not specified in paragraph (b) of this section.

APPENDIX TO §1625.32—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING COORDINATION OF RETIREE HEALTH BENEFITS WITH MEDICARE AND STATE HEALTH BENEFITS

Q1. Why is the Commission issuing an exemption from the Act?

A1. The Commission recognizes that while employers are under no legal obligation to offer retiree health benefits, some employers

choose to do so in order to maintain a competitive advantage in the marketplace—using these and other benefits to attract and retain the best talent available to work for their organizations. Further, retiree health benefits clearly benefit workers, allowing such individuals to acquire affordable health insurance coverage at a time when private health insurance coverage might otherwise be cost prohibitive. The Commission believes that it is in the best interest of both employers and employees for the Commission to pursue a policy that permits employers to offer these benefits to the greatest extent possible.

Q2. Does the exemption mean that the Act no longer applies to retirees?

A2. No. Only the practice of coordinating retiree health benefits with Medicare (or a comparable State health benefit plan) as specified in paragraph (b) of this section is exempt from the Act. In all other contexts, the Act continues to apply to retirees to the same extent that it did prior to the issuance of this section.

Q3. May an employer offer a ''carve-out plan'' for retirees who are eligible for Medicare or a comparable State health plan?

A3. Yes. A ''carve-out plan'' reduces the benefits available under an employee benefit plan by the amount payable by Medicare or a comparable State health plan. Employers may continue to offer such ''carve-out plans''and make Medicare or a comparable State health plan the primary payer of health benefits for those retirees eligible for Medicare or the comparable State health plan.

Q4. Does the exemption also apply to dependent and/or spousal health benefits that are included as part of the health benefits provided for retired participants?

A4. Yes. Because dependent and/or spousal health benefits are benefits provided to the retired participant, the exemption applies to these benefits, just as it does to the health benefits for the retired participant. However, dependent and/or spousal benefits need not be identical to the health benefits provided for retired participants. Consequently, dependent and/or spousal benefits may be altered, reduced or eliminated pursuant to the exemption whether or not the health benefits provided for retired participants are similarly altered, reduced or eliminated.

Q5. Does the exemption address how the ADEA may apply to other acts, practices or employment benefits not specified in the rule?

A5. No. The exemption only applies to the practice of coordinating employer-sponsored retiree health benefits with eligibility for Medicare or a comparable State health benefit program. No other aspects of ADEA coverage or employment benefits other than retiree health benefits are affected by the exemption.

Q6. Does the exemption apply to existing, as well as to newly created, employee benefit plans?

A6. Yes. The exemption applies to all retiree health benefits that coordinate with Medicare (or a comparable State health benefit plan) as specified in paragraph (b) of this section, whether those benefits are provided for in an existing or newly created employee benefit plan.

Q7. Does the exemption apply to health benefits that are provided to current employees who are at or over the age of Medicare eligibility (or the age of eligibility for a comparable State health benefit plan)?

A7. No. The exemption applies only to retiree health benefits, not to health benefits that are provided to current employees. Thus, health benefits for current employees must be provided in a manner that comports with the requirements of the Act. Moreover, under the laws governing the Medicare program, an employer must offer to current employees who are at or over the age of Medicare eligibility the same health benefits, under the same conditions, that it offers to any current employee under the age of Medicare eligibility.

[72 FR 72945, Dec. 26, 2007]

PART 1626—PROCEDURES—AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: Sec. 9, 81 Stat. 605, 29 U.S.C. 628; sec. 2, Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1978, 3 CFR, 1978 Comp., p. 321.

SOURCE: 48 FR 140, Jan. 3, 1983, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1626.1 Purpose.

The regulations set forth in this part contain the procedures established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for carrying out its responsibilities in the administration and enforcement of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended.

§ 1626.2 Terms defined in the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended.

The terms *person*, *employer*, *employment agency*, *labor organization*, *employee*, *commerce*, *industry affecting commerce*, and *State* as used herein shall have the meanings set forth in section 11 of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, as amended.

§ 1626.3 Other definitions.

(a) For the purposes of this part, the term *the Act* shall mean the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended; the *EEOC* or *Commission* shall mean the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or any of its designated representatives; *charge* shall mean a statement filed with the Commission by or on behalf of an aggrieved person which alleges that the named prospective defendant has engaged in or is about to engage in actions in violation of the Act; *complaint* shall mean information received from any source, that is not a charge, which alleges that a named prospective defendant has engaged in or is about to engage in actions in violation of the Act; *charging party* means the person filing a charge; *complainant* means the person filing a complaint; and *respondent* means the person named as a prospective defendant in a charge or complaint, or as a result of a Commission-initiated investigation.

[48 FR 140, Jan. 3, 1983, as amended at 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1626.4 Information concerning alleged violations of the Act.

The Commission may, on its own initiative, conduct investigations of employers, employment agencies and labor organizations, in accordance with the powers vested in it pursuant to sections 6 and 7 of the Act. The Commission shall also receive information concerning alleged violations of the Act, including charges and complaints, from any source. Where the information discloses a possible violation, the appropriate Commission office may render assistance in the filing of a charge. The identity of a complainant, confidential witness, or aggrieved person on whose behalf a charge was filed will ordinarily not be disclosed without prior written consent, unless necessary in a court proceeding.

§ 1626.5 Where to submit complaints and charges.

Complaints and charges may be made through the EEOC's designated digital systems, in person, by telephone, by facsimile, or by mail to any EEOC office or any designated representative of the Commission. The current addresses of the EEOC's offices appear at *www.eeoc.gov*.

[85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1626.6 Form of charge.

A charge shall be in writing and shall name the prospective respondent and shall generally allege the discriminatory act(s). Charges received in person or by telephone shall be reduced to writing.

§ 1626.7 Timeliness of charge.

(a) Potential charging parties will be advised that, pursuant to section 7(d)(1) and (2) of the Act, no civil suit may be commenced by an individual until 60 days after a charge has been filed on the subject matter of the suit, and such charge shall be filed with the Commission or its designated agent within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory action, or, in a case where the alleged discriminatory action occurs in a State which has its own age discrimination law and authority administering that

law, within 300 days of the alleged discriminatory action, or 30 days after receipt of notice of termination of State proceedings, whichever is earlier.

(b) For purposes of determining the date of filing with the Commission, the following applies:

(1) Charges filed digitally: Date of transmission;

(2) Charges filed by mail:

(i) Date of postmark, if legible,

(ii) Date of letter, if postmark is illegible,

(iii) Date of receipt by Commission, or its designated agent, if postmark and letter date are illegible and/or cannot be accurately affixed;

(3) Written charges filed in person: Date of receipt;

(4) Oral charges filed in person or by telephone, as reduced to writing: Date of oral communication received by Commission.

[48 FR 140, Jan. 3, 1983, as amended at 68 FR 70152, Dec. 17, 2003; 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1626.8 Contents of charge; amendment of charge.

(a) In addition to the requirements of § 1626.6, each charge should contain the following:

(1) The full name and contact information of the person making the charge except as provided in § 1626.8(d) below;

(2) The full name and contact information of the person against whom the charge is made, if known (hereinafter referred to as the respondent);

(3) A clear and concise statement of the facts, including pertinent dates, constituting the alleged unlawful employment practices;

(4) If known, the approximate number of employees of the prospective defendant employer or members of the prospective defendant labor organization.

(5) A statement disclosing whether proceedings involving the alleged unlawful employment practice have been commenced before a State agency charged with the enforcement of fair employment practice laws and, if so, the date of such commencement and the name of the agency.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section, a charge is sufficient when the Commission receives from the person making the charge either a written statement or information reduced to writing by the Commission that conforms to the requirements of § 1626.6.

(c) A charge may be amended to clarify or amplify allegations made therein. Such amendments and amendments alleging additional acts which constitute unlawful employment practices related to or growing out of the subject matter of the original charge will relate back to the date the charge was first received. A charge that has been so amended shall not again be referred to the appropriate State agency.

(d) A charge that any person has engaged in or is engaging in an unlawful employment practice within the meaning of the ADEA may be made by or on behalf of any person claiming to be aggrieved. A charge on behalf of a person claiming to be aggrieved may be made by any person, agency, or organization. The written charge need not identify by name the person on whose behalf it is made. The person making the charge, however, must provide the Commission with the name and contact information of the person on whose behalf the charge is made. During the Commission investigation, Commission personnel shall verify the authorization of such charge by the person on whose behalf the charge is made. Any such person may request that the Commission shall keep his or her identity confidential. However, such request for confidentiality shall not prevent the Commission from disclosing the identity to Federal, State or local agencies that have agreed to keep such information confidential. If this condition is violated by a recipient agency, the Commission may decline to honor subsequent requests for such information.

(e) The person claiming to be aggrieved has the responsibility to provide the Commission with notice of a change in contact information so that he or she can be contacted when necessary during the Commission's consideration of the charge.

[48 FR 140, Jan. 3, 1983, as amended at 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1626.9 Referral to and from State agencies; referral States.

The Commission may refer all charges to any appropriate State agency and will encourage State agencies to refer charges to the Commission in order to assure that the prerequisites for private law suits, as set out in section 14(b) of the Act, are met. Charges so referred shall be deemed to have been filed with the Commission in accordance with the specifications contained in §1626.7(b). The Commission may process any charge at any time, notwithstanding provisions for referral to and from appropriate State agencies.

[48 FR 140, Jan. 3, 1983, as amended at 68 FR 70152, Dec. 17, 2003]

§ 1626.10 Agreements with State or local fair employment practices agencies.

(a) Pursuant to sections 6 and 7 of the ADEA and section 11(b) of the FLSA, the Commission may enter into agreements with State or local fair employment practices agencies to cooperate in enforcement, technical assistance, research, or public informational activities, and may engage the services of such agencies in processing charges assuring the safeguard of the Federal rights of aggrieved persons.

(b) The Commission may enter into agreements with State or local agencies which authorize such agencies to receive charges and complaints pursuant to §1626.5 and in accordance with the specifications contained in §§1626.7 and 1626.8.

(c) When a worksharing agreement with a State agency is in effect, the State agency will act on certain charges and the Commission will promptly process charges which the State agency does not pursue. Charges received by one agency under the agreement shall be deemed received by the other agency for purposes of §1626.7

§ 1626.11 Notice of charge.

Upon receipt of a charge, the Commission shall promptly notify the respondent that a charge has been filed.

§ 1626.12 Conciliation efforts pursuant to section 7(d) of the Act.

Upon receipt of a charge, the Commission shall promptly attempt to eliminate any alleged unlawful practice by informal methods of conciliation, conference and persuasion. Upon failure of such conciliation the Commission will notify the charging party. Such notification enables the charging party or any person aggrieved by the subject matter of the charge to commence action to enforce their rights without waiting for the lapse of 60 days. Notification under this section is not a Notice of Dismissal or Termination under §1626.17.

[89 FR 12232, Feb. 16, 2024]

§ 1626.13 Withdrawal of charge.

Charging parties may request withdrawal of a charge. Because the Commission has independent investigative authority, see §1626.4, it may continue any investigation and may secure relief for all affected persons notwithstanding a request by a charging party to withdraw a charge.

§ 1626.14 Right to inspect or copy data.

A person who submits data or evidence to the Commission may retain or, on payment of lawfully prescribed costs, procure a copy or transcript thereof, except that a witness may for good cause be limited to inspection of the official transcript of his or her testimony.

§ 1626.15 Commission enforcement.

(a) As provided in sections 9, 11, 16 and 17 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended (29 U.S.C. 209, 211, 216 and 217) (FLSA) and sections 6 and 7 of this Act, the Commission and its authorized representatives may (1) investigate and gather data; (2) enter and inspect establishments and records and make transcripts thereof; (3) interview employees; (4) impose on persons subject to the Act appropriate recordkeeping and reporting requirements; (5) advise employers, employment agencies and labor organizations with regard to their obligations under the Act and any changes necessary in their policies, practices and procedures to assure compliance with the Act; (6)

subpoena witnesses and require the production of documents and other evidence; (7) supervise the payment of amounts owing pursuant to section 16(c) of the FLSA, and (8) institute action under section 16(c) or section 17 of the FLSA or both to obtain appropriate relief.

(b) Whenever the Commission has a reasonable basis to conclude that a violation of the Act has occurred or will occur, it may commence conciliation under section 7(b) of the Act. Notice of commencement of will ordinarily be issued in the form of a letter of violation; provided, however, that failure to issue a written violation letter shall in no instance be construed as a finding of no violation. The Commission will ordinarily notify the respondent and aggrieved persons of its determination. In the process of conducting any investigation or conciliation under this Act, the identity of persons who have provided information in confidence shall not be disclosed except in accordance with §1626.4.

(c) Any agreement reached as a result of efforts undertaken pursuant to this section shall, as far as practicable, require the respondent to eliminate the unlawful practice(s) and provide appropriate affirmative relief. Such agreement shall be reduced to writing and will ordinarily be signed by the Commission's delegated representative, the respondent, and the charging party, if any. The signed agreement shall be sent to all the signatories thereto.

(d) Upon the failure of informal conciliation, conference and persuasion under section 7(b) of the Act, the Commission may initiate and conduct litigation.

(e) The District Directors, Field Directors, Area Directors, and Local Directors, the Director of the Office of Field Programs or their designees, are hereby delegated authority to exercise the powers enumerated in §1626.15(a) (1) through (7) and (b) and (c). The General Counsel or his/her designee is hereby delegated the authority to exercise the powers in paragraph (a) of this section and at the direction of the Commission to initiate and conduct litigation.

[48 FR 140, Jan. 3, 1983, as amended at 54 FR 32063, Aug. 4, 1989; 54 FR 33503, Aug. 15, 1989; 68 FR 70152, Dec. 17, 2003; 71 FR 26831, May 9, 2006; 85 FR 65219, Oct. 15, 2020; 86 FR 2985, Jan. 14, 2021; 89 FR 12233, Feb. 16, 2024]

§1626.16 Subpoenas.

(a) To effectuate the purposes of the Act the Commission shall have the authority to issue a subpoena requiring:

(1) The attendance and testimony of witnesses;

(2) The production of evidence including, but not limited to, books, records, correspondence, or documents, in the possession or under the control of the person subpoenaed; and

(3) Access to evidence for the purpose of examination and the right to copy.

(b) The power to issue subpoenas has been delegated by the Commission, pursuant to section 6(a) of the Act, to the General Counsel, the District Directors, Field Directors, Area Directors, and Local Directors, the Director of the Office of Field Programs, or their designees. The subpoena shall state the name, address and title of the issuer, identify the person or evidence subpoenaed, the name of the person to whom the subpoena is returnable, the date, time and place that testimony is to be given or that documents are to be provided or access provided.

(c) A subpoena issued by the Commission or its designee pursuant to the Act is not subject to review or appeal.

(d) Upon the failure of any person to comply with a subpoena issued under this section, the Commission may utilize the provisions of sections 9 and 10 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 15 U.S.C. 49 and 50, to compel compliance with the subpoena.

(e) Persons subpoenaed shall be entitled to the same fees and mileage that are paid witnesses in the courts of the United States.

[48 FR 140, Jan. 3, 1983, as amended at 54 FR 32063, Aug. 4, 1989; 71 FR 26831, May 9, 2006; 85 FR 65220, Oct. 15, 2020]

§1626.17 Notice of dismissal or termination.

(a) *Issuance of Notice of Dismissal or Termination.* (1) Where a charge filed with the Commission under the ADEA

is dismissed or the Commission's proceedings are otherwise terminated, the Commission will issue a Notice of Dismissal or Termination on the charge as described in paragraph (c) of this section to the person(s) claiming to be aggrieved. In the case of a charge concerning more than one aggrieved person, the Commission will only issue a Notice of Dismissal or Termination when the charge is dismissed or proceedings are otherwise terminated as to all aggrieved persons.

(2) Where the charge has been filed under the ADEA and title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA), or the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA), the Commission will issue a Notice of Dismissal or Termination under the ADEA at the same time it issues the Notice of Right to Sue under title VII, the ADA, GINA, or the PWFA, in accordance with 29 CFR 1601.28.

(3) The issuance of a Notice of Dismissal or Termination does not preclude the Commission from offering such assistance to a person receiving the notice as the Commission deems necessary or appropriate. The issuance does not preclude or interfere with the Commission's continuing right to investigate and litigate the same matter or any ADEA matter under its enforcement authority.

(b) *Delegation of Authority To Issue Notices of Dismissal or Termination.* The Commission hereby delegates authority to issue Notices of Dismissal or Termination, in accordance with this section, to: Directors of District, Field, Area and Local offices; the Director of the Office of Field Programs; the Director of Field Management Programs, Office of Field Programs; the General Counsel; or their designees.

(c) *Contents of the Notice of Dismissal or Termination.* The Notice of Dismissal or Termination shall include:

(1) A copy of the charge;

(2) Notification that the charge has been dismissed or the Commission's proceedings have otherwise been terminated; and

(3) Notification that the aggrieved person's right to file a civil action against the respondent on the subject charge under the ADEA will expire 90 days after receipt of such notice.

[68 FR 70152, Dec. 17, 2003, as amended at 71 FR 26831, May 9, 2006; 85 FR 65220, Oct. 15, 2020; 89 FR 11172, Feb. 14, 2024]

§ 1626.18 Filing of private lawsuit.

(a) An aggrieved person may file a civil action against the respondent named in the charge in either Federal or State court under section 7 of the ADEA.

(b) An aggrieved person whose claims are the subject of a timely pending charge may file a civil action at any time after 60 days have elapsed from the filing of the charge with the Commission (or as provided in §1626.12) without waiting for a Notice of Dismissal or Termination to be issued.

(c) The right of an aggrieved person to file suit expires 90 days after receipt of the Notice of Dismissal or Termination or upon commencement of an action by the Commission to enforce the right of such person.

(d) If the Commission becomes aware that the aggrieved person whose claim is the subject of a pending ADEA charge has filed an ADEA lawsuit against the respondent named in the charge, it shall terminate further processing of the charge or portion of the charge affecting that person unless the District Director; Field Director; Area Director; Local Director; Director of the Office of Field Programs; the General Counsel; the Director of Field Management Programs; or their designees determine at that time or at a later time that it would effectuate the purpose of the ADEA to further process the charge.

[68 FR 70152, Dec. 17, 2003, as amended at 71 FR 26831, May 9, 2006]

§ 1626.19 Filing of Commission lawsuit.

The right of the Commission to file a civil action under the ADEA is not dependent on the filing of a charge and is not affected by the issuance of a Notice of Dismissal or Termination to any aggrieved person.

[68 FR 70152, Dec. 17, 2003]

§ 1626.20 Procedure for requesting an opinion letter.

(a) A request for an opinion letter should be submitted in writing to the Chair, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 131 M Street, NE., Washington DC 20507, and shall contain:

(1) A concise statement of the issues on which an opinion is requested;

(2) As full a statement as possible of relevant facts and law; and

(3) The names and addresses of the person making the request and other interested persons.

(b) Issuance of an opinion letter by the Commission is discretionary.

(c) *Informal advice.* When the Commission, at its discretion, determines that it will not issue an opinion letter as defined in §1626.21, the Commission may provide informal advice or guidance to the requestor. An informal letter of advice does not represent the formal position of the Commission and does not commit the Commission to the views expressed therein. Any letter other than those defined in §1626.21(a)(1) will be considered a letter of advice and may not be relied upon by any employer within the meaning of section 10 of the Portal to Portal Act of 1947, incorporated into the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 through section 7(e)(1) of the Act.

[48 FR 140, Jan. 3, 1983, as amended at 54 FR 32063, Aug. 4, 1989. Redesignated at 68 FR 70152, Dec. 17, 2003; 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009 ; 85 FR 65220, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1626.21 Effect of opinions and interpretations of the Commission.

(a) Section 10 of the Portal to Portal Act of 1947, incorporated into the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 through section 7(e)(1) of the Act, provides that:

> In any action or proceeding based on any act or omission on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, no employer shall be subject to any liability or punishment * * * if he pleads and proves that the act or omission complained of was in good faith in conformity with and in reliance on any written administrative regulations, order, ruling, approval or interpretation * * * or any administrative practice or enforcement policy of [the Commission].

The Commission has determined that only (1) a written document, entitled ''opinion letter,'' signed by the Legal Counsel on behalf of and as approved by the Commission, or (2) a written document issued in the conduct of litigation, entitled ''opinion letter,'' signed by the General Counsel on behalf of and as approved by the Commission, or (3) matter published and specifically designated as such in the FEDERAL REGISTER, may be relied upon by any employer as a ''written regulation, order, ruling, approval or interpretation'' or ''evidence of any administrative practice or enforcement policy'' of the Commission ''with respect to the class of employers to which he belongs,'' within the meaning of the statutory provisions quoted above.

(b) An opinion letter issued pursuant to paragraph (a)(1) of this section, when issued to the specific addressee, has no effect upon situations other than that of the specific addressee.

(c) When an opinion letter, as defined in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, is requested, the procedure stated in §1626.20 shall be followed.

[48 FR 140, Jan. 3, 1983. Redesignated at 68 FR 70152, Dec. 17, 2003; 85 FR 65220, Oct. 15, 2020]

§ 1626.22 Rules to be liberally construed.

(a) These rules and regulations shall be liberally construed to effectuate the purposes and provisions of this Act and any other acts administered by the Commission.

(b) Whenever the Commission receives a charge or obtains information relating to possible violations of one of the statutes which it administers and the charge or information reveals possible violations of one or more of the other statutes which it administers, the Commission will treat such charges or information in accordance with all such relevant statutes.

(c) Whenever a charge is filed under one statute and it is subsequently believed that the alleged discrimination constitutes an unlawful employment practice under another statute administered and enforced by the Commission, the charge may be so amended and timeliness determined from the date of filing of the original charge.

[48 FR 140, Jan. 3, 1983. Redesignated at 68 FR 70152, Dec. 17, 2003]

PART 1627—RECORDS TO BE MADE OR KEPT RELATING TO AGE: NOTICES TO BE POSTED

Subpart A—General

Sec.
1627.1 Purpose and scope.

Subpart B—Records To Be Made or Kept Relating to Age; Notices To Be Posted

1627.2 Forms of records.
1627.3 Records to be kept by employers.
1627.4 Records to be kept by employment agencies.
1627.5 Records to be kept by labor organizations.
1627.6 Availability of records for inspection.
1627.7 Transcriptions and reports.
1627.8–1627.9 [Reserved]
1627.10 Notices to be posted.
1627.11 Petitions for recordkeeping exceptions.

Subpart D—Statutory Exemption

1627.17 Calculating the amount of qualified retirement benefits for purposes of the exemption for bona fide executives or high policymaking employees.

AUTHORITY: Sec. 7, 81 Stat. 604; 29 U.S.C. 626; sec. 11, 52 Stat. 1066, 29 U.S.C. 211; sec. 12, 29 U.S.C. 631, Pub. L. 99–592, 100 Stat. 3342; sec. 2, Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1978, 43 FR 19807.

SOURCE: 44 FR 38459, July 2, 1979, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 1627.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) Section 7 of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (hereinafter referred to in this part as the Act) empowers the Commission to require the keeping of records which are necessary or appropriate for the administration of the Act in accordance with the powers contained in section 11 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. Subpart B of this part sets forth the recordkeeping and posting requirements which are prescribed by the Commission for employers, employment agencies, and labor organizations which are subject to the Act. Reference should be made to section 11 of the Act for definitions of the terms ''employer'', ''employment agency'', and ''labor organization''. General interpretations of the Act and of this part are published in part 1625 of this chapter. This part also reflects pertinent delegations of the Commission's duties.

(b) Subpart D of this part sets forth the Commission's regulations issued pursuant to section 12(c)(2) of the Act, providing that the Secretary of Labor, after consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, shall prescribe the manner of calculating the amount of qualified retirement benefits for purposes of the exemption in section 12(c)(1) of the Act.

[44 FR 38459, July 2, 1979, as amended at 44 FR 66797, Nov. 21, 1979; 72 FR 72944, Dec. 26, 2007]

Subpart B—Records To Be Made or Kept Relating to Age; Notices To Be Posted

§ 1627.2 Forms of records.

No particular order or form of records is required by the regulations in this part 1627. It is required only that the records contain in some form the information specified. If the information required is available in records kept for other purposes, or can be obtained readily by recomputing or extending data recorded in some other form, no further records are required to be made or kept on a routine basis by this part 1627.

§ 1627.3 Records to be kept by employers.

(a) Every employer shall make and keep for 3 years payroll or other records for each of his employees which contain:

(1) Name;
(2) Address;
(3) Date of birth;
(4) Occupation;
(5) Rate of pay, and
(6) Compensation earned each week.

(b)(1) Every employer who, in the regular course of his business, makes, obtains, or uses, any personnel or employment records related to the following, shall, except as provided in paragraphs (b) (3) and (4) of this section, keep them for a period of 1 year from the date of the personnel action to which any records relate:

(i) Job applications, resumes, or any other form of employment inquiry whenever submitted to the employer in response to his advertisement or other

notice of existing or anticipated job openings, including records pertaining to the failure or refusal to hire any individual,

(ii) Promotion, demotion, transfer, selection for training, layoff, recall, or discharge of any employee,

(iii) Job orders submitted by the employer to an employment agency or labor organization for recruitment of personnel for job openings,

(iv) Test papers completed by applicants or candidates for any position which disclose the results of any employer-administered aptitude or other employment test considered by the employer in connection with any personnel action,

(v) The results of any physical examination where such examination is considered by the employer in connection with any personnel action,

(vi) Any advertisements or notices to the public or to employees relating to job openings, promotions, training programs, or opportunities for overtime work.

(2) Every employer shall keep on file any employee benefit plans such as pension and insurance plans, as well as copies of any seniority systems and merit systems which are in writing, for the full period the plan or system is in effect, and for at least 1 year after its termination. If the plan or system is not in writing, a memorandum fully outlining the terms of such plan or system and the manner in which it has been communicated to the affected employees, together with notations relating to any changes or revisions thereto, shall be kept on file for a like period.

(3) When an enforcement action is commenced under section 7 of the Act regarding a particular applicant or employee, the Commission or its authorized representative shall require the employer to retain any record required to be kept under paragraph (b) (1) or (2) of this section which is relative to such action until the final disposition thereof.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0018)

(Pub. L. 96–511, 94 Stat. 2812 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*))

[44 FR 38459, July 2, 1979, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981; 56 FR 35756, July 26, 1991]

§ 1627.4 Records to be kept by employment agencies.

(a)(1) Every employment agency which, in the regular course of its business, makes, obtains, or uses, any records related to the following, shall, except as provided in paragraphs (a) (2) and (3) of this section, keep them for a period of 1 year from the date of the action to which the records relate:

(i) Placements;

(ii) Referrals, where an individual is referred to an employer for a known or reasonably anticipated job opening;

(iii) Job orders from employers seeking individuals for job openings;

(iv) Job applications, resumes, or any other form of employment inquiry or record of any individual which identifies his qualifications for employment, whether for a known job opening at the time of submission or for future referral to an employer;

(v) Test papers completed by applicants or candidates for any position which disclose the results of any agency-administered aptitude or other employment test considered by the agency in connection with any referrals;

(vi) Advertisements or notices relative to job openings.

(2) When an enforcement action is commenced under section 7 of the Act regarding a particular applicant, the Commission or its authorized representative shall require the employment agency to retain any record required to be kept under paragraph (a)(1) of this section which is relative to such action until the final disposition thereof.

(b) Whenever an employment agency has an obligation as an ''employer'' or a ''labor organization'' under the Act, the employment agency must also

comply with the recordkeeping requirements set forth in §1627.3 or §1627.5, as appropriate.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0018)

(Pub. L. 96–511, 94 Stat. 2812 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*))

[44 FR 38459, July 2, 1979, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981; 56 FR 35756, July 26, 1991]

§1627.5 Records to be kept by labor organizations.

(a) Every labor organization shall keep current records identifying its members by name, address, and date of birth.

(b) Every labor organization shall, except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, keep for a period of 1 year from the making thereof, a record of the name, address, and age of any individual seeking membership in the organization. An individual seeking membership is considered to be a person who files an application for membership or who, in some other manner, indicates a specific intention to be considered for membership, but does not include any individual who is serving for a stated limited probationary period prior to permanent employment and formal union membership. A person who merely makes an inquiry about the labor organization or, for example, about its general program, is not considered to be an individual seeking membership in a labor organization.

(c) When an enforcement action is commenced under section 7 of the Act regarding a labor organization, the Commission or its authorized representative shall require the labor organization to retain any record required to be kept under paragraph (b) of this section which is relative to such action until the final disposition thereof.

(d) Whenever a labor organization has an obligation as an ''employer'' or as an ''employment agency'' under the Act, the labor organization must also comply with the recordkeeping requirements set forth in §1627.3 or §1627.4, as appropriate.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0018)

(Pub. L. 96–511, 94 Stat. 2812 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*))

[44 FR 38459, July 2, 1979, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981; 56 FR 35756, July 26, 1991]

§1627.6 Availability of records for inspection.

(a) *Place records are to be kept.* The records required to be kept by this part shall be kept safe and accessible at the place of employment or business at which the individual to whom they relate is employed or has applied for employment or membership, or at one or more established central recordkeeping offices.

(b) *Inspection of records.* All records required by this part to be kept shall be made available for inspection and transcription by authorized representatives of the Commission during business hours generally observed by the office at which they are kept or in the community generally. Where records are maintained at a central recordkeeping office pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section, such records shall be made available at the office at which they would otherwise be required to be kept within 72 hours following request from the Commission or its authorized representative.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0018)

(Pub. L. 96–511, 94 Stat. 2812 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*))

[44 FR 38459, July 2, 1979, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981]

§1627.7 Transcriptions and reports.

Every person required to maintain records under the Act shall make such extension, recomputation or transcriptions of his records and shall submit such reports concerning actions taken and limitations and classifications of individuals set forth in records

as the Commission or its authorized representative may request in writing.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 3046–0018)

(Pub. L. 96–511, 94 Stat. 2812 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*))

[44 FR 38459, July 2, 1979, as amended at 46 FR 63268, Dec. 31, 1981]

§§ 1627.8–1627.9 [Reserved]

§ 1627.10 Notices to be posted.

Every employer, employment agency, and labor organization which has an obligation under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 shall post and keep posted in conspicuous places upon its premises the notice pertaining to the applicability of the Act prescribed by the Commission or its authorized representative. Such a notice must be posted in prominent and accessible places where it can readily be observed by employees, applicants for employment and union members.

§ 1627.11 Petitions for recordkeeping exceptions.

(a) *Submission of petitions for relief.* Each employer, employment agency, or labor organization who for good cause wishes to maintain records in a manner other than required in this part, or to be relieved of preserving certain records for the period or periods prescribed in this part, may submit in writing a petition to the Commission requesting such relief setting forth the reasons therefor and proposing alternative recordkeeping or record-retention procedures.

(b) *Action on petitions.* If, no review of the petition and after completion of any necessary or appropriate investigation supplementary thereto, the Commission shall find that the alternative procedure proposed, if granted, will not hamper or interfere with the enforcement of the Act, and will be of equivalent usefulness in its enforcement, the Commission may grant the petition subject to such conditions as it may determine appropriate and subject to revocation. Whenever any relief granted to any person is sought to be revoked for failure to comply with the conditions of the Commission, that person shall be notified in writing of the facts constituting such failure and afforded an opportunity to achieve or demonstrate compliance.

(c) *Compliance after submission of petitions.* The submission of a petition or any delay of the Commission in acting upon such petition shall not relieve any employer, employment agency, or labor organization from any obligations to comply with this part. However, the Commission shall give notice of the denial of any petition with due promptness.

Subpart D—Statutory Exemption

§ 1627.17 Calculating the amount of qualified retirement benefits for purposes of the exemption for bona fide executives or high policymaking employees.

(a) Section 12(c)(1) of the Act, added by the 1978 amendments and amended in 1984 and 1986, provides:

> Nothing in this Act shall be construed to prohibit compulsory retirement of any employee who has attained 65 years of age, and who, for the 2-year period immediately before retirement, is employed in a bona fide executive or high policymaking position, if such employee is entitled to an immediate nonforfeitable annual retirement benefit from a pension, profit-sharing, savings, or deferred compensation plan, or any combination of such plans, of the employer of such employee, which equals, in the aggregate, at least $44,000.

The Commission's interpretative statements regarding this exemption are set forth in section 1625 of this chapter.

(b) Section 12(c)(2) of the Act provides:

> In applying the retirement benefit test of paragraph (a) of this subsection, if any such retirement benefit is in a form other than a straight life annuity (with no ancillary benefits), or if employees contribute to any such plan or make rollover contributions, such benefit shall be adjusted in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Commission, after consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, so that the benefit is the equivalent of a straight life annuity (with no ancillary benefits) under a plan to which employees do not contribute and under which no rollover contributions are made.

(c)(1) The requirement that an employee be entitled to the equivalent of a $44,000 straight life annuity (with no ancillary benefits) is statisfied in any case where the employee has the option

of receiving, during each year of his or her lifetime following retirement, an annual payment of at least $44,000, or periodic payments on a more frequent basis which, in the aggregate, equal at least $44,000 per year: Provided, however, that the portion of the retirement income figure attributable to Social Security, employee contributions, rollover contributions and contributions of prior employers is excluded in the manner described in paragraph (e) of this section. (A retirement benefit which excludes these amounts is sometimes referred to herein as a ''qualified'' retirement benefit.)

(2) The requirment is also met where the employee has the option of receiving, upon retirement, a lump sum payment with which it is possible to purchase a single life annuity (with no ancillary benefits) yielding at least $44,000 per year as adjusted.

(3) The requirement is also satisfied where the employee is entitled to receive, upon retirement, benefits whose aggregate value, as of the date of the employee's retirement, with respect to those payments which are scheduled to be made within the period of life expectancy of the employee, is $44,000 per year as adjusted.

(4) Where an employee has one or more of the options described in paragraphs (c)(1) through (3) of this section, but instead selects another option (or options), the test is also met. On the other hand, where an employee has no choice but to have certain benefits provided after his or her death, the value of these benefits may not be included in this determination.

(5) The determination of the value of those benefits which may be counted towards the $44,000 requirement must be made on the basis of reasonable actuarial assumptions with respect to mortality and interest. For purposes of excluding from this determination any benefits which are available only after death, it is not necessary to determine the life expectancy of each person on an individual basis. A reasonable actuarial assumption with respect to mortality will suffice.

(6) The benefits computed under paragraphs (c)(1), (2) and (3) of this section shall be aggregated for purposes of determining whether the $44,000 requirement has been met.

(d) The only retirement benefits which may be counted towards the $44,000 annual benefit are those from a pension, profit-sharing, savings, or deferred compensation plan, or any combination of such plans. Such plans include, but are not limited to, stock bonus, thrift and simplified employee pensions. The value of benefits from any other employee benefit plans, such as health or life insurance, may not be counted.

(e) In calculating the value of a pension, profit-sharing, savings, or deferred compensation plan (or any combination of such plans), amounts attributable to Social Security, employee contributions, contributions of prior employers, and rollover contributions must be excluded. Specific rules are set forth below.

(1) *Social Security.* Amounts attributable to Social Security must be excluded. Since these amounts are readily determinable, no specific rules are deemed necessary.

(2) *Employee contributions.* Amounts attributable to employee contributions must be excluded. The regulations governing this requirement are based on section 411(c) of the Internal Revenue Code and Treasury Regulations thereunder (§1.411(c)–(1)), relating to the allocation of accrued benefits between employer and employee contributions. Different calculations are needed to determine the amount of employee contributions, depending upon whether the retirement income plan is a defined contribution plan or a defined benefit plan. Defined contribution plans (also referred to as individual account plans) generally provide that each participant has an individual account and the participant's benefits are based solely on the account balance. No set benefit is promised in defined contribution plans, and the final amount is a result not only of the actual contributions, but also of other factors, such as investment gains and losses. Any retirement income plan which is not an individual account plan is a defined benefit plan. Defined benefit plans generally provide a definitely determinable benefit, by specifying either a flat monthly payment or a schedule of payments based

on a formula (frequently involving salary and years of service), and they are funded according to actuarial principles over the employee's period of participation.

(i) *Defined contribution plans*—(A) *Separate accounts maintained.* If a separate account is maintained with respect to an employee's contributions and all income, expenses, gains and losses attributable thereto, the balance in such an account represents the amount attributable to employee contributions.

(B) *Separate accounts not maintained.* If a separate account is not maintained with respect to an employee's contributions and the income, expenses, gains and losses attributable thereto, the proportion of the total benefit attributable to employee contributions is determined by multiplying that benefit by a fraction:

(*1*) The numerator of which is the total amount of the employee's contributions under the plan (less withdrawals), and

(*2*) The denominator of which is the sum of the numerator and the total contributions made under the plan by the employer on behalf of the employee (less withdrawals).

Example: A defined contribution plan does not maintain separate accounts for employee contributions. An employee's annual retirement benefit under the plan is $40,000. The employee has contributed $96,000 and the employer has contributed $144,000 to the employee's individual account; no withdrawals have been made. The amount of the $40,000 annual benefit attributable to employee contributions is $40,000 × $96,000/$96,000 + $144,000 = $16,000. Hence the employer's share of the $40,000 annual retirement benefit is $40,000 minus $16,000 or $24,000—too low to fall within the exemption.

(ii) *Defined benefit plans*—(A) *Separate accounts maintained.* If a separate account is maintained with respect to an employee's contributions and all income, expenses, gains and losses attributable thereto, the balance in such an account represents the amount attributable to employee contributions.

(B) *Separate accounts not maintained.* If a separate account is not maintained with respect to an employee's contributions and the income, expenses, gains and losses attributable thereto, all of the contributions made by an employee must be converted actuarially to a single life annuity (without ancillary benefits) commencing at the age of forced retirement. An employee's accumulated contributions are the sum of all contributions (mandatory and, if not separately accounted for, voluntary) made by the employee, together with interest on the sum of all such contributions compounded annually at the rate of 5 percent per annum from the time each such contribution was made until the date of retirement. *Provided, however,* That prior to the date any plan became subject to section 411(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, interest will be credited at the rate (if any) specified in the plan. The amount of the employee's accumulated contribution described in the previous sentence must be multiplied by an ''appropriate conversion factor'' in order to convert it to a single life annuity (without ancillary benefits) commencing at the age of actual retirement. The appropriate conversion factor depends upon the age of retirement. In accordance with Rev. Rul. 76–47, 1976–2 C.B. 109, the following conversion factors shall be used with respect to the specified retirement ages:

Retirement age	Conversion factor percent
65 through 66	10
67 through 68	11
69	12

Example: An employee is scheduled to receive a pension from a defined benefit plan of $50,000 per year. Over the years he has contributed $150,000 to the plan, and at age 65 this amount, when contributions have been compounded at appropriate annual interest rates, is equal to $240,000. In accordance with Rev. Rul. 76–47, 10 percent is an appropriate conversion factor. When the $240,000 is multiplied by this conversion factor, the product is $24,000, which represents that part of the $50,000 annual pension payment which is attributable to employee contributions. The difference—$26,000—represents the employer's contribution, which is too low to meet the test in the exemption.

(3) *Contributions of prior employers.* Amounts attributable to contributions of prior employers must be excluded.

(i) *Current employer distinguished from prior employers.* Under the section 12(c) exemption, for purposes of excluding contributions of prior employers, a

prior employer is every previous employer of the employee except those previous employers which are members of a ''controlled group of corporations'' with, or ''under common control'' with, the employer which forces the employee to retire, as those terms are used in sections 414 (b) and 414(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, as modified by section 414(h) (26 U.S.C. 414(b), (c) and (h)).

(ii) *Benefits attributable to current employer and to prior employers.* Where the current employer maintains or contributes to a plan which is separate from plans maintained or contributed to by prior employers, the amount of the employee's benefit attributable to those prior employers can be readily determined. However, where the current employer maintains or contributes to the same plan as prior employers, the following rule shall apply. The benefit attributable to the current employer shall be the total benefit received by the employee, reduced by the benefit that the employee would have received from the plan if he or she had never worked for the current employer. For purposes of this calculation, it shall be assumed that all benefits have always been vested, even if benefits accrued as a result of service with a prior employer had not in fact been vested.

(4) *Rollover contributions.* Amounts attributable to rollover contributions must be excluded. For purposes of §1627.17(e), a rollover contribution (as defined in sections 402(a)(5), 403(a)(4), 408(d)(3) and 409(b)(3)(C) of the Internal Revenue Code) shall be treated as an employee contribution. These amounts have already been excluded as a result of the computations set forth in §1627.17(e)(2). Accordingly, no separate calculation is necessary to comply with this requirement.

(Sec. 12(c)(1) of the Age Discrimination In Employment Act of 1967, as amended by sec. 802(c)(1) of the Older Americans Act Amendments of 1984, Pub. L. 98–459, 98 Stat. 1792))

[44 FR 66797, Nov. 21, 1979, as amended at 50 FR 2544, Jan. 17, 1985; 53 FR 5973, Feb. 29, 1988]

PART 1630—REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT PROVISIONS OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Sec.

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1630.16 Specific activities permitted.
APPENDIX TO PART 1630—INTERPRETIVE GUIDANCE ON TITLE I OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 12116 and 12205a of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended.

SOURCE: 56 FR 35734, July 26, 1991, unless otherwise noted.

§1630.1 Purpose, applicability, and construction.

(a) *Purpose.* The purpose of this part is to implement title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA or Amendments Act), 42 U.S.C. 12101, *et seq.*, requiring equal employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The ADA as amended, and these regulations, are intended to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities, and to provide clear, strong, consistent, enforceable standards addressing discrimination.

(b) *Applicability*. This part applies to ''covered entities'' as defined at §1630.2(b).

(c) *Construction*—(1) *In general*. Except as otherwise provided in this part, this part does not apply a lesser standard than the standards applied under title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 790–794a, as amended), or the regulations issued by Federal agencies pursuant to that title.

(2) *Relationship to other laws*. This part does not invalidate or limit the remedies, rights, and procedures of any Federal law or law of any State or political subdivision of any State or jurisdiction that provides greater or equal protection for the rights of individuals with disabilities than is afforded by this part.

(3) *State workers' compensation laws and disability benefit programs*. Nothing in this part alters the standards for determining eligibility for benefits under State workers' compensation laws or under State and Federal disability benefit programs.

(4) *Broad coverage*. The primary purpose of the ADAAA is to make it easier for people with disabilities to obtain protection under the ADA. Consistent with the Amendments Act's purpose of reinstating a broad scope of protection under the ADA, the definition of ''disability'' in this part shall be construed broadly in favor of expansive coverage to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of the ADA. The primary object of attention in cases brought under the ADA should be whether covered entities have complied with their obligations and whether discrimination has occurred, not whether the individual meets the definition of disability. The question of whether an individual meets the definition of disability under this part should not demand extensive analysis.

[76 FR 16999, Mar. 25, 2011]

§1630.2 Definitions.

(a) *Commission* means the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission established by section 705 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e–4).

(b) *Covered Entity* means an employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor management committee.

(c) *Person, labor organization, employment agency, commerce and industry affecting commerce* shall have the same meaning given those terms in section 701 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e).

(d) *State* means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(e) *Employer*—(1) *In general*. The term employer means a person engaged in an industry affecting commerce who has 15 or more employees for each working day in each of 20 or more calendar weeks in the current or preceding calendar year, and any agent of such person, except that, from July 26, 1992 through July 25, 1994, an employer means a person engaged in an industry affecting commerce who has 25 or more employees for each working day in each of 20 or more calendar weeks in the current or preceding year and any agent of such person.

(2) *Exceptions*. The term employer does not include—

(i) The United States, a corporation wholly owned by the government of the United States, or an Indian tribe; or

(ii) A bona fide private membership club (other than a labor organization) that is exempt from taxation under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(f) *Employee* means an individual employed by an employer.

(g) *Definition of ''disability''*—(1) *In general*. *Disability* means, with respect to an individual—

(i) A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual;

(ii) A record of such an impairment; or

(iii) Being regarded as having such an impairment as described in paragraph (l) of this section. This means that the individual has been subjected to an action prohibited by the ADA as amended because of an actual or perceived impairment that is not both ''transitory and minor.''

(2) An individual may establish coverage under any one or more of these

three prongs of the definition of disability, i.e., paragraphs (g)(1)(i) (the ''actual disability'' prong), (g)(1)(ii) (the ''record of'' prong), and/or (g)(1)(iii) (the ''regarded as'' prong) of this section.

(3) Where an individual is not challenging a covered entity's failure to make reasonable accommodations and does not require a reasonable accommodation, it is generally unnecessary to proceed under the ''actual disability'' or ''record of'' prongs, which require a showing of an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity or a record of such an impairment. In these cases, the evaluation of coverage can be made solely under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of disability, which does not require a showing of an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity or a record of such an impairment. An individual may choose, however, to proceed under the ''actual disability'' and/or ''record of'' prong regardless of whether the individual is challenging a covered entity's failure to make reasonable accommodations or requires a reasonable accommodation.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (g): See §1630.3 for exceptions to this definition.

(h) *Physical or mental impairment* means—

(1) Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems, such as neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, immune, circulatory, hemic, lymphatic, skin, and endocrine; or

(2) Any mental or psychological disorder, such as an intellectual disability (formerly termed ''mental retardation''), organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.

(i) *Major life activities*—(1) *In general.* Major life activities include, but are not limited to:

(i) Caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, and working; and

(ii) The operation of a major bodily function, including functions of the immune system, special sense organs and skin; normal cell growth; and digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, and reproductive functions. The operation of a major bodily function includes the operation of an individual organ within a body system.

(2) In determining other examples of major life activities, the term ''major'' shall not be interpreted strictly to create a demanding standard for disability. ADAAA section 2(b)(4) (Findings and Purposes). Whether an activity is a ''major life activity'' is not determined by reference to whether it is of ''central importance to daily life.''

(j) *Substantially limits*—(1) *Rules of construction.* The following rules of construction apply when determining whether an impairment substantially limits an individual in a major life activity:

(i) The term ''substantially limits'' shall be construed broadly in favor of expansive coverage, to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of the ADA. ''Substantially limits'' is not meant to be a demanding standard.

(ii) An impairment is a disability within the meaning of this section if it substantially limits the ability of an individual to perform a major life activity as compared to most people in the general population. An impairment need not prevent, or significantly or severely restrict, the individual from performing a major life activity in order to be considered substantially limiting. Nonetheless, not every impairment will constitute a disability within the meaning of this section.

(iii) The primary object of attention in cases brought under the ADA should be whether covered entities have complied with their obligations and whether discrimination has occurred, not whether an individual's impairment substantially limits a major life activity. Accordingly, the threshold issue of whether an impairment ''substantially limits'' a major life activity should not demand extensive analysis.

(iv) The determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity requires an individualized assessment. However, in making this assessment, the term ''substantially limits'' shall be interpreted and applied to require a degree of functional limitation that is lower than the standard for ''substantially limits'' applied prior to the ADAAA.

(v) The comparison of an individual's performance of a major life activity to the performance of the same major life activity by most people in the general population usually will not require scientific, medical, or statistical analysis. Nothing in this paragraph is intended, however, to prohibit the presentation of scientific, medical, or statistical evidence to make such a comparison where appropriate.

(vi) The determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity shall be made without regard to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures. However, the ameliorative effects of ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses shall be considered in determining whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity.

(vii) An impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.

(viii) An impairment that substantially limits one major life activity need not substantially limit other major life activities in order to be considered a substantially limiting impairment.

(ix) The six-month ''transitory'' part of the ''transitory and minor'' exception to ''regarded as'' coverage in §1630.15(f) does not apply to the definition of ''disability'' under paragraphs (g)(1)(i) (the ''actual disability'' prong) or (g)(1)(ii) (the ''record of'' prong) of this section. The effects of an impairment lasting or expected to last fewer than six months can be substantially limiting within the meaning of this section.

(2) *Non-applicability to the ''regarded as'' prong.* Whether an individual's impairment ''substantially limits'' a major life activity is not relevant to coverage under paragraph (g)(1)(iii) (the ''regarded as'' prong) of this section.

(3) *Predictable assessments*—(i) The principles set forth in paragraphs (j)(1)(i) through (ix) of this section are intended to provide for more generous coverage and application of the ADA's prohibition on discrimination through a framework that is predictable, consistent, and workable for all individuals and entities with rights and responsibilities under the ADA as amended.

(ii) Applying the principles set forth in paragraphs (j)(1)(i) through (ix) of this section, the individualized assessment of some types of impairments will, in virtually all cases, result in a determination of coverage under paragraphs (g)(1)(i) (the ''actual disability'' prong) or (g)(1)(ii) (the ''record of'' prong) of this section. Given their inherent nature, these types of impairments will, as a factual matter, virtually always be found to impose a substantial limitation on a major life activity. Therefore, with respect to these types of impairments, the necessary individualized assessment should be particularly simple and straightforward.

(iii) For example, applying the principles set forth in paragraphs (j)(1)(i) through (ix) of this section, it should easily be concluded that the following types of impairments will, at a minimum, substantially limit the major life activities indicated: Deafness substantially limits hearing; blindness substantially limits seeing; an intellectual disability (formerly termed mental retardation) substantially limits brain function; partially or completely missing limbs or mobility impairments requiring the use of a wheelchair substantially limit musculoskeletal function; autism substantially limits brain function; cancer substantially limits normal cell growth; cerebral palsy substantially limits brain function; diabetes substantially limits endocrine function; epilepsy substantially limits neurological function; Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection substantially limits immune function; multiple sclerosis substantially limits neurological function; muscular dystrophy substantially limits neurological function; and major depressive

disorder, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, and schizophrenia substantially limit brain function. The types of impairments described in this section may substantially limit additional major life activities not explicitly listed above.

(4) *Condition, manner, or duration*—

(i) At all times taking into account the principles in paragraphs (j)(1)(i) through (ix) of this section, in determining whether an individual is substantially limited in a major life activity, it may be useful in appropriate cases to consider, as compared to most people in the general population, the condition under which the individual performs the major life activity; the manner in which the individual performs the major life activity; and/or the duration of time it takes the individual to perform the major life activity, or for which the individual can perform the major life activity.

(ii) Consideration of facts such as condition, manner, or duration may include, among other things, consideration of the difficulty, effort, or time required to perform a major life activity; pain experienced when performing a major life activity; the length of time a major life activity can be performed; and/or the way an impairment affects the operation of a major bodily function. In addition, the non-ameliorative effects of mitigating measures, such as negative side effects of medication or burdens associated with following a particular treatment regimen, may be considered when determining whether an individual's impairment substantially limits a major life activity.

(iii) In determining whether an individual has a disability under the ''actual disability'' or ''record of'' prongs of the definition of disability, the focus is on how a major life activity is substantially limited, and not on what outcomes an individual can achieve. For example, someone with a learning disability may achieve a high level of academic success, but may nevertheless be substantially limited in the major life activity of learning because of the additional time or effort he or she must spend to read, write, or learn compared to most people in the general population.

(iv) Given the rules of construction set forth in paragraphs (j)(1)(i) through (ix) of this section, it may often be unnecessary to conduct an analysis involving most or all of these types of facts. This is particularly true with respect to impairments such as those described in paragraph (j)(3)(iii) of this section, which by their inherent nature should be easily found to impose a substantial limitation on a major life activity, and for which the individualized assessment should be particularly simple and straightforward.

(5) *Examples of mitigating measures*—Mitigating measures include, but are not limited to:

(i) Medication, medical supplies, equipment, or appliances, low-vision devices (defined as devices that magnify, enhance, or otherwise augment a visual image, but not including ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses), prosthetics including limbs and devices, hearing aid(s) and cochlear implant(s) or other implantable hearing devices, mobility devices, and oxygen therapy equipment and supplies;

(ii) Use of assistive technology;

(iii) Reasonable accommodations or ''auxiliary aids or services'' (as defined by 42 U.S.C. 12103(1));

(iv) Learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications; or

(v) Psychotherapy, behavioral therapy, or physical therapy.

(6) *Ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses—defined.* Ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses are lenses that are intended to fully correct visual acuity or to eliminate refractive error.

(k) *Has a record of such an impairment*—(1) *In general.* An individual has a record of a disability if the individual has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

(2) *Broad construction.* Whether an individual has a record of an impairment that substantially limited a major life activity shall be construed broadly to the maximum extent permitted by the ADA and should not demand extensive analysis. An individual will be considered to have a record of a disability if

the individual has a history of an impairment that substantially limited one or more major life activities when compared to most people in the general population, or was misclassified as having had such an impairment. In determining whether an impairment substantially limited a major life activity, the principles articulated in paragraph (j) of this section apply.

(3) *Reasonable accommodation.* An individual with a record of a substantially limiting impairment may be entitled, absent undue hardship, to a reasonable accommodation if needed and related to the past disability. For example, an employee with an impairment that previously limited, but no longer substantially limits, a major life activity may need leave or a schedule change to permit him or her to attend follow-up or ''monitoring'' appointments with a health care provider.

(l) ''*Is regarded as having such an impairment.*'' The following principles apply under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of disability (paragraph (g)(1)(iii) of this section) above:

(1) Except as provided in §1630.15(f), an individual is ''regarded as having such an impairment'' if the individual is subjected to a prohibited action because of an actual or perceived physical or mental impairment, whether or not that impairment substantially limits, or is perceived to substantially limit, a major life activity. Prohibited actions include but are not limited to refusal to hire, demotion, placement on involuntary leave, termination, exclusion for failure to meet a qualification standard, harassment, or denial of any other term, condition, or privilege of employment

(2) Except as provided in §1630.15(f), an individual is ''regarded as having such an impairment'' any time a covered entity takes a prohibited action against the individual because of an actual or perceived impairment, even if the entity asserts, or may or does ultimately establish, a defense to such action.

(3) Establishing that an individual is ''regarded as having such an impairment'' does not, by itself, establish liability. Liability is established under title I of the ADA only when an individual proves that a covered entity discriminated on the basis of disability within the meaning of section 102 of the ADA, 42 U.S.C. 12112.

(m) The term ''*qualified,*'' with respect to an individual with a disability, means that the individual satisfies the requisite skill, experience, education and other job-related requirements of the employment position such individual holds or desires and, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of such position. See §1630.3 for exceptions to this definition.

(n) *Essential functions*—(1) *In general.* The term *essential functions* means the fundamental job duties of the employment position the individual with a disability holds or desires. The term ''essential functions'' does not include the marginal functions of the position.

(2) A job function may be considered essential for any of several reasons, including but not limited to the following:

(i) The function may be essential because the reason the position exists is to perform that function;

(ii) The function may be essential because of the limited number of employees available among whom the performance of that job function can be distributed; and/or

(iii) The function may be highly specialized so that the incumbent in the position is hired for his or her expertise or ability to perform the particular function.

(3) Evidence of whether a particular function is essential includes, but is not limited to:

(i) The employer's judgment as to which functions are essential;

(ii) Written job descriptions prepared before advertising or interviewing applicants for the job;

(iii) The amount of time spent on the job performing the function;

(iv) The consequences of not requiring the incumbent to perform the function;

(v) The terms of a collective bargaining agreement;

(vi) The work experience of past incumbents in the job; and/or

(vii) The current work experience of incumbents in similar jobs.

(o) *Reasonable accommodation.* (1) The term *reasonable accommodation* means:

(i) Modifications or adjustments to a job application process that enable a qualified applicant with a disability to be considered for the position such qualified applicant desires; or

(ii) Modifications or adjustments to the work environment, or to the manner or circumstances under which the position held or desired is customarily performed, that enable an individual with a disability who is qualified to perform the essential functions of that position; or

(iii) Modifications or adjustments that enable a covered entity's employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by its other similarly situated employees without disabilities.

(2) *Reasonable accommodation* may include but is not limited to:

(i) Making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities; and

(ii) Job restructuring; part-time or modified work schedules; reassignment to a vacant position; acquisition or modifications of equipment or devices; appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials, or policies; the provision of qualified readers or interpreters; and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

(3) To determine the appropriate reasonable accommodation it may be necessary for the covered entity to initiate an informal, interactive process with the individual with a disability in need of the accommodation. This process should identify the precise limitations resulting from the disability and potential reasonable accommodations that could overcome those limitations.

(4) A covered entity is required, absent undue hardship, to provide a reasonable accommodation to an otherwise qualified individual who meets the definition of disability under the ''actual disability'' prong (paragraph (g)(1)(i) of this section), or ''record of'' prong (paragraph (g)(1)(ii) of this section), but is not required to provide a reasonable accommodation to an individual who meets the definition of disability solely under the ''regarded as'' prong (paragraph (g)(1)(iii) of this section).

(p) *Undue hardship*—(1) *In general. Undue hardship* means, with respect to the provision of an accommodation, significant difficulty or expense incurred by a covered entity, when considered in light of the factors set forth in paragraph (p)(2) of this section.

(2) *Factors to be considered.* In determining whether an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on a covered entity, factors to be considered include:

(i) The nature and net cost of the accommodation needed under this part, taking into consideration the availability of tax credits and deductions, and/or outside funding;

(ii) The overall financial resources of the facility or facilities involved in the provision of the reasonable accommodation, the number of persons employed at such facility, and the effect on expenses and resources;

(iii) The overall financial resources of the covered entity, the overall size of the business of the covered entity with respect to the number of its employees, and the number, type and location of its facilities;

(iv) The type of operation or operations of the covered entity, including the composition, structure and functions of the workforce of such entity, and the geographic separateness and administrative or fiscal relationship of the facility or facilities in question to the covered entity; and

(v) The impact of the accommodation upon the operation of the facility, including the impact on the ability of other employees to perform their duties and the impact on the facility's ability to conduct business.

(q) *Qualification standards* means the personal and professional attributes including the skill, experience, education, physical, medical, safety and other requirements established by a covered entity as requirements which an individual must meet in order to be eligible for the position held or desired.

(r) *Direct Threat* means a significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others that cannot be eliminated or reduced

by reasonable accommodation. The determination that an individual poses a ''direct threat'' shall be based on an individualized assessment of the individual's present ability to safely perform the essential functions of the job. This assessment shall be based on a reasonable medical judgment that relies on the most current medical knowledge and/or on the best available objective evidence. In determining whether an individual would pose a direct threat, the factors to be considered include:

(1) The duration of the risk;

(2) The nature and severity of the potential harm;

(3) The likelihood that the potential harm will occur; and

(4) The imminence of the potential harm.

[56 FR 35734, July 26, 1991, as amended at 76 FR 16999, Mar. 25, 2011]

§ 1630.3 Exceptions to the definitions of "Disability" and "Qualified Individual with a Disability."

(a) The terms *disability* and *qualified individual with a disability* do not include individuals currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs, when the covered entity acts on the basis of such use.

(1) *Drug* means a controlled substance, as defined in schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C 812)

(2) *Illegal use of drugs* means the use of drugs the possession or distribution of which is unlawful under the Controlled Substances Act, as periodically updated by the Food and Drug Administration. This term does not include the use of a drug taken under the supervision of a licensed health care professional, or other uses authorized by the Controlled Substances Act or other provisions of Federal law.

(b) However, the terms *disability* and *qualified* individual with a disability may not exclude an individual who:

(1) Has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program and is no longer engaging in the illegal use of drugs, or has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully and is no longer engaging in the illegal use of drugs; or

(2) Is participating in a supervised rehabilitation program and is no longer engaging in such use; or

(3) Is erroneously regarded as engaging in such use, but is not engaging in such use.

(c) It shall not be a violation of this part for a covered entity to adopt or administer reasonable policies or procedures, including but not limited to drug testing, designed to ensure that an individual described in paragraph (b) (1) or (2) of this section is no longer engaging in the illegal use of drugs. (See §1630.16(c) Drug testing).

(d) *Disability* does not include:

(1) Transvestism, transsexualism, pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism, gender identity disorders not resulting from physical impairments, or other sexual behavior disorders;

(2) Compulsive gambling, kleptomania, or pyromania; or

(3) Psychoactive substance use disorders resulting from current illegal use of drugs.

(e) *Homosexuality and bisexuality* are not impairments and so are not disabilities as defined in this part.

§ 1630.4 Discrimination prohibited.

(a) *In general*—(1) It is unlawful for a covered entity to discriminate on the basis of disability against a qualified individual in regard to:

(i) Recruitment, advertising, and job application procedures;

(ii) Hiring, upgrading, promotion, award of tenure, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, right of return from layoff, and rehiring;

(iii) Rates of pay or any other form of compensation and changes in compensation;

(iv) Job assignments, job classifications, organizational structures, position descriptions, lines of progression, and seniority lists;

(v) Leaves of absence, sick leave, or any other leave;

(vi) Fringe benefits available by virtue of employment, whether or not administered by the covered entity;

(vii) Selection and financial support for training, including: apprenticeships, professional meetings, conferences and other related activities, and selection for leaves of absence to pursue training;

(viii) Activities sponsored by a covered entity, including social and recreational programs; and

(ix) Any other term, condition, or privilege of employment.

(2) The term discrimination includes, but is not limited to, the acts described in §§ 1630.4 through 1630.13 of this part.

(b) *Claims of no disability.* Nothing in this part shall provide the basis for a claim that an individual without a disability was subject to discrimination because of his lack of disability, including a claim that an individual with a disability was granted an accommodation that was denied to an individual without a disability.

[76 FR 17002, Mar. 25, 2011]

§ 1630.5 Limiting, segregating, and classifying.

It is unlawful for a covered entity to limit, segregate, or classify a job applicant or employee in a way that adversely affects his or her employment opportunities or status on the basis of disability.

§ 1630.6 Contractual or other arrangements.

(a) *In general.* It is unlawful for a covered entity to participate in a contractual or other arrangement or relationship that has the effect of subjecting the covered entity's own qualified applicant or employee with a disability to the discrimination prohibited by this part.

(b) *Contractual or other arrangement defined.* The phrase *contractual or other arrangement or relationship* includes, but is not limited to, a relationship with an employment or referral agency; labor union, including collective bargaining agreements; an organization providing fringe benefits to an employee of the covered entity; or an organization providing training and apprenticeship programs.

(c) *Application.* This section applies to a covered entity, with respect to its own applicants or employees, whether the entity offered the contract or initiated the relationship, or whether the entity accepted the contract or acceded to the relationship. A covered entity is not liable for the actions of the other party or parties to the contract which only affect that other party's employees or applicants.

§ 1630.7 Standards, criteria, or methods of administration.

It is unlawful for a covered entity to use standards, criteria, or methods of administration, which are not job-related and consistent with business necessity, and:

(a) That have the effect of discriminating on the basis of disability; or

(b) That perpetuate the discrimination of others who are subject to common administrative control.

§ 1630.8 Relationship or association with an individual with a disability.

It is unlawful for a covered entity to exclude or deny equal jobs or benefits to, or otherwise discriminate against, a qualified individual because of the known disability of an individual with whom the qualified individual is known to have a family, business, social or other relationship or association.

§ 1630.9 Not making reasonable accommodation.

(a) It is unlawful for a covered entity not to make reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified applicant or employee with a disability, unless such covered entity can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its business.

(b) It is unlawful for a covered entity to deny employment opportunities to an otherwise qualified job applicant or employee with a disability based on the need of such covered entity to make reasonable accommodation to such individual's physical or mental impairments.

(c) A covered entity shall not be excused from the requirements of this part because of any failure to receive technical assistance authorized by section 507 of the ADA, including any failure in the development or dissemination of any technical assistance manual authorized by that Act.

(d) An individual with a disability is not required to accept an accommodation, aid, service, opportunity or benefit which such qualified individual chooses not to accept. However, if such

individual rejects a reasonable accommodation, aid, service, opportunity or benefit that is necessary to enable the individual to perform the essential functions of the position held or desired, and cannot, as a result of that rejection, perform the essential functions of the position, the individual will not be considered qualified.

(e) A covered entity is required, absent undue hardship, to provide a reasonable accommodation to an otherwise qualified individual who meets the definition of disability under the ''actual disability'' prong (§1630.2(g)(1)(i)), or ''record of'' prong (§1630.2(g)(1)(ii)), but is not required to provide a reasonable accommodation to an individual who meets the definition of disability solely under the ''regarded as'' prong (§1630.2(g)(1)(iii)).

[56 FR 35734, July 26, 1991, as amended at 76 FR 17002, Mar. 25, 2011]

§1630.10 Qualification standards, tests, and other selection criteria.

(a) *In general.* It is unlawful for a covered entity to use qualification standards, employment tests or other selection criteria that screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities, on the basis of disability, unless the standard, test, or other selection criteria, as used by the covered entity, is shown to be job related for the position in question and is consistent with business necessity.

(b) *Qualification standards and tests related to uncorrected vision.* Notwithstanding §1630.2(j)(1)(vi) of this part, a covered entity shall not use qualification standards, employment tests, or other selection criteria based on an individual's uncorrected vision unless the standard, test, or other selection criterion, as used by the covered entity, is shown to be job related for the position in question and is consistent with business necessity. An individual challenging a covered entity's application of a qualification standard, test, or other criterion based on uncorrected vision need not be a person with a disability, but must be adversely affected by the application of the standard, test, or other criterion.

[76 FR 17002, Mar. 25, 2011]

§1630.11 Administration of tests.

It is unlawful for a covered entity to fail to select and administer tests concerning employment in the most effective manner to ensure that, when a test is administered to a job applicant or employee who has a disability that impairs sensory, manual or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the skills, aptitude, or whatever other factor of the applicant or employee that the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills of such employee or applicant (except where such skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

§1630.12 Retaliation and coercion.

(a) *Retaliation.* It is unlawful to discriminate against any individual because that individual has opposed any act or practice made unlawful by this part or because that individual made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing to enforce any provision contained in this part.

(b) *Coercion, interference or intimidation.* It is unlawful to coerce, intimidate, threaten, harass or interfere with any individual in the exercise or enjoyment of, or because that individual aided or encouraged any other individual in the exercise of, any right granted or protected by this part.

§1630.13 Prohibited medical examinations and inquiries.

(a) *Pre-employment examination or inquiry.* Except as permitted by §1630.14, it is unlawful for a covered entity to conduct a medical examination of an applicant or to make inquiries as to whether an applicant is an individual with a disability or as to the nature or severity of such disability.

(b) *Examination or inquiry of employees.* Except as permitted by §1630.14, it is unlawful for a covered entity to require a medical examination of an employee or to make inquiries as to whether an employee is an individual with a disability or as to the nature or severity of such disability.

§ 1630.14 Medical examinations and inquiries specifically permitted.

(a) *Acceptable pre-employment inquiry.* A covered entity may make pre-employment inquiries into the ability of an applicant to perform job-related functions, and/or may ask an applicant to describe or to demonstrate how, with or without reasonable accommodation, the applicant will be able to perform job-related functions.

(b) *Employment entrance examination.* A covered entity may require a medical examination (and/or inquiry) after making an offer of employment to a job applicant and before the applicant begins his or her employment duties, and may condition an offer of employment on the results of such examination (and/or inquiry), if all entering employees in the same job category are subjected to such an examination (and/or inquiry) regardless of disability.

(1) Information obtained under paragraph (b) of this section regarding the medical condition or history of the applicant shall be collected and maintained on separate forms and in separate medical files and be treated as a confidential medical record, except that:

(i) Supervisors and managers may be informed regarding necessary restrictions on the work or duties of the employee and necessary accommodations;

(ii) First aid and safety personnel may be informed, when appropriate, if the disability might require emergency treatment; and

(iii) Government officials investigating compliance with this part shall be provided relevant information on request.

(2) The results of such examination shall not be used for any purpose inconsistent with this part.

(3) Medical examinations conducted in accordance with this section do not have to be job-related and consistent with business necessity. However, if certain criteria are used to screen out an employee or employees with disabilities as a result of such an examination or inquiry, the exclusionary criteria must be job-related and consistent with business necessity, and performance of the essential job functions cannot be accomplished with reasonable accommodation as required in this part. (See §1630.15(b) Defenses to charges of discriminatory application of selection criteria.)

(c) *Examination of employees.* A covered entity may require a medical examination (and/or inquiry) of an employee that is job-related and consistent with business necessity. A covered entity may make inquiries into the ability of an employee to perform job-related functions.

(1) Information obtained under paragraph (c) of this section regarding the medical condition or history of any employee shall be collected and maintained on separate forms and in separate medical files and be treated as a confidential medical record, except that:

(i) Supervisors and managers may be informed regarding necessary restrictions on the work or duties of the employee and necessary accommodations;

(ii) First aid and safety personnel may be informed, when appropriate, if the disability might require emergency treatment; and

(iii) Government officials investigating compliance with this part shall be provided relevant information on request.

(2) Information obtained under paragraph (c) of this section regarding the medical condition or history of any employee shall not be used for any purpose inconsistent with this part.

(d) *Other acceptable examinations and inquiries.* A covered entity may conduct voluntary medical examinations and activities, including voluntary medical histories, which are part of an employee health program available to employees at the work site.

(1) *Employee health program.* An employee health program, including any disability-related inquiries or medical examinations that are part of such program, must be reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease. A program satisfies this standard if it has a reasonable chance of improving the health of, or preventing disease in, participating employees, and it is not overly burdensome, is not a subterfuge for violating the ADA or other laws prohibiting employment discrimination, and is not highly suspect in the method chosen to promote health or prevent disease. A program consisting

of a measurement, test, screening, or collection of health-related information without providing results, follow-up information, or advice designed to improve the health of participating employees is not reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease, unless the collected information actually is used to design a program that addresses at least a subset of the conditions identified. A program also is not reasonably designed if it exists mainly to shift costs from the covered entity to targeted employees based on their health or simply to give an employer information to estimate future health care costs. Whether an employee health program is reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease is evaluated in light of all the relevant facts and circumstances.

(2) *Voluntary*. An employee health program that includes disability-related inquiries or medical examinations (including disability-related inquiries or medical examinations that are part of a health risk assessment) is voluntary as long as a covered entity:

(i) Does not require employees to participate;

(ii) Does not deny coverage under any of its group health plans or particular benefits packages within a group health plan for non-participation, or limit the extent of benefits (except as allowed under paragraph (d)(3) of this section) for employees who do not participate;

(iii) Does not take any adverse employment action or retaliate against, interfere with, coerce, intimidate, or threaten employees within the meaning of Section 503 of the ADA, codified at 42 U.S.C. 12203; and

(iv) Provides employees with a notice that:

(A) Is written so that the employee from whom medical information is being obtained is reasonably likely to understand it;

(B) Describes the type of medical information that will be obtained and the specific purposes for which the medical information will be used; and

(C) Describes the restrictions on the disclosure of the employee's medical information, the employer representatives or other parties with whom the information will be shared, and the methods that the covered entity will use to ensure that medical information is not improperly disclosed (including whether it complies with the measures set forth in the HIPAA regulations codified at 45 CFR parts 160 and 164).

(3) [Reserved]

(4)(i) *Confidentiality*. Information obtained under paragraph (d) of this section regarding the medical condition or history of any employee shall be collected and maintained on separate forms and in separate medical files and be treated as a confidential medical record, except that:

(A) Supervisors and managers may be informed regarding necessary restrictions on the work or duties of the employee and necessary accommodations;

(B) First aid and safety personnel may be informed, when appropriate, if the disability might require emergency treatment; and

(C) Government officials investigating compliance with this part shall be provided relevant information on request.

(ii) Information obtained under paragraph (d) of this section regarding the medical condition or history of any employee shall not be used for any purpose inconsistent with this part.

(iii) Except as permitted under paragraph (d)(4)(i) of this section and as is necessary to administer the health plan, information obtained under this paragraph (d) regarding the medical information or history of any individual may only be provided to an ADA covered entity in aggregate terms that do not disclose, or are not reasonably likely to disclose, the identity of any employee.

(iv) A covered entity shall not require an employee to agree to the sale, exchange, sharing, transfer, or other disclosure of medical information (except to the extent permitted by this part to carry out specific activities related to the wellness program), or to waive any confidentiality protections in this part as a condition for participating in a wellness program or for earning any incentive the covered entity offers in connection with such a program.

(5) Compliance with the requirements of this paragraph (d), including the limit on incentives under the ADA,

does not relieve a covered entity from the obligation to comply in all respects with the nondiscrimination provisions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, 29 U.S.C. 206(d), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, 29 U.S.C. 621 *et seq.*, Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, 42 U.S.C. 2000ff, *et seq.*, or other sections of Title I of the ADA.

(6) The ''safe harbor'' provisions in §1630.16(f) of this part applicable to health insurance, life insurance, and other benefit plans do not apply to wellness programs, even if such plans are part of a covered entity's health plan.

[56 FR 35734, July 26, 1991, as amended at 81 FR 31139, May 17, 2016; 83 FR 65296, Dec. 20, 2018]

§1630.15 Defenses.

Defenses to an allegation of discrimination under this part may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) *Disparate treatment charges.* It may be a defense to a charge of disparate treatment brought under §§1630.4 through 1630.8 and 1630.11 through 1630.12 that the challenged action is justified by a legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason.

(b) *Charges of discriminatory application of selection criteria*—(1) *In general.* It may be a defense to a charge of discrimination, as described in §1630.10, that an alleged application of qualification standards, tests, or selection criteria that screens out or tends to screen out or otherwise denies a job or benefit to an individual with a disability has been shown to be job-related and consistent with business necessity, and such performance cannot be accomplished with reasonable accommodation, as required in this part.

(2) *Direct threat as a qualification standard.* The term ''qualification standard'' may include a requirement that an individual shall not pose a direct threat to the health or safety of the individual or others in the workplace. (See §1630.2(r) defining direct threat.)

(c) *Other disparate impact charges.* It may be a defense to a charge of discrimination brought under this part that a uniformly applied standard, criterion, or policy has a disparate impact on an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities that the challenged standard, criterion or policy has been shown to be job-related and consistent with business necessity, and such performance cannot be accomplished with reasonable accommodation, as required in this part.

(d) *Charges of not making reasonable accommodation.* It may be a defense to a charge of discrimination, as described in §1630.9, that a requested or necessary accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the covered entity's business.

(e) *Conflict with other Federal laws.* It may be a defense to a charge of discrimination under this part that a challenged action is required or necessitated by another Federal law or regulation, or that another Federal law or regulation prohibits an action (including the provision of a particular reasonable accommodation) that would otherwise be required by this part.

(f) *Claims based on transitory and minor impairments under the ''regarded as'' prong.* It may be a defense to a charge of discrimination by an individual claiming coverage under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of disability that the impairment is (in the case of an actual impairment) or would be (in the case of a perceived impairment) ''transitory and minor.'' To establish this defense, a covered entity must demonstrate that the impairment is both ''transitory'' and ''minor.'' Whether the impairment at issue is or would be ''transitory and minor'' is to be determined objectively. A covered entity may not defeat ''regarded as'' coverage of an individual simply by demonstrating that it subjectively believed the impairment was transitory and minor; rather, the covered entity must demonstrate that the impairment is (in the case of an actual impairment) or would be (in the case of a perceived impairment) both transitory and minor. For purposes of this section, ''transitory'' is defined as lasting or expected to last six months or less.

(g) *Additional defenses.* It may be a defense to a charge of discrimination

under this part that the alleged discriminatory action is specifically permitted by §1630.14 or §1630.16.

[56 FR 35734, July 26, 1991, as amended at 76 FR 17003, Mar. 25, 2011]

§1630.16 Specific activities permitted.

(a) *Religious entities.* A religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society is permitted to give preference in employment to individuals of a particular religion to perform work connected with the carrying on by that corporation, association, educational institution, or society of its activities. A religious entity may require that all applicants and employees conform to the religious tenets of such organization. However, a religious entity may not discriminate against a qualified individual, who satisfies the permitted religious criteria, on the basis of his or her disability.

(b) *Regulation of alcohol and drugs.* A covered entity:

(1) May prohibit the illegal use of drugs and the use of alcohol at the workplace by all employees;

(2) May require that employees not be under the influence of alcohol or be engaging in the illegal use of drugs at the workplace;

(3) May require that all employees behave in conformance with the requirements established under the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. 701 *et seq.*);

(4) May hold an employee who engages in the illegal use of drugs or who is an alcoholic to the same qualification standards for employment or job performance and behavior to which the entity holds its other employees, even if any unsatisfactory performance or behavior is related to the employee's drug use or alcoholism;

(5) May require that its employees employed in an industry subject to such regulations comply with the standards established in the regulations (if any) of the Departments of Defense and Transportation, and of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, regarding alcohol and the illegal use of drugs; and

(6) May require that employees employed in sensitive positions comply with the regulations (if any) of the Departments of Defense and Transportation and of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that apply to employment in sensitive positions subject to such regulations.

(c) *Drug testing*—(1) *General policy.* For purposes of this part, a test to determine the illegal use of drugs is not considered a medical examination. Thus, the administration of such drug tests by a covered entity to its job applicants or employees is not a violation of §1630.13 of this part. However, this part does not encourage, prohibit, or authorize a covered entity to conduct drug tests of job applicants or employees to determine the illegal use of drugs or to make employment decisions based on such test results.

(2) *Transportation employees.* This part does not encourage, prohibit, or authorize the otherwise lawful exercise by entities subject to the jurisdiction of the Department of Transportation of authority to:

(i) Test employees of entities in, and applicants for, positions involving safety sensitive duties for the illegal use of drugs or for on-duty impairment by alcohol; and

(ii) Remove from safety-sensitive positions persons who test positive for illegal use of drugs or on-duty impairment by alcohol pursuant to paragraph (c)(2)(i) of this section.

(3) *Confidentiality.* Any information regarding the medical condition or history of any employee or applicant obtained from a test to determine the illegal use of drugs, except information regarding the illegal use of drugs, is subject to the requirements of §1630.14(b) (2) and (3) of this part.

(d) *Regulation of smoking.* A covered entity may prohibit or impose restrictions on smoking in places of employment. Such restrictions do not violate any provision of this part.

(e) *Infectious and communicable diseases; food handling jobs*—(1) *In general.* Under title I of the ADA, section 103(d)(1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services is to prepare a list, to be updated annually, of infectious and communicable diseases which are transmitted through the handling of food. (Copies may be obtained from Center for Infectious Diseases, Centers for Disease Control, 1600 Clifton Road, NE., Mailstop C09, Atlanta, GA 30333.)

If an individual with a disability is disabled by one of the infectious or communicable diseases included on this list, and if the risk of transmitting the disease associated with the handling of food cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation, a covered entity may refuse to assign or continue to assign such individual to a job involving food handling. However, if the individual with a disability is a current employee, the employer must consider whether he or she can be accommodated by reassignment to a vacant position not involving food handling.

(2) *Effect on State or other laws.* This part does not preempt, modify, or amend any State, county, or local law, ordinance or regulation applicable to food handling which:

(i) Is in accordance with the list, referred to in paragraph (e)(1) of this section, of infectious or communicable diseases and the modes of transmissibility published by the Secretary of Health and Human Services; and

(ii) Is designed to protect the public health from individuals who pose a significant risk to the health or safety of others, where that risk cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation.

(f) *Health insurance, life insurance, and other benefit plans*—(1) An insurer, hospital, or medical service company, health maintenance organization, or any agent or entity that administers benefit plans, or similar organizations may underwrite risks, classify risks, or administer such risks that are based on or not inconsistent with State law.

(2) A covered entity may establish, sponsor, observe or administer the terms of a bona fide benefit plan that are based on underwriting risks, classifying risks, or administering such risks that are based on or not inconsistent with State law.

(3) A covered entity may establish, sponsor, observe, or administer the terms of a bona fide benefit plan that is not subject to State laws that regulate insurance.

(4) The activities described in paragraphs (f) (1), (2), and (3) of this section are permitted unless these activities are being used as a subterfuge to evade the purposes of this part.

[56 FR 35734, July 26, 1991, 76 FR 17003, Mar. 25, 2011]

APPENDIX TO PART 1630—INTERPRETIVE GUIDANCE ON TITLE I OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

INTRODUCTION

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a landmark piece of civil rights legislation signed into law on July 26, 1990, and amended effective January 1, 2009. See 42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*, as amended. In passing the ADA, Congress recognized that ''discrimination against individuals with disabilities continues to be a serious and pervasive social problem'' and that the ''continuing existence of unfair and unnecessary discrimination and prejudice denies people with disabilities the opportunity to compete on an equal basis and to pursue those opportunities for which our free society is justifiably famous, and costs the United States billions of dollars in unnecessary expenses resulting from dependency and nonproductivity.'' 42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(2), (8). Discrimination on the basis of disability persists in critical areas such as housing, public accommodations, education, transportation, communication, recreation, institutionalization, health services, voting, access to public services, and employment. 42 U.S.C. 12101(a)(3). Accordingly, the ADA prohibits discrimination in a wide range of areas, including employment, public services, and public accommodations.

Title I of the ADA prohibits disability-based discrimination in employment. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (the Commission or the EEOC) is responsible for enforcement of title I (and parts of title V) of the ADA. Pursuant to the ADA as amended, the EEOC is expressly granted the authority and is expected to amend these regulations. 42 U.S.C. 12205a. Under title I of the ADA, covered entities may not discriminate against qualified individuals on the basis of disability in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training, or other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. 42 U.S.C. 12112(a). For these purposes, ''discriminate'' includes (1) limiting, segregating, or classifying a job applicant or employee in a way that adversely affects the opportunities or status of the applicant or employee; (2) participating in a contractual or other arrangement or relationship that has the effect of subjecting a covered entity's qualified applicants or employees to discrimination; (3) utilizing standards, criteria, or other methods of administration that have the effect of discrimination on the basis

of disability; (4) not making reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability, unless the covered entity can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the business of the covered entity; (5) denying employment opportunities to a job applicant or employee who is otherwise qualified, if such denial is based on the need to make reasonable accommodation; (6) using qualification standards, employment tests or other selection criteria that screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities unless the standard, test or other selection criterion is shown to be job related for the position in question and is consistent with business necessity; and (7) subjecting applicants or employees to prohibited medical inquiries or examinations. See 42 U.S.C. 12112(b), (d).

As with other civil rights laws, individuals seeking protection under these anti-discrimination provisions of the ADA generally must allege and prove that they are members of the ''protected class.''[1] Under the ADA, this typically means they have to show that they meet the statutory definition of ''disability.'' 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 5. However, ''Congress did not intend for the threshold question of disability to be used as a means of excluding individuals from coverage.'' Id.

In the original ADA, Congress defined ''disability'' as (1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an individual; (2) a record of such an impairment; or (3) being regarded as having such an impairment. 42 U.S.C. 12202(2). Congress patterned these three parts of the definition of disability—the ''actual,'' ''record of,'' and ''regarded as'' prongs—after the definition of ''handicap'' found in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 6. By doing so, Congress intended that the relevant case law developed under the Rehabilitation Act would be generally applicable to the term ''disability'' as used in the ADA. H.R. Rep. No. 485 part 3, 101st Cong., 2d Sess. 27 (1990) (1990 House Judiciary Report or House Judiciary Report); See also S. Rep. No. 116, 101st Cong., 1st Sess. 21 (1989) (1989 Senate Report or Senate Report); H.R. Rep. No. 485 part 2, 101st Cong., 2d Sess. 50 (1990) (1990 House Labor Report or House Labor Report). Congress expected that the definition of disability and related terms, such as ''substantially limits'' and ''major life activity,'' would be interpreted under the ADA ''consistently with how courts had applied the definition of a handicapped individual under the Rehabilitation Act''—i.e., expansively and in favor of broad coverage. ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA or Amendments Act) at section 2(a)(1)–(8) and (b)(1)–(6) (Findings and Purposes); See also Senate Statement of the Managers to Accompany S. 3406 (2008 Senate Statement of Managers) at 3 (''When Congress passed the ADA in 1990, it adopted the functional definition of disability from section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, in part, because after 17 years of development through case law the requirements of the definition were well understood. Within this framework, with its generous and inclusive definition of disability, courts treated the determination of disability as a threshold issue but focused primarily on whether unlawful discrimination had occurred.''); 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 6 & n.6 (noting that courts had interpreted this Rehabilitation Act definition ''broadly to include persons with a wide range of physical and mental impairments'').

That expectation was not fulfilled. ADAAA section 2(a)(3). The holdings of several Supreme Court cases sharply narrowed the broad scope of protection Congress originally intended under the ADA, thus eliminating protection for many individuals whom Congress intended to protect. Id. For example, in *Sutton* v. *United Air Lines, Inc.*, 527 U.S. 471 (1999), the Court ruled that whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity is to be determined with reference to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures. In *Sutton*, the Court also adopted a restrictive reading of the meaning of being ''regarded as'' disabled under the ADA's definition of disability. Subsequently, in *Toyota Motor Mfg., Ky., Inc.* v. *Williams*, 534 U.S. 184 (2002), the Court held that the terms ''substantially'' and ''major'' in the definition of disability ''need to be interpreted strictly to create a demanding standard for qualifying as disabled'' under the ADA, and that to be substantially limited in performing a major life activity under the ADA, ''an individual must have an impairment that prevents or severely restricts the individual from doing activities that are of central importance to most people's daily lives.''

[1] Claims of improper disability-related inquiries or medical examinations, improper disclosure of confidential medical information, or retaliation may be brought by any applicant or employee, not just individuals with disabilities. See, e.g., *Cossette* v. *Minnesota Power & Light*, 188 F.3d 964, 969–70 (8th Cir. 1999); *Fredenburg* v. *Contra Costa County Dep't of Health Servs.*, 172 F.3d 1176, 1182 (9th Cir. 1999); *Griffin* v. *Steeltek, Inc.*, 160 F.3d 591, 594 (10th Cir. 1998). Likewise, a nondisabled applicant or employee may challenge an employment action that is based on the disability of an individual with whom the applicant or employee is known to have a relationship or association. See 42 U.S.C. 12112(b)(4).

As a result of these Supreme Court decisions, lower courts ruled in numerous cases that individuals with a range of substantially limiting impairments were not individuals with disabilities, and thus not protected by the ADA. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 3 (''After the Court's decisions in *Sutton* that impairments must be considered in their mitigated state and in *Toyota* that there must be a demanding standard for qualifying as disabled, lower courts more often found that an individual's impairment did not constitute a disability. As a result, in too many cases, courts would never reach the question whether discrimination had occurred.''). Congress concluded that these rulings imposed a greater degree of limitation and expressed a higher standard than it had originally intended, and coupled with the EEOC's 1991 ADA regulations which had defined the term ''substantially limits'' as ''significantly restricted,'' unduly precluded many individuals from being covered under the ADA. Id. (''[t]hus, some 18 years later we are faced with a situation in which physical or mental impairments that would previously have been found to constitute disabilities are not considered disabilities under the Supreme Court's narrower standard'' and ''[t]he resulting court decisions contribute to a legal environment in which individuals must demonstrate an inappropriately high degree of functional limitation in order to be protected from discrimination under the ADA'').

Consequently, Congress amended the ADA with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008. The ADAAA was signed into law on September 25, 2008, and became effective on January 1, 2009. This legislation is the product of extensive bipartisan efforts, and the culmination of collaboration and coordination between legislators and stakeholders, including representatives of the disability, business, and education communities. See Statement of Representatives Hoyer and Sensenbrenner, 154 Cong. Rec. H8294–96 (daily ed. Sept. 17, 2008) (Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Congressional Record Statement); Senate Statement of Managers at 1. The express purposes of the ADAAA are, among other things:

(1) To carry out the ADA's objectives of providing ''a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination'' and ''clear, strong, consistent, enforceable standards addressing discrimination'' by reinstating a broad scope of protection under the ADA;

(2) To reject the requirement enunciated in *Sutton* and its companion cases that whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity is to be determined with reference to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures;

(3) To reject the Supreme Court's reasoning in *Sutton* with regard to coverage under the third prong of the definition of disability and to reinstate the reasoning of the Supreme Court in *School Board of Nassau County* v. *Arline,* 480 U.S. 273 (1987), which set forth a broad view of the third prong of the definition of handicap under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;

(4) To reject the standards enunciated by the Supreme Court in *Toyota* that the terms ''substantially'' and ''major'' in the definition of disability under the ADA ''need to be interpreted strictly to create a demanding standard for qualifying as disabled,'' and that to be substantially limited in performing a major life activity under the ADA ''an individual must have an impairment that prevents or severely restricts the individual from doing activities that are of central importance to most people's daily lives'';

(5) To convey congressional intent that the standard created by the Supreme Court in *Toyota* for ''substantially limits,'' and applied by lower courts in numerous decisions, has created an inappropriately high level of limitation necessary to obtain coverage under the ADA;

(6) To convey that it is the intent of Congress that the primary object of attention in cases brought under the ADA should be whether entities covered under the ADA have complied with their obligations, and to convey that the question of whether an individual's impairment is a disability under the ADA should not demand extensive analysis; and

(7) To express Congress' expectation that the EEOC will revise that portion of its current regulations that defines the term ''substantially limits'' as ''significantly restricted'' to be consistent with the ADA as amended.

ADAAA section 2(b). The findings and purposes of the ADAAA ''give[] clear guidance to the courts and * * * [are] intend[ed] to be applied appropriately and consistently.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 5.

The EEOC has amended its regulations to reflect the ADAAA's findings and purposes. The Commission believes that it is essential also to amend its appendix to the original regulations at the same time, and to reissue this interpretive guidance as amended concurrently with the issuance of the amended regulations. This will help to ensure that individuals with disabilities understand their rights, and to facilitate and encourage compliance by covered entities under this part.

Accordingly, this amended appendix addresses the major provisions of this part and explains the major concepts related to disability-based employment discrimination. This appendix represents the Commission's interpretation of the issues addressed within it, and the Commission will be guided by this appendix when resolving charges of employment discrimination.

NOTE ON CERTAIN TERMINOLOGY USED

The ADA, the EEOC's ADA regulations, and this appendix use the term ''disabilities'' rather than the term ''handicaps'' which was originally used in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 701–796. Substantively, these terms are equivalent. As originally noted by the House Committee on the Judiciary, ''[t]he use of the term 'disabilities' instead of the term 'handicaps' reflects the desire of the Committee to use the most current terminology. It reflects the preference of persons with disabilities to use that term rather than 'handicapped' as used in previous laws, such as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 * * *.'' 1990 House Judiciary Report at 26–27; See also 1989 Senate Report at 21; 1990 House Labor Report at 50–51.

In addition, consistent with the Amendments Act, revisions have been made to the regulations and this appendix to refer to ''individual with a disability'' and ''qualified individual'' as separate terms, and to change the prohibition on discrimination to ''on the basis of disability'' instead of prohibiting discrimination against a qualified individual ''with a disability because of the disability of such individual.'' ''This ensures that the emphasis in questions of disability discrimination is properly on the critical inquiry of whether a qualified person has been discriminated against on the basis of disability, and not unduly focused on the preliminary question of whether a particular person is a 'person with a disability.'" 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 11.

The use of the term ''Americans'' in the title of the ADA, in the EEOC's regulations, or in this appendix as amended is not intended to imply that the ADA only applies to United States citizens. Rather, the ADA protects all qualified individuals with disabilities, regardless of their citizenship status or nationality, from discrimination by a covered entity.

Finally, the terms ''employer'' and ''employer or other covered entity'' are used interchangeably throughout this appendix to refer to all covered entities subject to the employment provisions of the ADA.

Section 1630.1 Purpose, Applicability and Construction

Section 1630.1(a) Purpose

The express purposes of the ADA as amended are to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities; to provide clear, strong, consistent, enforceable standards addressing discrimination against individuals with disabilities; to ensure that the Federal Government plays a central role in enforcing the standards articulated in the ADA on behalf of individuals with disabilities; and to invoke the sweep of congressional authority to address the major areas of discrimination faced day-to-day by people with disabilities. 42 U.S.C. 12101(b). The EEOC's ADA regulations are intended to implement these Congressional purposes in simple and straightforward terms.

Section 1630.1(b) Applicability

The EEOC's ADA regulations as amended apply to all ''covered entities'' as defined at §1630.2(b). The ADA defines ''covered entities'' to mean an employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee. 42 U.S.C. 12111(2). All covered entities are subject to the ADA's rules prohibiting discrimination. 42 U.S.C. 12112.

Section 1630.1(c) Construction

The ADA must be construed as amended. The primary purpose of the Amendments Act was to make it easier for people with disabilities to obtain protection under the ADA. See Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement on the Origins of the ADA Restoration Act of 2008, H.R. 3195 (reviewing provisions of H.R. 3195 as revised following negotiations between representatives of the disability and business communities) (Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement) at 2. Accordingly, under the ADA as amended and the EEOC's regulations, the definition of ''disability'' ''shall be construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals under [the ADA], to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of [the ADA].'' 42 U.S.C. 12102(4)(A); See also 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 3 (''The ADA Amendments Act * * * reiterates that Congress intends that the scope of the [ADA] be broad and inclusive.''). This construction is also intended to reinforce the general rule that civil rights statutes must be broadly construed to achieve their remedial purpose. Id. at 2; See also 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 19 (this rule of construction ''directs courts to construe the definition of 'disability' broadly to advance the ADA's remedial purposes'' and thus ''brings treatment of the ADA's definition of disability in line with treatment of other civil rights laws, which should be construed broadly to effectuate their remedial purposes'').

The ADAAA and the EEOC's regulations also make clear that the primary object of attention in cases brought under the ADA should be whether entities covered under the ADA have complied with their obligations, not whether the individual meets the definition of disability. ADAAA section 2(b)(5). This means, for example, examining whether an employer has discriminated against an employee, including whether an employer has fulfilled its obligations with respect to providing a ''reasonable accommodation'' to an individual with a disability; or whether

an employee has met his or her responsibilities under the ADA with respect to engaging in the reasonable accommodation ''interactive process.'' See also 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 4 (''[L]ower court cases have too often turned solely on the question of whether the plaintiff is an individual with a disability rather than the merits of discrimination claims, such as whether adverse decisions were impermissibly made by the employer on the basis of disability, reasonable accommodations were denied, or qualification standards were unlawfully discriminatory.''); 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 6 (''An individual who does not qualify as disabled * * * does not meet th[e] threshold question of coverage in the protected class and is therefore not permitted to attempt to prove his or her claim of discriminatory treatment.'').

Further, the question of whether an individual has a disability under this part ''should not demand extensive analysis.'' ADAAA section 2(b)(5). See also House Education and Labor Committee Report at 9 (''The Committee intends that the establishment of coverage under the ADA should not be overly complex nor difficult. * * *'').

In addition, unless expressly stated otherwise, the standards applied in the ADA are intended to provide at least as much protection as the standards applied under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The ADA does not preempt any Federal law, or any State or local law, that grants to individuals with disabilities protection greater than or equivalent to that provided by the ADA. This means that the existence of a lesser standard of protection to individuals with disabilities under the ADA will not provide a defense to failing to meet a higher standard under another law. Thus, for example, title I of the ADA would not be a defense to failing to prepare and maintain an affirmative action program under section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act. On the other hand, the existence of a lesser standard under another law will not provide a defense to failing to meet a higher standard under the ADA. See 1990 House Labor Report at 135; 1990 House Judiciary Report at 69–70.

This also means that an individual with a disability could choose to pursue claims under a State discrimination or tort law that does not confer greater substantive rights, or even confers fewer substantive rights, if the potential available remedies would be greater than those available under the ADA and this part. The ADA does not restrict an individual with a disability from pursuing such claims in addition to charges brought under this part. 1990 House Judiciary Report at 69–70.

The ADA does not automatically preempt medical standards or safety requirements established by Federal law or regulations. It does not preempt State, county, or local laws, ordinances or regulations that are consistent with this part and designed to protect the public health from individuals who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation. However, the ADA does preempt inconsistent requirements established by State or local law for safety or security sensitive positions. See 1989 Senate Report at 27; 1990 House Labor Report at 57.

An employer allegedly in violation of this part cannot successfully defend its actions by relying on the obligation to comply with the requirements of any State or local law that imposes prohibitions or limitations on the eligibility of individuals with disabilities who are qualified to practice any occupation or profession. For example, suppose a municipality has an ordinance that prohibits individuals with tuberculosis from teaching school children. If an individual with dormant tuberculosis challenges a private school's refusal to hire him or her on the basis of the tuberculosis, the private school would not be able to rely on the city ordinance as a defense under the ADA.

Paragraph (c)(3) is consistent with language added to section 501 of the ADA by the ADA Amendments Act. It makes clear that nothing in this part is intended to alter the determination of eligibility for benefits under state workers' compensation laws or Federal and State disability benefit programs. State workers' compensation laws and Federal disability benefit programs, such as programs that provide payments to veterans with service-connected disabilities and the Social Security Disability Insurance program, have fundamentally different purposes than title I of the ADA.

Section 1630.2 Definitions

Sections 1630.2(a)–(f) Commission, Covered Entity, etc.

The definitions section of part 1630 includes several terms that are identical, or almost identical, to the terms found in title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Among these terms are ''Commission,'' ''Person,'' ''State,'' and ''Employer.'' These terms are to be given the same meaning under the ADA that they are given under title VII. In general, the term ''employee'' has the same meaning that it is given under title VII. However, the ADA's definition of ''employee'' does not contain an exception, as does title VII, for elected officials and their personal staffs. It should further be noted that all State and local governments are covered by title II of the ADA whether or not they are also covered by this part. Title II, which is enforced by the Department of Justice, became effective on January 26, 1992. See 28 CFR part 35.

The term ''covered entity'' is not found in title VII. However, the title VII definitions of the entities included in the term ''covered entity'' (e.g., employer, employment agency, labor organization, etc.) are applicable to the ADA.

Section 1630.2(g) Disability

In addition to the term ''covered entity,'' there are several other terms that are unique to the ADA as amended. The first of these is the term ''disability.'' ''This definition is of critical importance because as a threshold issue it determines whether an individual is covered by the ADA.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 6.

In the original ADA, ''Congress sought to protect anyone who experiences discrimination because of a current, past, or perceived disability.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 6. Accordingly, the definition of the term ''disability'' is divided into three prongs: An individual is considered to have a ''disability'' if that individual (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of that person's major life activities (the ''actual disability'' prong); (2) has a record of such an impairment (the ''record of'' prong); or (3) is regarded by the covered entity as an individual with a disability as defined in §1630.2(l) (the ''regarded as'' prong). The ADAAA retained the basic structure and terms of the original definition of disability. However, the Amendments Act altered the interpretation and application of this critical statutory term in fundamental ways. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 1 (''The bill maintains the ADA's inherently functional definition of disability'' but ''clarifies and expands the definition's meaning and application.'').

As noted above, the primary purpose of the ADAAA is to make it easier for people with disabilities to obtain protection under the ADA. See Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 2. Accordingly, the ADAAA provides rules of construction regarding the definition of disability. Consistent with the congressional intent to reinstate a broad scope of protection under the ADA, the ADAAA's rules of construction require that the definition of ''disability'' ''shall be construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals under [the ADA], to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of [the ADA].'' 42 U.S.C. 12102(4)(A). The legislative history of the ADAAA is replete with references emphasizing this principle. See Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 2 (''[The bill] establishes that the definition of disability must be interpreted broadly to achieve the remedial purposes of the ADA''); 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 1 (the ADAAA's purpose is to ''enhance the protections of the [ADA]'' by ''expanding the definition, and by rejecting several opinions of the United States Supreme Court that have had the effect of restricting the meaning and application of the definition of disability''); id. (stressing the importance of removing barriers ''to construing and applying the definition of disability more generously''); id. at 4 (''The managers have introduced the [ADAAA] to restore the proper balance and application of the ADA by clarifying and broadening the definition of disability, and to increase eligibility for the protections of the ADA.''); id. (''It is our expectation that because the bill makes the definition of disability more generous, some people who were not covered before will now be covered.''); id. (warning that ''the definition of disability should not be unduly used as a tool for excluding individuals from the ADA's protections''); id. (this principle ''sends a clear signal of our intent that the courts must interpret the definition of disability broadly rather than stringently''); 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 5 (''The purpose of the bill is to restore protection for the broad range of individuals with disabilities as originally envisioned by Congress by responding to the Supreme Court's narrow interpretation of the definition of disability.'').

Further, as the purposes section of the ADAAA explicitly cautions, the ''primary object of attention'' in cases brought under the ADA should be whether entities covered under the ADA have complied with their obligations. As noted above, this means, for example, examining whether an employer has discriminated against an employee, including whether an employer has fulfilled its obligations with respect to providing a ''reasonable accommodation'' to an individual with a disability; or whether an employee has met his or her responsibilities under the ADA with respect to engaging in the reasonable accommodation ''interactive process.'' ADAAA section 2(b)(5); See also 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 4 (''[L]ower court cases have too often turned solely on the question of whether the plaintiff is an individual with a disability rather than the merits of discrimination claims, such as whether adverse decisions were impermissibly made by the employer on the basis of disability, reasonable accommodations were denied, or qualification standards were unlawfully discriminatory.''); 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report (criticizing pre-ADAAA court decisions which ''prevented individuals that Congress unquestionably intended to cover from ever getting a chance to prove their case''). Accordingly, the threshold coverage question of whether an individual's impairment is a disability under the ADA ''should not demand extensive analysis.'' ADAAA section 2(b)(5).

Section 1630.2(g)(2) provides that an individual may establish coverage under any one or more (or all three) of the prongs in the

definition of disability. However, to be an individual with a disability, an individual is only required to satisfy one prong.

As §1630.2(g)(3) indicates, in many cases it may be unnecessary for an individual to resort to coverage under the ''actual disability'' or ''record of'' prongs. Where the need for a reasonable accommodation is not at issue—for example, where there is no question that the individual is ''qualified'' without a reasonable accommodation and is not seeking or has not sought a reasonable accommodation—it would not be necessary to determine whether the individual is substantially limited in a major life activity (under the actual disability prong) or has a record of a substantially limiting impairment (under the record of prong). Such claims could be evaluated solely under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition. In fact, Congress expected the first and second prongs of the definition of disability ''to be used only by people who are affirmatively seeking reasonable accommodations * * *'' and that ''[a]ny individual who has been discriminated against because of an impairment—short of being granted a reasonable accommodation * * *—should be bringing a claim under the third prong of the definition which will require no showing with regard to the severity of his or her impairment.'' Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 4. An individual may choose, however, to proceed under the ''actual disability'' and/or ''record of'' prong regardless of whether the individual is challenging a covered entity's failure to make reasonable accommodation or requires a reasonable accommodation.

To fully understand the meaning of the term ''disability,'' it is also necessary to understand what is meant by the terms ''physical or mental impairment,'' ''major life activity,'' ''substantially limits,'' ''record of,'' and ''regarded as.'' Each of these terms is discussed below.

Section 1630.2(h) Physical or Mental Impairment

Neither the original ADA nor the ADAAA provides a definition for the terms ''physical or mental impairment.'' However, the legislative history of the Amendments Act notes that Congress ''expect[s] that the current regulatory definition of these terms, as promulgated by agencies such as the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (DOE OCR) will not change.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 6. The definition of ''physical or mental impairment'' in the EEOC's regulations remains based on the definition of the term ''physical or mental impairment'' found in the regulations implementing section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act at 34 CFR part 104. However, the definition in EEOC's regulations adds additional body systems to those provided in the section 504 regulations and makes clear that the list is non-exhaustive.

It is important to distinguish between conditions that are impairments and physical, psychological, environmental, cultural, and economic characteristics that are not impairments. The definition of the term ''impairment'' does not include physical characteristics such as eye color, hair color, left-handedness, or height, weight, or muscle tone that are within ''normal'' range and are not the result of a physiological disorder. The definition, likewise, does not include characteristic predisposition to illness or disease. Other conditions, such as pregnancy, that are not the result of a physiological disorder are also not impairments. However, a pregnancy-related impairment that substantially limits a major life activity is a disability under the first prong of the definition. Alternatively, a pregnancy-related impairment may constitute a ''record of'' a substantially limiting impairment,'' or may be covered under the ''regarded as'' prong if it is the basis for a prohibited employment action and is not ''transitory and minor.''

The definition of an impairment also does not include common personality traits such as poor judgment or a quick temper where these are not symptoms of a mental or psychological disorder. Environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantages such as poverty, lack of education, or a prison record are not impairments. Advanced age, in and of itself, is also not an impairment. However, various medical conditions commonly associated with age, such as hearing loss, osteoporosis, or arthritis would constitute impairments within the meaning of this part. See 1989 Senate Report at 22–23; 1990 House Labor Report at 51–52; 1990 House Judiciary Report at 28–29.

Section 1630.2(i) Major Life Activities

The ADAAA provided significant new guidance and clarification on the subject of ''major life activities.'' As the legislative history of the Amendments Act explains, Congress anticipated that protection under the ADA would now extend to a wider range of cases, in part as a result of the expansion of the category of major life activities. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 8 n.17.

For purposes of clarity, the Amendments Act provides an illustrative list of major life activities, including caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. The ADA Amendments expressly made this statutory list of examples of major life activities non-exhaustive, and the regulations include sitting,

reaching, and interacting with others as additional examples. Many of these major life activities listed in the ADA Amendments Act and the regulations already had been included in the EEOC's 1991 now-superseded regulations implementing title I of the ADA and in sub-regulatory documents, and already were recognized by the courts.

The ADA as amended also explicitly defines ''major life activities'' to include the operation of ''major bodily functions.'' This was an important addition to the statute. This clarification was needed to ensure that the impact of an impairment on the operation of a major bodily function would not be overlooked or wrongly dismissed as falling outside the definition of ''major life activities'' under the ADA. 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 16; See also 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 8 (''for the first time [in the ADAAA], the category of 'major life activities' is defined to include the operation of major bodily functions, thus better addressing chronic impairments that can be substantially limiting'').

The regulations include all of those major bodily functions identified in the ADA Amendments Act's non-exhaustive list of examples and add a number of others that are consistent with the body systems listed in the regulations' definition of ''impairment'' (at §1630.2(h)) and with the U.S. Department of Labor's nondiscrimination and equal employment opportunity regulations implementing section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, 29 U.S.C. 2801, *et seq.* Thus, special sense organs, skin, genitourinary, cardiovascular, hemic, lymphatic, and musculoskeletal functions are major bodily functions not included in the statutory list of examples but included in §1630.2(i)(1)(ii). The Commission has added these examples to further illustrate the non-exhaustive list of major life activities, including major bodily functions, and to emphasize that the concept of major life activities is to be interpreted broadly consistent with the Amendments Act. The regulations also provide that the operation of a major bodily function may include the operation of an individual organ within a body system. This would include, for example, the operation of the kidney, liver, pancreas, or other organs.

The link between particular impairments and various major bodily functions should not be difficult to identify. Because impairments, by definition, affect the functioning of body systems, they will generally affect major bodily functions. For example, cancer affects an individual's normal cell growth; diabetes affects the operation of the pancreas and also the function of the endocrine system; and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection affects the immune system. Likewise, sickle cell disease affects the functions of the hemic system, lymphedema affects lymphatic functions, and rheumatoid arthritis affects musculoskeletal functions.

In the legislative history of the ADAAA, Congress expressed its expectation that the statutory expansion of ''major life activities'' to include major bodily functions (along with other statutory changes) would lead to more expansive coverage. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 8 n.17 (indicating that these changes will make it easier for individuals to show that they are eligible for the ADA's protections under the first prong of the definition of disability). The House Education and Labor Committee explained that the inclusion of major bodily functions would ''affect cases such as *U.S.* v. *Happy Time Day Care Ctr.* in which the courts struggled to analyze whether the impact of HIV infection substantially limits various major life activities of a five-year-old child, and recognizing, among other things, that 'there is something inherently illogical about inquiring whether' a five-year-old's ability to procreate is substantially limited by his HIV infection; *Furnish* v. *SVI Sys., Inc,* in which the court found that an individual with cirrhosis of the liver caused by Hepatitis B is not disabled because liver function—unlike eating, working, or reproducing—'is not integral to one's daily existence;' and *Pimental* v. *Dartmouth-Hitchcock Clinic,* in which the court concluded that the plaintiff's stage three breast cancer did not substantially limit her ability to care for herself, sleep, or concentrate. The Committee expects that the plaintiffs in each of these cases could establish a [substantial limitation] on major bodily functions that would qualify them for protection under the ADA.'' 2008 House Education and Labor Committee Report at 12.

The examples of major life activities (including major bodily functions) in the ADAAA and the EEOC's regulations are illustrative and non-exhaustive, and the absence of a particular life activity or bodily function from the examples does not create a negative implication as to whether an omitted activity or function constitutes a major life activity under the statute. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 8; See also 2008 House Committee on Educ. and Labor Report at 11; 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 17.

The Commission anticipates that courts will recognize other major life activities, consistent with the ADA Amendments Act's mandate to construe the definition of disability broadly. As a result of the ADA Amendments Act's rejection of the holding in *Toyota Motor Mfg., Ky., Inc.* v. *Williams,* 534 U.S. 184 (2002), whether an activity is a ''major life activity'' is not determined by reference to whether it is of ''central importance to daily life.'' See Toyota, 534 U.S. at 197 (defining ''major life activities'' as activities that are of ''central importance to

most people's daily lives''). Indeed, this holding was at odds with the earlier Supreme Court decision of *Bragdon* v. *Abbott,* 524 U.S. 624 (1998), which held that a major life activity (in that case, reproduction) does not have to have a ''public, economic or daily aspect.'' Id. at 639.

Accordingly, the regulations provide that in determining other examples of major life activities, the term ''major'' shall not be interpreted strictly to create a demanding standard for disability. Cf. 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 7 (indicating that a person is considered an individual with a disability for purposes of the first prong when one or more of the individual's ''important life activities'' are restricted) (citing 1989 Senate Report at 23). The regulations also reject the notion that to be substantially limited in performing a major life activity, an individual must have an impairment that prevents or severely restricts the individual from doing ''activities that are of central importance to most people's daily lives.'' Id.; see also 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 5 n.12.

Thus, for example, lifting is a major life activity regardless of whether an individual who claims to be substantially limited in lifting actually performs activities of central importance to daily life that require lifting. Similarly, the Commission anticipates that the major life activity of performing manual tasks (which was at issue in *Toyota*) could have many different manifestations, such as performing tasks involving fine motor coordination, or performing tasks involving grasping, hand strength, or pressure. Such tasks need not constitute activities of central importance to most people's daily lives, nor must an individual show that he or she is substantially limited in performing all manual tasks.

Section 1630.2(j) Substantially Limits

In any case involving coverage solely under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of ''disability'' (e.g., cases where reasonable accommodation is not at issue), it is not necessary to determine whether an individual is ''substantially limited'' in any major life activity. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 10; id. at 13 (''The functional limitation imposed by an impairment is irrelevant to the third 'regarded as' prong.''). Indeed, Congress anticipated that the first and second prongs of the definition of disability would ''be used only by people who are affirmatively seeking reasonable accommodations * * *'' and that ''[a]ny individual who has been discriminated against because of an impairment—short of being granted a reasonable accommodation * * *—should be bringing a claim under the third prong of the definition which will require no showing with regard to the severity of his or her impairment.'' Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 4. Of course, an individual may choose, however, to proceed under the ''actual disability'' and/or ''record of'' prong regardless of whether the individual is challenging a covered entity's failure to make reasonable accommodations or requires a reasonable accommodation. The concept of ''substantially limits'' is only relevant in cases involving coverage under the ''actual disability'' or ''record of'' prong of the definition of disability. Thus, the information below pertains to these cases only.

Section 1630.2(j)(1) Rules of Construction

It is clear in the text and legislative history of the ADAAA that Congress concluded the courts had incorrectly construed ''substantially limits,'' and disapproved of the EEOC's now-superseded 1991 regulation defining the term to mean ''significantly restricts.'' See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 6 (''We do not believe that the courts have correctly instituted the level of coverage we intended to establish with the term 'substantially limits' in the ADA'' and ''we believe that the level of limitation, and the intensity of focus, applied by the Supreme Court in *Toyota* goes beyond what we believe is the appropriate standard to create coverage under this law.''). Congress extensively deliberated over whether a new term other than ''substantially limits'' should be adopted to denote the appropriate functional limitation necessary under the first and second prongs of the definition of disability. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 6–7. Ultimately, Congress affirmatively opted to retain this term in the Amendments Act, rather than replace it. It concluded that ''adopting a new, undefined term that is subject to widely disparate meanings is not the best way to achieve the goal of ensuring consistent and appropriately broad coverage under this Act.'' Id. Instead, Congress determined ''a better way * * * to express [its] disapproval of *Sutton* and *Toyota* (along with the current EEOC regulation) is to retain the words 'substantially limits,' but clarify that it is not meant to be a demanding standard.'' Id. at 7. To achieve that goal, Congress set forth detailed findings and purposes and ''rules of construction'' to govern the interpretation and application of this concept going forward. See ADAAA Sections 2–4; 42 U.S.C. 12102(4).

The Commission similarly considered whether to provide a new definition of ''substantially limits'' in the regulation. Following Congress's lead, however, the Commission ultimately concluded that a new definition would inexorably lead to greater focus and intensity of attention on the threshold issue of coverage than intended by Congress. Therefore, the regulations simply provide rules of construction that must be

applied in determining whether an impairment substantially limits (or substantially limited) a major life activity. These are each discussed in greater detail below.

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(i) Broad Construction; not a Demanding Standard

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(i) states: ''The term 'substantially limits' shall be construed broadly in favor of expansive coverage, to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of the ADA. 'Substantially limits' is not meant to be a demanding standard.''

Congress stated in the ADA Amendments Act that the definition of disability ''shall be construed in favor of broad coverage,'' and that ''the term 'substantially limits' shall be interpreted consistently with the findings and purposes of the ADA Amendments Act of 2008.'' 42 U.S.C. 12101(4)(A)–(B), as amended. ''This is a textual provision that will legally guide the agencies and courts in properly interpreting the term 'substantially limits.' '' Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Congressional Record Statement at H8295. As Congress noted in the legislative history of the ADAAA, ''[t]o be clear, the purposes section conveys our intent to clarify not only that 'substantially limits' should be measured by a lower standard than that used in *Toyota*, but also that the definition of disability should not be unduly used as a tool for excluding individuals from the ADA's protections.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 5 (also stating that ''[t]his rule of construction, together with the rule of construction providing that the definition of disability shall be construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals sends a clear signal of our intent that the courts must interpret the definition of disability broadly rather than stringently''). Put most succinctly, ''substantially limits'' ''is not meant to be a demanding standard.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 7.

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(ii) Significant or Severe Restriction Not Required; Nonetheless, Not Every Impairment Is Substantially Limiting

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(ii) states: ''An impairment is a disability within the meaning of this section if it substantially limits the ability of an individual to perform a major life activity as compared to most people in the general population. An impairment need not prevent, or significantly or severely restrict, the individual from performing a major life activity in order to be considered substantially limiting. Nonetheless, not every impairment will constitute a 'disability' within the meaning of this section.''

In keeping with the instruction that the term ''substantially limits'' is not meant to be a demanding standard, the regulations provide that an impairment is a disability if it substantially limits the ability of an individual to perform a major life activity as compared to most people in the general population. However, to be substantially limited in performing a major life activity an individual need not have an impairment that prevents or significantly or severely restricts the individual from performing a major life activity. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 2, 6–8 & n.14; 2008 House Committee on Educ. and Labor Report at 9–10 (''While the limitation imposed by an impairment must be important, it need not rise to the level of severely restricting or significantly restricting the ability to perform a major life activity to qualify as a disability.''); 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 16 (similarly requiring an ''important'' limitation). The level of limitation required is ''substantial'' as compared to most people in the general population, which does not require a significant or severe restriction. Multiple impairments that combine to substantially limit one or more of an individual's major life activities also constitute a disability. Nonetheless, not every impairment will constitute a ''disability'' within the meaning of this section. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 4 (''We reaffirm that not every individual with a physical or mental impairment is covered by the first prong of the definition of disability in the ADA.'')

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(iii) Substantial Limitation Should Not Be Primary Object of Attention; Extensive Analysis Not Needed

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(iii) states: ''The primary object of attention in cases brought under the ADA should be whether covered entities have complied with their obligations, not whether an individual's impairment substantially limits a major life activity. Accordingly, the threshold issue of whether an impairment 'substantially limits' a major life activity should not demand extensive analysis.''

Congress retained the term ''substantially limits'' in part because it was concerned that adoption of a new phrase—and the resulting need for further judicial scrutiny and construction—would not ''help move the focus from the threshold issue of disability to the primary issue of discrimination.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 7.

This was the primary problem Congress sought to solve in enacting the ADAAA. It recognized that ''clearing the initial [disability] threshold is critical, as individuals who are excluded from the definition 'never have the opportunity to have their condition evaluated in light of medical evidence and a determination made as to whether they [are] 'otherwise qualified.' '' 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 7; See also id. (expressing concern that ''[a]n individual who does not qualify as disabled does not meet th[e]

threshold question of coverage in the protected class and is therefore not permitted to attempt to prove his or her claim of discriminatory treatment''); 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 4 (criticizing pre-ADAAA lower court cases that ''too often turned solely on the question of whether the plaintiff is an individual with a disability rather than the merits of discrimination claims, such as whether adverse decisions were impermissibly made by the employer on the basis of disability, reasonable accommodations were denied, or qualification standards were unlawfully discriminatory'').

Accordingly, the Amendments Act and the amended regulations make plain that the emphasis in ADA cases now should be squarely on the merits and not on the initial coverage question. The revised regulations therefore provide that an impairment is a disability if it substantially limits the ability of an individual to perform a major life activity as compared to most people in the general population and deletes the language to which Congress objected. The Commission believes that this provides a useful framework in which to analyze whether an impairment satisfies the definition of disability. Further, this framework better reflects Congress's expressed intent in the ADA Amendments Act that the definition of the term ''disability'' shall be construed broadly, and is consistent with statements in the Amendments Act's legislative history. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 7 (stating that ''adopting a new, undefined term'' and the ''resulting need for further judicial scrutiny and construction will not help move the focus from the threshold issue of disability to the primary issue of discrimination,'' and finding that '' 'substantially limits' as construed consistently with the findings and purposes of this legislation establishes an appropriate functionality test of determining whether an individual has a disability'' and that ''using the correct standard—one that is lower than the strict or demanding standard created by the Supreme Court in *Toyota*—will make the disability determination an appropriate threshold issue but not an onerous burden for those seeking accommodations or modifications'').

Consequently, this rule of construction makes clear that the question of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity should not demand extensive analysis. As the legislative history explains, ''[w]e expect that courts interpreting [the ADA] will not demand such an extensive analysis over whether a person's physical or mental impairment constitutes a disability.'' Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Congressional Record Statement at H8295; see id. (''Our goal throughout this process has been to simplify that analysis.'')

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(iv) Individualized Assessment Required, But With Lower Standard Than Previously Applied

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(iv) states: ''The determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity requires an individualized assessment. However, in making this assessment, the term 'substantially limits' shall be interpreted and applied to require a degree of functional limitation that is lower than the standard for 'substantially limits' applied prior to the ADAAA.''

By retaining the essential elements of the definition of disability including the key term ''substantially limits,'' Congress reaffirmed that not every individual with a physical or mental impairment is covered by the first prong of the definition of disability in the ADA. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 4. To be covered under the first prong of the definition, an individual must establish that an impairment substantially limits a major life activity. That has not changed—nor will the necessity of making this determination on an individual basis. Id. However, what the ADAAA changed is the standard required for making this determination. Id. at 4–5.

The Amendments Act and the EEOC's regulations explicitly reject the standard enunciated by the Supreme Court in *Toyota Motor Mfg., Ky., Inc.* v. *Williams,* 534 U.S. 184 (2002), and applied in the lower courts in numerous cases. See ADAAA section 2(b)(4). That previous standard created ''an inappropriately high level of limitation necessary to obtain coverage under the ADA.'' Id. at section 2(b)(5). The Amendments Act and the EEOC's regulations reject the notion that ''substantially limits'' should be interpreted strictly to create a demanding standard for qualifying as disabled. Id. at section 2(b)(4). Instead, the ADAAA and these regulations establish a degree of functional limitation required for an impairment to constitute a disability that is consistent with what Congress originally intended. 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 7. This will make the disability determination an appropriate threshold issue but not an onerous burden for those seeking to prove discrimination under the ADA. Id.

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(v) Scientific, Medical, or Statistical Analysis Not Required, But Permissible When Appropriate

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(v) states: ''The comparison of an individual's performance of a major life activity to the performance of the same major life activity by most people in the general population usually will not require scientific, medical, or statistical analysis. Nothing in this paragraph is intended, however, to prohibit the presentation of scientific, medical, or statistical evidence to make such a comparison where appropriate.''

The term ''average person in the general population,'' as the basis of comparison for determining whether an individual's impairment substantially limits a major life activity, has been changed to ''most people in the general population.'' This revision is not a substantive change in the concept, but rather is intended to conform the language to the simpler and more straightforward terminology used in the legislative history to the Amendments Act. The comparison between the individual and ''most people'' need not be exacting, and usually will not require scientific, medical, or statistical analysis. Nothing in this subparagraph is intended, however, to prohibit the presentation of scientific, medical, or statistical evidence to make such a comparison where appropriate.

The comparison to most people in the general population continues to mean a comparison to other people in the general population, not a comparison to those similarly situated. For example, the ability of an individual with an amputated limb to perform a major life activity is compared to other people in the general population, not to other amputees. This does not mean that disability cannot be shown where an impairment, such as a learning disability, is clinically diagnosed based in part on a disparity between an individual's aptitude and that individual's actual versus expected achievement, taking into account the person's chronological age, measured intelligence, and age-appropriate education. Individuals diagnosed with dyslexia or other learning disabilities will typically be substantially limited in performing activities such as learning, reading, and thinking when compared to most people in the general population, particularly when the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures, including therapies, learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications, assistive devices (e.g., audio recordings, screen reading devices, voice activated software), studying longer, or receiving more time to take a test, are disregarded as required under the ADA Amendments Act.

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(vi) Mitigating Measures

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(vi) states: ''The determination of whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity shall be made without regard to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures. However, the ameliorative effects of ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses shall be considered in determining whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity.''

The ameliorative effects of mitigating measures shall not be considered in determining whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity. Thus, ''[w]ith the exception of ordinary eyeglasses and contact lenses, impairments must be examined in their unmitigated state.'' See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 5.

This provision in the ADAAA and the EEOC's regulations ''is intended to eliminate the catch-22 that exist[ed] * * * where individuals who are subjected to discrimination on the basis of their disabilities [we]re frequently unable to invoke the ADA's protections because they [we]re not considered people with disabilities when the effects of their medication, medical supplies, behavioral adaptations, or other interventions [we]re considered.'' Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 2; See also 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 9 (''This provision is intended to eliminate the situation created under [prior] law in which impairments that are mitigated [did] not constitute disabilities but [were the basis for discrimination].''). To the extent cases pre-dating the 2008 Amendments Act reasoned otherwise, they are contrary to the law as amended. See 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 9 & nn.25, 20–21 (citing, e.g., *McClure* v. *General Motors Corp.*, 75 F. App'x 983 (5th Cir. 2003) (court held that individual with muscular dystrophy who, with the mitigating measure of ''adapting'' how he performed manual tasks, had successfully learned to live and work with his disability was therefore not an individual with a disability); *Orr* v. *Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.*, 297 F.3d 720 (8th Cir. 2002) (court held that *Sutton* v. *United Air Lines, Inc.*, 527 U.S. 471 (1999), required consideration of the ameliorative effects of plaintiff's careful regimen of medicine, exercise and diet, and declined to consider impact of uncontrolled diabetes on plaintiff's ability to see, speak, read, and walk); *Gonzales* v. *National Bd. of Med. Examiners,* 225 F.3d 620 (6th Cir. 2000) (where the court found that an individual with a diagnosed learning disability was not substantially limited after considering the impact of self-accommodations that allowed him to read and achieve academic success); *McMullin* v. *Ashcroft,* 337 F. Supp. 2d 1281 (D. Wyo. 2004) (individual fired because of clinical depression not protected because of the successful management of the condition with medication for fifteen years); *Eckhaus* v. *Consol. Rail Corp.,* 2003 WL 23205042 (D.N.J. Dec. 24, 2003) (individual fired because of a hearing impairment was not protected because a hearing aid helped correct that impairment); *Todd* v. *Academy Corp.,* 57 F. Supp. 2d 448, 452 (S.D. Tex. 1999) (court held that because medication reduced the frequency and intensity of plaintiff's seizures, he was not disabled)).

An individual who, because of the use of a mitigating measure, has experienced no limitations, or only minor limitations, related to the impairment may still be an individual with a disability, where there is evidence that in the absence of an effective mitigating measure the individual's impairment

would be substantially limiting. For example, someone who began taking medication for hypertension before experiencing substantial limitations related to the impairment would still be an individual with a disability if, without the medication, he or she would now be substantially limited in functions of the cardiovascular or circulatory system.

Evidence showing that an impairment would be substantially limiting in the absence of the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures could include evidence of limitations that a person experienced prior to using a mitigating measure, evidence concerning the expected course of a particular disorder absent mitigating measures, or readily available and reliable information of other types. However, we expect that consistent with the Amendments Act's command (and the related rules of construction in the regulations) that the definition of disability ''should not demand extensive analysis,'' covered entities and courts will in many instances be able to conclude that a substantial limitation has been shown without resort to such evidence.

The Amendments Act provides an ''illustrative but non-comprehensive list of the types of mitigating measures that are not to be considered.'' See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 9. Section 1630.2(j)(5) of the regulations includes all of those mitigating measures listed in the ADA Amendments Act's illustrative list of mitigating measures, including reasonable accommodations (as applied under title I) or ''auxiliary aids or services'' (as defined by 42 U.S.C. 12103(1) and applied under titles II and III).

Since it would be impossible to guarantee comprehensiveness in a finite list, the list of examples of mitigating measures provided in the ADA and the regulations is non-exhaustive. See 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 20. The absence of any particular mitigating measure from the list in the regulations should not convey a negative implication as to whether the measure is a mitigating measure under the ADA. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 9.

For example, the fact that mitigating measures include ''reasonable accommodations'' generally makes it unnecessary to mention specific kinds of accommodations. Nevertheless, the use of a service animal, job coach, or personal assistant on the job would certainly be considered types of mitigating measures, as would the use of any device that could be considered assistive technology, and whether individuals who use these measures have disabilities would be determined without reference to their ameliorative effects. See 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 20; 2008 House Educ. & Labor Rep. at 15. Similarly, adaptive strategies that might mitigate, or even allow an individual to otherwise avoid performing particular major life activities, are mitigating measures and also would not be considered in determining whether an impairment is substantially limiting. Id.

The determination of whether or not an individual's impairment substantially limits a major life activity is unaffected by whether the individual chooses to forgo mitigating measures. For individuals who do not use a mitigating measure (including for example medication or reasonable accommodation that could alleviate the effects of an impairment), the availability of such measures has no bearing on whether the impairment substantially limits a major life activity. The limitations posed by the impairment on the individual and any negative (non-ameliorative) effects of mitigating measures used determine whether an impairment is substantially limiting. The origin of the impairment, whether its effects can be mitigated, and any ameliorative effects of mitigating measures in fact used may not be considered in determining if the impairment is substantially limiting. However, the use or non-use of mitigating measures, and any consequences thereof, including any ameliorative and non-ameliorative effects, may be relevant in determining whether the individual is qualified or poses a direct threat to safety.

The ADA Amendments Act and the regulations state that ''ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses'' *shall* be considered in determining whether someone has a disability. This is an exception to the rule that the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures are not to be taken into account. ''The rationale behind this exclusion is that the use of ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses, without more, is not significant enough to warrant protection under the ADA.'' Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 2. Nevertheless, as discussed in greater detail below at §1630.10(b), if an applicant or employee is faced with a qualification standard that requires uncorrected vision (as the plaintiffs in the *Sutton* case were), and the applicant or employee who is adversely affected by the standard brings a challenge under the ADA, an employer will be required to demonstrate that the qualification standard is job related and consistent with business necessity. 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 9.

The ADAAA and the EEOC's regulations both define the term ''ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses'' as lenses that are ''intended to fully correct visual acuity or eliminate refractive error.'' So, if an individual with severe myopia uses eyeglasses or contact lenses that are intended to fully correct visual acuity or eliminate refractive error, they are ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses, and therefore any inquiry into whether such individual is substantially limited in seeing or reading would be based on how the individual sees or reads with the benefit of the

eyeglasses or contact lenses. Likewise, if the only visual loss an individual experiences affects the ability to see well enough to read, and the individual's ordinary reading glasses are intended to completely correct for this visual loss, the ameliorative effects of using the reading glasses must be considered in determining whether the individual is substantially limited in seeing. Additionally, eyeglasses or contact lenses that are the wrong prescription or an outdated prescription may nevertheless be ''ordinary'' eyeglasses or contact lenses, if a proper prescription would fully correct visual acuity or eliminate refractive error.

Both the statute and the regulations distinguish ''ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses'' from ''low vision devices,'' which function by magnifying, enhancing, or otherwise augmenting a visual image, and which are not considered when determining whether someone has a disability. The regulations do not establish a specific level of visual acuity (e.g., 20/20) as the basis for determining whether eyeglasses or contact lenses should be considered ''ordinary'' eyeglasses or contact lenses. Whether lenses fully correct visual acuity or eliminate refractive error is best determined on a case-by-case basis, in light of current and objective medical evidence. Moreover, someone who uses ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses is not automatically considered to be outside the ADA's protection. Such an individual may demonstrate that, even with the use of ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses, his vision is still substantially limited when compared to most people.

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(vii) Impairments That Are Episodic or in Remission

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(vii) states: ''An impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.''

An impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity in its active state. ''This provision is intended to reject the reasoning of court decisions concluding that certain individuals with certain conditions—such as epilepsy or post traumatic stress disorder—were not protected by the ADA because their conditions were episodic or intermittent.'' Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 2–3. The legislative history provides: ''This * * * rule of construction thus rejects the reasoning of the courts in cases like *Todd* v. *Academy Corp.* [57 F. Supp. 2d 448, 453 (S.D. Tex. 1999)] where the court found that the plaintiff's epilepsy, which resulted in short seizures during which the plaintiff was unable to speak and experienced tremors, was not sufficiently limiting, at least in part because those seizures occurred episodically. It similarly rejects the results reached in cases [such as *Pimental* v. *Dartmouth-Hitchock Clinic*, 236 F. Supp. 2d 177, 182–83 (D.N.H. 2002)] where the courts have discounted the impact of an impairment [such as cancer] that may be in remission as too short-lived to be substantially limiting. It is thus expected that individuals with impairments that are episodic or in remission (e.g., epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, cancer) will be able to establish coverage if, when active, the impairment or the manner in which it manifests (e.g., seizures) substantially limits a major life activity.'' 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 19–20.

Other examples of impairments that may be episodic include, but are not limited to, hypertension, diabetes, asthma, major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. See 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 19–20. The fact that the periods during which an episodic impairment is active and substantially limits a major life activity may be brief or occur infrequently is no longer relevant to determining whether the impairment substantially limits a major life activity. For example, a person with post-traumatic stress disorder who experiences intermittent flashbacks to traumatic events is substantially limited in brain function and thinking.

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(viii) Substantial Limitation in Only One Major Life Activity Required

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(viii) states: ''An impairment that substantially limits one major life activity need not substantially limit other major life activities in order to be considered a substantially limiting impairment.''

The ADAAA explicitly states that an impairment need only substantially limit one major life activity to be considered a disability under the ADA. See ADAAA Section 4(a); 42 U.S.C. 12102(4)(C). ''This responds to and corrects those courts that have required individuals to show that an impairment substantially limits more than one life activity.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 8. In addition, this rule of construction is ''intended to clarify that the ability to perform one or more particular tasks within a broad category of activities does not preclude coverage under the ADA.'' Id. To the extent cases pre-dating the applicability of the 2008 Amendments Act reasoned otherwise, they are contrary to the law as amended. Id. (citing *Holt* v. *Grand Lake Mental Health Ctr., Inc.*, 443 F. 3d 762 (10th Cir. 2006) (holding an individual with cerebral palsy who could not independently perform certain specified manual tasks was not substantially limited in her ability to perform a ''broad range'' of manual tasks)); See also 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 19 &

n.52 (this legislatively corrects court decisions that, with regard to the major life activity of performing manual tasks, ''have offset substantial limitation in the performance of some tasks with the ability to perform others'' (citing *Holt*)).

For example, an individual with diabetes is substantially limited in endocrine function and thus an individual with a disability under the first prong of the definition. He need not also show that he is substantially limited in eating to qualify for coverage under the first prong. An individual whose normal cell growth is substantially limited due to lung cancer need not also show that she is substantially limited in breathing or respiratory function. And an individual with HIV infection is substantially limited in the function of the immune system, and therefore is an individual with a disability without regard to whether his or her HIV infection substantially limits him or her in reproduction.

In addition, an individual whose impairment substantially limits a major life activity need not additionally demonstrate a resulting limitation in the ability to perform activities of central importance to daily life in order to be considered an individual with a disability under §1630.2(g)(1)(i) or §1630.2(g)(1)(ii), as cases relying on the Supreme Court's decision in *Toyota Motor Mfg., Ky., Inc.* v. *Williams,* 534 U.S. 184 (2002), had held prior to the ADA Amendments Act.

Thus, for example, someone with an impairment resulting in a 20-pound lifting restriction that lasts or is expected to last for several months is substantially limited in the major life activity of lifting, and need not also show that he is unable to perform activities of daily living that require lifting in order to be considered substantially limited in lifting. Similarly, someone with monocular vision whose depth perception or field of vision would be substantially limited, with or without any compensatory strategies the individual may have developed, need not also show that he is unable to perform activities of central importance to daily life that require seeing in order to be substantially limited in seeing.

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(ix) Effects of an Impairment Lasting Fewer Than Six Months Can Be Substantially Limiting

Section 1630.2(j)(1)(ix) states: ''The six-month 'transitory' part of the 'transitory and minor' exception to 'regarded as' coverage in §1630.2(l) does not apply to the definition of 'disability' under §1630.2(g)(1)(i) or §1630.2(g)(1)(ii). The effects of an impairment lasting or expected to last fewer than six months can be substantially limiting within the meaning of this section.''

The regulations include a clear statement that the definition of an impairment as transitory, that is, ''lasting or expected to last for six months or less,'' only applies to the ''regarded as'' (third) prong of the definition of ''disability'' as part of the ''transitory and minor'' defense to ''regarded as'' coverage. It does not apply to the first or second prong of the definition of disability. See Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 3 (''[T]here is no need for the transitory and minor exception under the first two prongs because it is clear from the statute and the legislative history that a person can only bring a claim if the impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities or the individual has a record of an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.'').

Therefore, an impairment does not have to last for more than six months in order to be considered substantially limiting under the first or the second prong of the definition of disability. For example, as noted above, if an individual has a back impairment that results in a 20-pound lifting restriction that lasts for several months, he is substantially limited in the major life activity of lifting, and therefore covered under the first prong of the definition of disability. At the same time, ''[t]he duration of an impairment is one factor that is relevant in determining whether the impairment substantially limits a major life activity. Impairments that last only for a short period of time are typically not covered, although they may be covered if sufficiently severe.'' Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 5.

Section 1630.2(j)(3) Predictable Assessments

As the regulations point out, disability is determined based on an individualized assessment. There is no ''per se'' disability. However, as recognized in the regulations, the individualized assessment of some kinds of impairments will virtually always result in a determination of disability. The inherent nature of these types of medical conditions will in virtually all cases give rise to a substantial limitation of a major life activity. Cf. *Heiko* v. *Columbo Savings Bank, F.S.B.,* 434 F.3d 249, 256 (4th Cir. 2006) (stating, even pre-ADAAA, that ''certain impairments are by their very nature substantially limiting: the major life activity of seeing, for example, is always substantially limited by blindness''). Therefore, with respect to these types of impairments, the necessary individualized assessment should be particularly simple and straightforward.

This result is the consequence of the combined effect of the statutory changes to the definition of disability contained in the Amendments Act and flows from application of the rules of construction set forth in §§1630.2(j)(1)(i)–(ix) (including the lower standard for ''substantially limits''; the rule that major life activities include major bodily functions; the principle that impairments

that are episodic or in remission are disabilities if they would be substantially limiting when active; and the requirement that the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures (other than ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses) must be disregarded in assessing whether an individual has a disability).

The regulations at §1630.2(j)(3)(iii) provide examples of the types of impairments that should easily be found to substantially limit a major life activity. The legislative history states that Congress modeled the ADA definition of disability on the definition contained in the Rehabilitation Act, and said it wished to return courts to the way they had construed that definition. See 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 6. Describing this goal, the legislative history states that courts had interpreted the Rehabilitation Act definition ''broadly to include persons with a wide range of physical and mental impairments such as epilepsy, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, and intellectual and developmental disabilities * * * even where a mitigating measure—like medication or a hearing aid—might lessen their impact on the individual.'' Id.; See also id. at 9 (referring to individuals with disabilities that had been covered under the Rehabilitation Act and that Congress intended to include under the ADA—''people with serious health conditions like epilepsy, diabetes, cancer, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, intellectual and developmental disabilities''); id. at n.6 (citing cases also finding that cerebral palsy, hearing impairments, mental retardation, heart disease, and vision in only one eye were disabilities under the Rehabilitation Act); id. at 10 (citing testimony from Rep. Steny H. Hoyer, one of the original lead sponsors of the ADA in 1990, stating that ''we could not have fathomed that people with diabetes, epilepsy, heart conditions, cancer, mental illnesses and other disabilities would have their ADA claims denied because they would be considered too functional to meet the definition of disability''); 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 3 (explaining that ''we [we]re faced with a situation in which physical or mental impairments that would previously [under the Rehabilitation Act] have been found to constitute disabilities [we]re not considered disabilities'' and citing individuals with impairments such as amputation, intellectual disabilities, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, muscular dystrophy, and cancer as examples).

Of course, the impairments listed in subparagraph 1630.2(j)(3)(iii) may substantially limit a variety of other major life activities in addition to those listed in the regulation. For example, mobility impairments requiring the use of a wheelchair substantially limit the major life activity of walking. Diabetes may substantially limit major life activities such as eating, sleeping, and thinking. Major depressive disorder may substantially limit major life activities such as thinking, concentrating, sleeping, and interacting with others. Multiple sclerosis may substantially limit major life activities such as walking, bending, and lifting.

By using the term ''brain function'' to describe the system affected by various mental impairments, the Commission is expressing no view on the debate concerning whether mental illnesses are caused by environmental or biological factors, but rather intends the term to capture functions such as the ability of the brain to regulate thought processes and emotions.

Section 1630.2(j)(4) Condition, Manner, or Duration

The regulations provide that facts such as the ''condition, manner, or duration'' of an individual's performance of a major life activity may be useful in determining whether an impairment results in a substantial limitation. In the legislative history of the ADAAA, Congress reiterated what it had said at the time of the original ADA: ''A person is considered an individual with a disability for purposes of the first prong of the definition when [one or more of] the individual's important life activities are restricted as to the conditions, manner, or duration under which they can be performed in comparison to most people.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 7 (citing 1989 Senate Report at 23). According to Congress: ''We particularly believe that this test, which articulated an analysis that considered whether a person's activities are limited in condition, duration and manner, is a useful one. We reiterate that using the correct standard—one that is lower than the strict or demanding standard created by the Supreme Court in *Toyota*—will make the disability determination an appropriate threshold issue but not an onerous burden for those seeking accommodations * * *. At the same time, plaintiffs should not be constrained from offering evidence needed to establish that their impairment is substantially limiting.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 7.

Consistent with the legislative history, an impairment may substantially limit the ''condition'' or ''manner'' under which a major life activity can be performed in a number of ways. For example, the condition or manner under which a major life activity can be performed may refer to the way an individual performs a major life activity. Thus, the condition or manner under which a person with an amputated hand performs manual tasks will likely be more cumbersome than the way that someone with two hands would perform the same tasks.

Condition or manner may also describe how performance of a major life activity affects the individual with an impairment. For example, an individual whose impairment causes pain or fatigue that most people

would not experience when performing that major life activity may be substantially limited. Thus, the condition or manner under which someone with coronary artery disease performs the major life activity of walking would be substantially limiting if the individual experiences shortness of breath and fatigue when walking distances that most people could walk without experiencing such effects. Similarly, condition or manner may refer to the extent to which a major life activity, including a major bodily function, can be performed. For example, the condition or manner under which a major bodily function can be performed may be substantially limited when the impairment ''causes the operation [of the bodily function] to over-produce or under-produce in some harmful fashion.'' See 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 17.

''Duration'' refers to the length of time an individual can perform a major life activity or the length of time it takes an individual to perform a major life activity, as compared to most people in the general population. For example, a person whose back or leg impairment precludes him or her from standing for more than two hours without significant pain would be substantially limited in standing, since most people can stand for more than two hours without significant pain. However, a person who can walk for ten miles continuously is not substantially limited in walking merely because on the eleventh mile, he or she begins to experience pain because most people would not be able to walk eleven miles without experiencing some discomfort. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 7 (citing 1989 Senate Report at 23).

The regulations provide that in assessing substantial limitation and considering facts such as condition, manner, or duration, the non-ameliorative effects of mitigating measures may be considered. Such ''non-ameliorative effects'' could include negative side effects of medicine, burdens associated with following a particular treatment regimen, and complications that arise from surgery, among others. Of course, in many instances, it will not be necessary to assess the negative impact of a mitigating measure in determining that a particular impairment substantially limits a major life activity. For example, someone with end-stage renal disease is substantially limited in kidney function, and it thus is not necessary to consider the burdens that dialysis treatment imposes.

Condition, manner, or duration may also suggest the amount of time or effort an individual has to expend when performing a major life activity because of the effects of an impairment, even if the individual is able to achieve the same or similar result as someone without the impairment. For this reason, the regulations include language which says that the outcome an individual with a disability is able to achieve is not determinative of whether he or she is substantially limited in a major life activity.

Thus, someone with a learning disability may achieve a high level of academic success, but may nevertheless be substantially limited in the major life activity of learning because of the additional time or effort he or she must spend to read, write, or learn compared to most people in the general population. As Congress emphasized in passing the Amendments Act, ''[w]hen considering the condition, manner, or duration in which an individual with a specific learning disability performs a major life activity, it is critical to reject the assumption that an individual who has performed well academically cannot be substantially limited in activities such as learning, reading, writing, thinking, or speaking.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 8. Congress noted that: ''In particular, some courts have found that students who have reached a high level of academic achievement are not to be considered individuals with disabilities under the ADA, as such individuals may have difficulty demonstrating substantial limitation in the major life activities of learning or reading relative to 'most people.' When considering the condition, manner or duration in which an individual with a specific learning disability performs a major life activity, it is critical to reject the assumption that an individual who performs well academically or otherwise cannot be substantially limited in activities such as learning, reading, writing, thinking, or speaking. As such, the Committee rejects the findings in *Price* v. *National Board of Medical Examiners, Gonzales* v. *National Board of Medical Examiners,* and *Wong* v. *Regents of University of California*. The Committee believes that the comparison of individuals with specific learning disabilities to 'most people' is not problematic unto itself, but requires a careful analysis of the method and manner in which an individual's impairment limits a major life activity. For the majority of the population, the basic mechanics of reading and writing do not pose extraordinary lifelong challenges; rather, recognizing and forming letters and words are effortless, unconscious, automatic processes. Because specific learning disabilities are neurologically-based impairments, the process of reading for an individual with a reading disability (e.g. dyslexia) is word-by-word, and otherwise cumbersome, painful, deliberate and slow—throughout life. The Committee expects that individuals with specific learning disabilities that substantially limit a major life activity will be better protected under the amended Act.'' 2008 House Educ. & Labor Rep. at 10–11.

It bears emphasizing that while it may be useful in appropriate cases to consider facts such as condition, manner, or duration, it is always necessary to consider and apply the

rules of construction in §1630.2(j)(1)(i)–(ix) that set forth the elements of broad coverage enacted by Congress. 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 6. Accordingly, while the Commission's regulations retain the concept of ''condition, manner, or duration,'' they no longer include the additional list of ''substantial limitation'' factors contained in the previous version of the regulations (i.e., the nature and severity of the impairment, duration or expected duration of the impairment, and actual or expected permanent or long-term impact of or resulting from the impairment).

Finally, ''condition, manner, or duration'' are not intended to be used as a rigid three-part standard that must be met to establish a substantial limitation. ''Condition, manner, or duration'' are not required ''factors'' that must be considered as a talismanic test. Rather, in referring to ''condition, manner, *or* duration,'' the regulations make clear that these are merely the types of facts that may be considered in appropriate cases. To the extent such aspects of limitation may be useful or relevant to show a substantial limitation in a particular fact pattern, some or all of them (and related facts) may be considered, but evidence relating to each of these facts may not be necessary to establish coverage.

At the same time, individuals seeking coverage under the first or second prong of the definition of disability should not be constrained from offering evidence needed to establish that their impairment is substantially limiting. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 7. Of course, covered entities may defeat a showing of ''substantial limitation'' by refuting whatever evidence the individual seeking coverage has offered, or by offering evidence that shows an impairment does not impose a substantial limitation on a major life activity. However, a showing of substantial limitation is not defeated by facts related to ''condition, manner, or duration'' that are not pertinent to the substantial limitation the individual has proffered.

Sections 1630.2(j)(5) and (6) Examples of Mitigating Measures; Ordinary Eyeglasses or Contact Lenses

These provisions of the regulations provide numerous examples of mitigating measures and the definition of ''ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses.'' These definitions have been more fully discussed in the portions of this interpretive guidance concerning the rules of construction in §1630.2(j)(1).

Substantially Limited in Working

The Commission has removed from the text of the regulations a discussion of the major life activity of working. This is consistent with the fact that no other major life activity receives special attention in the regulation, and with the fact that, in light of the expanded definition of disability established by the Amendments Act, this major life activity will be used in only very targeted situations.

In most instances, an individual with a disability will be able to establish coverage by showing substantial limitation of a major life activity other than working; impairments that substantially limit a person's ability to work usually substantially limit one or more other major life activities. This will be particularly true in light of the changes made by the ADA Amendments Act. See, e.g., *Corley* v. *Dep't of Veterans Affairs ex rel Principi*, 218 F. App'x. 727, 738 (10th Cir. 2007) (employee with seizure disorder was not substantially limited in working because he was not foreclosed from jobs involving driving, operating machinery, childcare, military service, and other jobs; employee would now be substantially limited in neurological function); *Olds* v. *United Parcel Serv., Inc.*, 127 F. App'x. 779, 782 (6th Cir. 2005) (employee with bone marrow cancer was not substantially limited in working due to lifting restrictions caused by his cancer; employee would now be substantially limited in normal cell growth); *Williams* v. *Philadelphia Hous. Auth. Police Dep't*, 380 F.3d 751, 763–64 (3d Cir. 2004) (issue of material fact concerning whether police officer's major depression substantially limited him in performing a class of jobs due to restrictions on his ability to carry a firearm; officer would now be substantially limited in brain function).[2]

In the rare cases where an individual has a need to demonstrate that an impairment substantially limits him or her in working, the individual can do so by showing that the impairment substantially limits his or her ability to perform a class of jobs or broad

[2]In addition, many cases previously analyzed in terms of whether the plaintiff was ''substantially limited in working'' will now be analyzed under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of disability as revised by the Amendments Act. See, e.g., *Cannon* v. *Levi Strauss & Co.*, 29 F. App'x. 331 (6th Cir. 2002) (factory worker laid off due to her carpal tunnel syndrome not regarded as substantially limited in working because her job of sewing machine operator was not a ''broad class of jobs''; she would now be protected under the third prong because she was fired because of her impairment, carpal tunnel syndrome); *Bridges* v. *City of Bossier*, 92 F.3d 329 (5th Cir. 1996) (applicant not hired for firefighting job because of his mild hemophilia not regarded as substantially limited in working; applicant would now be protected under the third prong because he was not hired because of his impairment, hemophilia).

range of jobs in various classes as compared to most people having comparable training, skills, and abilities. In keeping with the findings and purposes of the Amendments Act, the determination of coverage under the law should not require extensive and elaborate assessment, and the EEOC and the courts are to apply a lower standard in determining when an impairment substantially limits a major life activity, including the major life activity of working, than they applied prior to the Amendments Act. The Commission believes that the courts, in applying an overly strict standard with regard to ''substantially limits'' generally, have reached conclusions with regard to what is necessary to demonstrate a substantial limitation in the major life activity of working that would be inconsistent with the changes now made by the Amendments Act. Accordingly, as used in this section the terms ''class of jobs'' and ''broad range of jobs in various classes'' will be applied in a more straightforward and simple manner than they were applied by the courts prior to the Amendments Act.[3]

Demonstrating a substantial limitation in performing the unique aspects of a single specific job is not sufficient to establish that a person is substantially limited in the major life activity of working.

A class of jobs may be determined by reference to the nature of the work that an individual is limited in performing (such as commercial truck driving, assembly line jobs, food service jobs, clerical jobs, or law enforcement jobs) or by reference to job-related requirements that an individual is limited in meeting (for example, jobs requiring repetitive bending, reaching, or manual tasks, jobs requiring repetitive or heavy lifting, prolonged sitting or standing, extensive walking, driving, or working under conditions such as high temperatures or noise levels).

For example, if a person whose job requires heavy lifting develops a disability that prevents him or her from lifting more than fifty pounds and, consequently, from performing not only his or her existing job but also other jobs that would similarly require heavy lifting, that person would be substantially limited in working because he or she is substantially limited in performing the class of jobs that require heavy lifting.

Section 1630.2(k) Record of a Substantially Limiting Impairment

The second prong of the definition of ''disability'' provides that an individual with a record of an impairment that substantially limits or limited a major life activity is an individual with a disability. The intent of this provision, in part, is to ensure that people are not discriminated against because of a history of disability. For example, the ''record of'' provision would protect an individual who was treated for cancer ten years ago but who is now deemed by a doctor to be free of cancer, from discrimination based on that prior medical history. This provision also ensures that individuals are not discriminated against because they have been misclassified as disabled. For example, individuals misclassified as having learning disabilities or intellectual disabilities (formerly termed ''mental retardation'') are protected from discrimination on the basis of that erroneous classification. Senate Report at 23; House Labor Report at 52–53; House Judiciary Report at 29; 2008 House Judiciary Report at 7–8 & n.14. Similarly, an employee who in the past was misdiagnosed with bipolar disorder and hospitalized as the result of a temporary reaction to medication she was taking has a record of a substantially limiting impairment, even though she did not actually have bipolar disorder.

This part of the definition is satisfied where evidence establishes that an individual has had a substantially limiting impairment. The impairment indicated in the record must be an impairment that would substantially limit one or more of the individual's major life activities. There are many types of records that could potentially contain this information, including but not limited to, education, medical, or employment records.

Such evidence that an individual has a past history of an impairment that substantially limited a major life activity is all that is necessary to establish coverage under the second prong. An individual may have a ''record of'' a substantially limiting impairment—and thus be protected under the

[3] In analyzing working as a major life activity in the past, some courts have imposed a complex and onerous standard that would be inappropriate under the Amendments Act. See, e.g., *Duncan* v. *WMATA*, 240 F.3d 1110, 1115 (DC Cir. 2001) (manual laborer whose back injury prevented him from lifting more than 20 pounds was not substantially limited in working because he did not present evidence of the number and types of jobs available to him in the Washington area; testimony concerning his inquiries and applications for truck driving jobs that all required heavy lifting was insufficient); *Taylor* v. *Federal Express Corp.*, 429 F.3d 461, 463–64 (4th Cir. 2005) (employee's impairment did not substantially limit him in working because, even though evidence showed that employee's injury disqualified him from working in numerous jobs in his geographic region, it also showed that he remained qualified for many other jobs). Under the Amendments Act, the determination of whether a person is substantially limited in working is more straightforward and simple than it was prior to the Act.

''record of'' prong of the statute—even if a covered entity does not specifically know about the relevant record. Of course, for the covered entity to be liable for discrimination under title I of the ADA, the individual with a ''record of'' a substantially limiting impairment must prove that the covered entity discriminated on the basis of the record of the disability.

The terms ''substantially limits'' and ''major life activity'' under the second prong of the definition of ''disability'' are to be construed in accordance with the same principles applicable under the ''actual disability'' prong, as set forth in §1630.2(j).

Individuals who are covered under the ''record of'' prong will often be covered under the first prong of the definition of disability as well. This is a consequence of the rule of construction in the ADAAA and the regulations providing that an individual with an impairment that is episodic or in remission can be protected under the first prong if the impairment would be substantially limiting when active. See 42 U.S.C. 12102(4)(D); §1630.2(j)(1)(vii). Thus, an individual who has cancer that is currently in remission is an individual with a disability under the ''actual disability'' prong because he has an impairment that would substantially limit normal cell growth when active. He is also covered by the ''record of'' prong based on his history of having had an impairment that substantially limited normal cell growth.

Finally, this section of the EEOC's regulations makes it clear that an individual with a record of a disability is entitled to a reasonable accommodation currently needed for limitations resulting from or relating to the past substantially limiting impairment. This conclusion, which has been the Commission's long-standing position, is confirmed by language in the ADA Amendments Act stating that individuals covered only under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of disability are not entitled to reasonable accommodation. See 42 U.S.C. 12201(h). By implication, this means that individuals covered under the first or second prongs are otherwise eligible for reasonable accommodations. See 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 22 (''This makes clear that the duty to accommodate . . . arises only when an individual establishes coverage under the first or second prong of the definition.''). Thus, as the regulations explain, an employee with an impairment that previously substantially limited but no longer substantially limits, a major life activity may need leave or a schedule change to permit him or her to attend follow-up or ''monitoring'' appointments from a health care provider.

Section 1630.2(l) Regarded as Substantially Limited in a Major Life Activity

Coverage under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of disability should not be difficult to establish. See 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 17 (explaining that Congress never expected or intended it would be a difficult standard to meet). Under the third prong of the definition of disability, an individual is ''regarded as having such an impairment'' if the individual is subjected to an action prohibited by the ADA because of an actual or perceived impairment that is not ''transitory and minor.''

This third prong of the definition of disability was originally intended to express Congress's understanding that ''unfounded concerns, mistaken beliefs, fears, myths, or prejudice about disabilities are often just as disabling as actual impairments, and [its] corresponding desire to prohibit discrimination founded on such perceptions.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 9; 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 17 (same). In passing the original ADA, Congress relied extensively on the reasoning of *School Board of Nassau County* v. *Arline*[4] ''that the negative reactions of others are just as disabling as the actual impact of an impairment.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 9. The ADAAA reiterates Congress's reliance on the broad views enunciated in that decision, and Congress ''believe[s] that courts should continue to rely on this standard.'' Id.

Accordingly, the ADA Amendments Act broadened the application of the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of disability. 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 9–10. In doing so, Congress rejected court decisions that had required an individual to establish that a covered entity perceived him or her to have an impairment that substantially limited a major life activity. This provision is designed to restore Congress's intent to allow individuals to establish coverage under the ''regarded as'' prong by showing that they were treated adversely because of an impairment, without having to establish the covered entity's beliefs concerning the severity of the impairment. Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 3.

Thus it is not necessary, as it was prior to the ADA Amendments Act, for an individual to demonstrate that a covered entity perceived him as substantially limited in the ability to perform a major life activity in order for the individual to establish that he or she is covered under the ''regarded as'' prong. Nor is it necessary to demonstrate that the impairment relied on by a covered entity is (in the case of an actual impairment) or would be (in the case of a perceived impairment) substantially limiting for an individual to be ''regarded as having such an impairment.'' In short, to qualify for coverage under the ''regarded as'' prong, an individual is not subject to any functional test. See 2008 Senate Statement of Managers

[4] 480 U.S. at 282–83.

at 13 (''The functional limitation imposed by an impairment is irrelevant to the third 'regarded as' prong.''); 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 17 (that is, ''the individual is not required to show that the perceived impairment limits performance of a major life activity''). The concepts of ''major life activities'' and ''substantial limitation'' simply are not relevant in evaluating whether an individual is ''regarded as having such an impairment.''

To illustrate how straightforward application of the ''regarded as'' prong is, if an employer refused to hire an applicant because of skin graft scars, the employer has regarded the applicant as an individual with a disability. Similarly, if an employer terminates an employee because he has cancer, the employer has regarded the employee as an individual with a disability.

A ''prohibited action'' under the ''regarded as'' prong refers to an action of the type that would be unlawful under the ADA (but for any defenses to liability). Such prohibited actions include, but are not limited to, refusal to hire, demotion, placement on involuntary leave, termination, exclusion for failure to meet a qualification standard, harassment, or denial of any other term, condition, or privilege of employment.

Where an employer bases a prohibited employment action on an actual or perceived impairment that is not ''transitory and minor,'' the employer regards the individual as disabled, whether or not myths, fears, or stereotypes about disability motivated the employer's decision. Establishing that an individual is ''regarded as having such an impairment'' does not, by itself, establish liability. Liability is established only if an individual meets the burden of proving that the covered entity discriminated unlawfully within the meaning of section 102 of the ADA, 42 U.S.C. 12112.

Whether a covered entity can ultimately establish a defense to liability is an inquiry separate from, and follows after, a determination that an individual was regarded as having a disability. Thus, for example, an employer who terminates an employee with angina from a manufacturing job that requires the employee to work around machinery, believing that the employee will pose a safety risk to himself or others if he were suddenly to lose consciousness, has regarded the individual as disabled. Whether the employer has a defense (e.g., that the employee posed a direct threat to himself or coworkers) is a separate inquiry.

The fact that the ''regarded as'' prong requires proof of causation in order to show that a person is covered does not mean that proving a ''regarded as'' claim is complex. While a person must show, for both coverage under the ''regarded as'' prong and for ultimate liability, that he or she was subjected to a prohibited action because of an actual or perceived impairment, this showing need only be made once. Thus, evidence that a covered entity took a prohibited action because of an impairment will establish coverage and will be relevant in establishing liability, although liability may ultimately turn on whether the covered entity can establish a defense.

As prescribed in the ADA Amendments Act, the regulations provide an exception to coverage under the ''regarded as'' prong where the impairment on which a prohibited action is based is both transitory (having an actual or expected duration of six months or less) and minor. The regulations make clear (at §1630.2(l)(2) and §1630.15(f)) that this exception is a defense to a claim of discrimination. ''Providing this exception responds to concerns raised by employer organizations and is reasonable under the 'regarded as' prong of the definition because individuals seeking coverage under this prong need not meet the functional limitation requirement contained in the first two prongs of the definition.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 10; See also 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 18 (explaining that ''absent this exception, the third prong of the definition would have covered individuals who are regarded as having common ailments like the cold or flu, and this exception responds to concerns raised by members of the business community regarding potential abuse of this provision and misapplication of resources on individuals with minor ailments that last only a short period of time''). However, as an exception to the general rule for broad coverage under the ''regarded as'' prong, this limitation on coverage should be construed narrowly. 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 18.

The relevant inquiry is whether the actual or perceived impairment on which the employer's action was based is objectively ''transitory and minor,'' not whether the employer claims it subjectively believed the impairment was transitory and minor. For example, an employer who terminates an employee whom it believes has bipolar disorder cannot take advantage of this exception by asserting that it believed the employee's impairment was transitory and minor, since bipolar disorder is not objectively transitory and minor. At the same time, an employer that terminated an employee with an objectively ''transitory and minor'' hand wound, mistakenly believing it to be symptomatic of HIV infection, will nevertheless have ''regarded'' the employee as an individual with a disability, since the covered entity took a prohibited employment action based on a perceived impairment (HIV infection) that is not ''transitory and minor.''

An individual covered only under the ''regarded as'' prong is not entitled to reasonable accommodation. 42 U.S.C. 12201(h).

Thus, in cases where reasonable accommodation is not at issue, the third prong provides a more straightforward framework for analyzing whether discrimination occurred. As Congress observed in enacting the ADAAA: ''[W]e expect [the first] prong of the definition to be used only by people who are affirmatively seeking reasonable accommodations or modifications. Any individual who has been discriminated against because of an impairment—short of being granted a reasonable accommodation or modification—should be bringing a claim under the third prong of the definition which will require no showing with regard to the severity of his or her impairment.'' Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 6.

Section 1630.2(m) Qualified Individual

The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability against a qualified individual. The determination of whether an individual with a disability is ''qualified'' should be made in two steps. The first step is to determine if the individual satisfies the prerequisites for the position, such as possessing the appropriate educational background, employment experience, skills, licenses, etc. For example, the first step in determining whether an accountant who is paraplegic is qualified for a certified public accountant (CPA) position is to examine the individual's credentials to determine whether the individual is a licensed CPA. This is sometimes referred to in the Rehabilitation Act caselaw as determining whether the individual is ''otherwise qualified'' for the position. See Senate Report at 33; House Labor Report at 64–65. (See §1630.9 Not Making Reasonable Accommodation).

The second step is to determine whether or not the individual can perform the essential functions of the position held or desired, with or without reasonable accommodation. The purpose of this second step is to ensure that individuals with disabilities who can perform the essential functions of the position held or desired are not denied employment opportunities because they are not able to perform marginal functions of the position. House Labor Report at 55.

The determination of whether an individual with a disability is qualified is to be made at the time of the employment decision. This determination should be based on the capabilities of the individual with a disability at the time of the employment decision, and should not be based on speculation that the employee may become unable in the future or may cause increased health insurance premiums or workers compensation costs.

Section 1630.2(n) Essential Functions

The determination of which functions are essential may be critical to the determination of whether or not the individual with a disability is qualified. The essential functions are those functions that the individual who holds the position must be able to perform unaided or with the assistance of a reasonable accommodation.

The inquiry into whether a particular function is essential initially focuses on whether the employer actually requires employees in the position to perform the functions that the employer asserts are essential. For example, an employer may state that typing is an essential function of a position. If, in fact, the employer has never required any employee in that particular position to type, this will be evidence that typing is not actually an essential function of the position.

If the individual who holds the position is actually required to perform the function the employer asserts is an essential function, the inquiry will then center around whether removing the function would fundamentally alter that position. This determination of whether or not a particular function is essential will generally include one or more of the following factors listed in part 1630.

The first factor is whether the position exists to perform a particular function. For example, an individual may be hired to proofread documents. The ability to proofread the documents would then be an essential function, since this is the only reason the position exists.

The second factor in determining whether a function is essential is the number of other employees available to perform that job function or among whom the performance of that job function can be distributed. This may be a factor either because the total number of available employees is low, or because of the fluctuating demands of the business operation. For example, if an employer has a relatively small number of available employees for the volume of work to be performed, it may be necessary that each employee perform a multitude of different functions. Therefore, the performance of those functions by each employee becomes more critical and the options for reorganizing the work become more limited. In such a situation, functions that might not be essential if there were a larger staff may become essential because the staff size is small compared to the volume of work that has to be done. See *Treadwell* v. *Alexander*, 707 F.2d 473 (11th Cir. 1983).

A similar situation might occur in a larger work force if the workflow follows a cycle of heavy demand for labor intensive work followed by low demand periods. This type of workflow might also make the performance of each function during the peak periods more critical and might limit the employer's flexibility in reorganizing operating procedures. See *Dexler* v. *Tisch*, 660 F. Supp. 1418 (D. Conn. 1987).

The third factor is the degree of expertise or skill required to perform the function. In certain professions and highly skilled positions the employee is hired for his or her expertise or ability to perform the particular function. In such a situation, the performance of that specialized task would be an essential function.

Whether a particular function is essential is a factual determination that must be made on a case by case basis. In determining whether or not a particular function is essential, all relevant evidence should be considered. Part 1630 lists various types of evidence, such as an established job description, that should be considered in determining whether a particular function is essential. Since the list is not exhaustive, other relevant evidence may also be presented. Greater weight will not be granted to the types of evidence included on the list than to the types of evidence not listed.

Although part 1630 does not require employers to develop or maintain job descriptions, written job descriptions prepared before advertising or interviewing applicants for the job, as well as the employer's judgment as to what functions are essential are among the relevant evidence to be considered in determining whether a particular function is essential. The terms of a collective bargaining agreement are also relevant to the determination of whether a particular function is essential. The work experience of past employees in the job or of current employees in similar jobs is likewise relevant to the determination of whether a particular function is essential. See H.R. Conf. Rep. No. 101–596, 101st Cong., 2d Sess. 58 (1990) [hereinafter Conference Report]; House Judiciary Report at 33–34. See also *Hall* v. *U.S. Postal Service*, 857 F.2d 1073 (6th Cir. 1988).

The time spent performing the particular function may also be an indicator of whether that function is essential. For example, if an employee spends the vast majority of his or her time working at a cash register, this would be evidence that operating the cash register is an essential function. The consequences of failing to require the employee to perform the function may be another indicator of whether a particular function is essential. For example, although a firefighter may not regularly have to carry an unconscious adult out of a burning building, the consequence of failing to require the firefighter to be able to perform this function would be serious.

It is important to note that the inquiry into essential functions is not intended to second guess an employer's business judgment with regard to production standards, whether qualitative or quantitative, nor to require employers to lower such standards. (See §1630.10 Qualification Standards, Tests and Other Selection Criteria). If an employer requires its typists to be able to accurately type 75 words per minute, it will not be called upon to explain why an inaccurate work product, or a typing speed of 65 words per minute, would not be adequate. Similarly, if a hotel requires its service workers to thoroughly clean 16 rooms per day, it will not have to explain why it requires thorough cleaning, or why it chose a 16 room rather than a 10 room requirement. However, if an employer does require accurate 75 word per minute typing or the thorough cleaning of 16 rooms, it will have to show that it actually imposes such requirements on its employees in fact, and not simply on paper. It should also be noted that, if it is alleged that the employer intentionally selected the particular level of production to exclude individuals with disabilities, the employer may have to offer a legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason for its selection.

Section 1630.2(o) Reasonable Accommodation

An individual with a disability is considered ''qualified'' if the individual can perform the essential functions of the position held or desired with or without reasonable accommodation. A covered entity is required, absent undue hardship, to provide reasonable accommodation to an otherwise qualified individual with a substantially limiting impairment or a ''record of'' such an impairment. However, a covered entity is not required to provide an accommodation to an individual who meets the definition of disability solely under the ''regarded as'' prong.

The legislative history of the ADAAA makes clear that Congress included this provision in response to various court decisions that had held (pre-Amendments Act) that individuals who were covered solely under the ''regarded as'' prong were eligible for reasonable accommodations. In those cases, the plaintiffs had been found not to be covered under the first prong of the definition of disability ''because of the overly stringent manner in which the courts had been interpreting that prong.'' 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 11. The legislative history goes on to explain that ''[b]ecause of [Congress's] strong belief that accommodating individuals with disabilities is a key goal of the ADA, some members [of Congress] continue to have reservations about this provision.'' Id. However, Congress ultimately concluded that clarifying that individuals covered solely under the ''regarded as'' prong are not entitled to reasonable accommodations ''is an acceptable compromise given our strong expectation that such individuals would now be covered under the first prong of the definition [of disability], properly applied''). Further, individuals covered only under the third prong still may bring discrimination claims (other than failure-to-

accommodate claims) under title I of the ADA. 2008 Senate Statement of Managers at 9–10.

In general, an accommodation is any change in the work environment or in the way things are customarily done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities. There are three categories of reasonable accommodation. These are (1) accommodations that are required to ensure equal opportunity in the application process; (2) accommodations that enable the employer's employees with disabilities to perform the essential functions of the position held or desired; and (3) accommodations that enable the employer's employees with disabilities to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by employees without disabilities. It should be noted that nothing in this part prohibits employers or other covered entities from providing accommodations beyond those required by this part.

Part 1630 lists the examples, specified in title I of the ADA, of the most common types of accommodation that an employer or other covered entity may be required to provide. There are any number of other specific accommodations that may be appropriate for particular situations but are not specifically mentioned in this listing. This listing is not intended to be exhaustive of accommodation possibilities. For example, other accommodations could include permitting the use of accrued paid leave or providing additional unpaid leave for necessary treatment, making employer provided transportation accessible, and providing reserved parking spaces. Providing personal assistants, such as a page turner for an employee with no hands or a travel attendant to act as a sighted guide to assist a blind employee on occasional business trips, may also be a reasonable accommodation. Senate Report at 31; House Labor Report at 62; House Judiciary Report at 39.

It may also be a reasonable accommodation to permit an individual with a disability the opportunity to provide and utilize equipment, aids or services that an employer is not required to provide as a reasonable accommodation. For example, it would be a reasonable accommodation for an employer to permit an individual who is blind to use a guide dog at work, even though the employer would not be required to provide a guide dog for the employee.

The accommodations included on the list of reasonable accommodations are generally self explanatory. However, there are a few that require further explanation. One of these is the accommodation of making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to, and usable by, individuals with disabilities. This accommodation includes both those areas that must be accessible for the employee to perform essential job functions, as well as non-work areas used by the employer's employees for other purposes. For example, accessible break rooms, lunch rooms, training rooms, restrooms etc., may be required as reasonable accommodations.

Another of the potential accommodations listed is ''job restructuring.'' An employer or other covered entity may restructure a job by reallocating or redistributing nonessential, marginal job functions. For example, an employer may have two jobs, each of which entails the performance of a number of marginal functions. The employer hires an individual with a disability who is able to perform some of the marginal functions of each job but not all of the marginal functions of either job. As an accommodation, the employer may redistribute the marginal functions so that all of the marginal functions that the individual with a disability can perform are made a part of the position to be filled by the individual with a disability. The remaining marginal functions that the individual with a disability cannot perform would then be transferred to the other position. See Senate Report at 31; House Labor Report at 62.

An employer or other covered entity is not required to reallocate essential functions. The essential functions are by definition those that the individual who holds the job would have to perform, with or without reasonable accommodation, in order to be considered qualified for the position. For example, suppose a security guard position requires the individual who holds the job to inspect identification cards. An employer would not have to provide an individual who is legally blind with an assistant to look at the identification cards for the legally blind employee. In this situation the assistant would be performing the job for the individual with a disability rather than assisting the individual to perform the job. See *Coleman* v. *Darden*, 595 F.2d 533 (10th Cir. 1979).

An employer or other covered entity may also restructure a job by altering when and/or how an essential function is performed. For example, an essential function customarily performed in the early morning hours may be rescheduled until later in the day as a reasonable accommodation to a disability that precludes performance of the function at the customary hour. Likewise, as a reasonable accommodation, an employee with a disability that inhibits the ability to write, may be permitted to computerize records that were customarily maintained manually.

Reassignment to a vacant position is also listed as a potential reasonable accommodation. In general, reassignment should be considered only when accommodation within the individual's current position would pose an undue hardship. Reassignment is not available to applicants. An applicant for a position must be qualified for, and be able to

perform the essential functions of, the position sought with or without reasonable accommodation.

Reassignment may not be used to limit, segregate, or otherwise discriminate against employees with disabilities by forcing reassignments to undesirable positions or to designated offices or facilities. Employers should reassign the individual to an equivalent position, in terms of pay, status, etc., if the individual is qualified, and if the position is vacant within a reasonable amount of time. A ''reasonable amount of time'' should be determined in light of the totality of the circumstances. As an example, suppose there is no vacant position available at the time that an individual with a disability requests reassignment as a reasonable accommodation. The employer, however, knows that an equivalent position for which the individual is qualified, will become vacant next week. Under these circumstances, the employer should reassign the individual to the position when it becomes available.

An employer may reassign an individual to a lower graded position if there are no accommodations that would enable the employee to remain in the current position and there are no vacant equivalent positions for which the individual is qualified with or without reasonable accommodation. An employer, however, is not required to maintain the reassigned individual with a disability at the salary of the higher graded position if it does not so maintain reassigned employees who are not disabled. It should also be noted that an employer is not required to promote an individual with a disability as an accommodation. See Senate Report at 31–32; House Labor Report at 63.

The determination of which accommodation is appropriate in a particular situation involves a process in which the employer and employee identify the precise limitations imposed by the disability and explore potential accommodations that would overcome those limitations. This process is discussed more fully in §1630.9 Not Making Reasonable Accommodation.

Section 1630.2(p) Undue Hardship

An employer or other covered entity is not required to provide an accommodation that will impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's or other covered entity's business. The term ''undue hardship'' means significant difficulty or expense in, or resulting from, the provision of the accommodation. The ''undue hardship'' provision takes into account the financial realities of the particular employer or other covered entity. However, the concept of undue hardship is not limited to financial difficulty. ''Undue hardship'' refers to any accommodation that would be unduly costly, extensive, substantial, or disruptive, or that would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the business. See Senate Report at 35; House Labor Report at 67.

For example, suppose an individual with a disabling visual impairment that makes it extremely difficult to see in dim lighting applies for a position as a waiter in a nightclub and requests that the club be brightly lit as a reasonable accommodation. Although the individual may be able to perform the job in bright lighting, the nightclub will probably be able to demonstrate that that particular accommodation, though inexpensive, would impose an undue hardship if the bright lighting would destroy the ambience of the nightclub and/or make it difficult for the customers to see the stage show. The fact that that particular accommodation poses an undue hardship, however, only means that the employer is not required to provide that accommodation. If there is another accommodation that will not create an undue hardship, the employer would be required to provide the alternative accommodation.

An employer's claim that the cost of a particular accommodation will impose an undue hardship will be analyzed in light of the factors outlined in part 1630. In part, this analysis requires a determination of whose financial resources should be considered in deciding whether the accommodation is unduly costly. In some cases the financial resources of the employer or other covered entity in its entirety should be considered in determining whether the cost of an accommodation poses an undue hardship. In other cases, consideration of the financial resources of the employer or other covered entity as a whole may be inappropriate because it may not give an accurate picture of the financial resources available to the particular facility that will actually be required to provide the accommodation. See House Labor Report at 68–69; House Judiciary Report at 40–41; see also Conference Report at 56–57.

If the employer or other covered entity asserts that only the financial resources of the facility where the individual will be employed should be considered, part 1630 requires a factual determination of the relationship between the employer or other covered entity and the facility that will provide the accommodation. As an example, suppose that an independently owned fast food franchise that receives no money from the franchisor refuses to hire an individual with a hearing impairment because it asserts that it would be an undue hardship to provide an interpreter to enable the individual to participate in monthly staff meetings. Since the financial relationship between the franchisor and the franchise is limited to payment of an annual franchise fee, only the financial resources of the franchise would be considered in determining whether or not providing the accommodation would be an undue hardship. See House Labor Report at 68; House Judiciary Report at 40.

If the employer or other covered entity can show that the cost of the accommodation would impose an undue hardship, it would still be required to provide the accommodation if the funding is available from another source, *e.g.*, a State vocational rehabilitation agency, or if Federal, State or local tax deductions or tax credits are available to offset the cost of the accommodation. If the employer or other covered entity receives, or is eligible to receive, monies from an external source that would pay the entire cost of the accommodation, it cannot claim cost as an undue hardship. In the absence of such funding, the individual with a disability requesting the accommodation should be given the option of providing the accommodation or of paying that portion of the cost which constitutes the undue hardship on the operation of the business. To the extent that such monies pay or would pay for only part of the cost of the accommodation, only that portion of the cost of the accommodation that could not be recovered—the final net cost to the entity—may be considered in determining undue hardship. (See §1630.9 Not Making Reasonable Accommodation). See Senate Report at 36; House Labor Report at 69.

Section 1630.2(r) Direct Threat

An employer may require, as a qualification standard, that an individual not pose a direct threat to the health or safety of himself/herself or others. Like any other qualification standard, such a standard must apply to all applicants or employees and not just to individuals with disabilities. If, however, an individual poses a direct threat as a result of a disability, the employer must determine whether a reasonable accommodation would either eliminate the risk or reduce it to an acceptable level. If no accommodation exists that would either eliminate or reduce the risk, the employer may refuse to hire an applicant or may discharge an employee who poses a direct threat.

An employer, however, is not permitted to deny an employment opportunity to an individual with a disability merely because of a slightly increased risk. The risk can only be considered when it poses a significant risk, *i.e.*, high probability, of substantial harm; a speculative or remote risk is insufficient. See Senate Report at 27; House Report Labor Report at 56–57; House Judiciary Report at 45.

Determining whether an individual poses a significant risk of substantial harm to others must be made on a case by case basis. The employer should identify the specific risk posed by the individual. For individuals with mental or emotional disabilities, the employer must identify the specific behavior on the part of the individual that would pose the direct threat. For individuals with physical disabilities, the employer must identify the aspect of the disability that would pose the direct threat. The employer should then consider the four factors listed in part 1630:

(1) The duration of the risk;

(2) The nature and severity of the potential harm;

(3) The likelihood that the potential harm will occur; and

(4) The imminence of the potential harm.

Such consideration must rely on objective, factual evidence—not on subjective perceptions, irrational fears, patronizing attitudes, or stereotypes—about the nature or effect of a particular disability, or of disability generally. See Senate Report at 27; House Labor Report at 56–57; House Judiciary Report at 45–46. See also *Strathie* v. *Department of Transportation*, 716 F.2d 227 (3d Cir. 1983). Relevant evidence may include input from the individual with a disability, the experience of the individual with a disability in previous similar positions, and opinions of medical doctors, rehabilitation counselors, or physical therapists who have expertise in the disability involved and/or direct knowledge of the individual with the disability.

An employer is also permitted to require that an individual not pose a direct threat of harm to his or her own safety or health. If performing the particular functions of a job would result in a high probability of substantial harm to the individual, the employer could reject or discharge the individual unless a reasonable accommodation that would not cause an undue hardship would avert the harm. For example, an employer would not be required to hire an individual, disabled by narcolepsy, who frequently and unexpectedly loses consciousness for a carpentry job the essential functions of which require the use of power saws and other dangerous equipment, where no accommodation exists that will reduce or eliminate the risk.

The assessment that there exists a high probability of substantial harm to the individual, like the assessment that there exists a high probability of substantial harm to others, must be strictly based on valid medical analyses and/or on other objective evidence. This determination must be based on individualized factual data, using the factors discussed above, rather than on stereotypic or patronizing assumptions and must consider potential reasonable accommodations. Generalized fears about risks from the employment environment, such as exacerbation of the disability caused by stress, cannot be used by an employer to disqualify an individual with a disability. For example, a law firm could not reject an applicant with a history of disabling mental illness based on a generalized fear that the stress of trying to make partner might trigger a relapse of the individual's mental illness. Nor can generalized fears about risks to individuals with disabilities in the event of an evacuation or other emergency be used by an employer to

disqualify an individual with a disability. See Senate Report at 56; House Labor Report at 73–74; House Judiciary Report at 45. See also *Mantolete* v. *Bolger*, 767 F.2d 1416 (9th Cir. 1985); *Bentivegna* v. *U.S. Department of Labor*, 694 F.2d 619 (9th Cir.1982).

Section 1630.3 Exceptions to the Definitions of ''Disability'' and ''Qualified Individual with a Disability''

Section 1630.3 (a) through (c) Illegal Use of Drugs

Part 1630 provides that an individual currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs is not an individual with a disability for purposes of this part when the employer or other covered entity acts on the basis of such use. Illegal use of drugs refers both to the use of unlawful drugs, such as cocaine, and to the unlawful use of prescription drugs.

Employers, for example, may discharge or deny employment to persons who illegally use drugs, on the basis of such use, without fear of being held liable for discrimination. The term ''currently engaging'' is not intended to be limited to the use of drugs on the day of, or within a matter of days or weeks before, the employment action in question. Rather, the provision is intended to apply to the illegal use of drugs that has occurred recently enough to indicate that the individual is actively engaged in such conduct. See Conference Report at 64.

Individuals who are erroneously perceived as engaging in the illegal use of drugs, but are not in fact illegally using drugs are not excluded from the definitions of the terms ''disability'' and ''qualified individual with a disability.'' Individuals who are no longer illegally using drugs and who have either been rehabilitated successfully or are in the process of completing a rehabilitation program are, likewise, not excluded from the definitions of those terms. The term ''rehabilitation program'' refers to both in-patient and out-patient programs, as well as to appropriate employee assistance programs, professionally recognized self-help programs, such as Narcotics Anonymous, or other programs that provide professional (not necessarily medical) assistance and counseling for individuals who illegally use drugs. See Conference Report at 64; see also House Labor Report at 77; House Judiciary Report at 47.

It should be noted that this provision simply provides that certain individuals are not excluded from the definitions of ''disability'' and ''qualified individual with a disability.'' Consequently, such individuals are still required to establish that they satisfy the requirements of these definitions in order to be protected by the ADA and this part. An individual erroneously regarded as illegally using drugs, for example, would have to show that he or she was regarded as a drug addict in order to demonstrate that he or she meets the definition of ''disability'' as defined in this part.

Employers are entitled to seek reasonable assurances that no illegal use of drugs is occurring or has occurred recently enough so that continuing use is a real and ongoing problem. The reasonable assurances that employers may ask applicants or employees to provide include evidence that the individual is participating in a drug treatment program and/or evidence, such as drug test results, to show that the individual is not currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs. An employer, such as a law enforcement agency, may also be able to impose a qualification standard that excludes individuals with a history of illegal use of drugs if it can show that the standard is job-related and consistent with business necessity. (See §1630.10 Qualification Standards, Tests and Other Selection Criteria) See Conference Report at 64.

Section 1630.4 Discrimination Prohibited

Paragraph (a) of this provision prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability against a qualified individual in all aspects of the employment relationship. The range of employment decisions covered by this nondiscrimination mandate is to be construed in a manner consistent with the regulations implementing section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Paragraph (b) makes it clear that the language ''on the basis of disability'' is not intended to create a cause of action for an individual without a disability who claims that someone with a disability was treated more favorably (disparate treatment), or was provided a reasonable accommodation that an individual without a disability was not provided. See 2008 House Judiciary Committee Report at 21 (this provision ''prohibits reverse discrimination claims by disallowing claims based on the lack of disability''). Additionally, the ADA and this part do not affect laws that may require the affirmative recruitment or hiring of individuals with disabilities, or any voluntary affirmative action employers may undertake on behalf of individuals with disabilities. However, part 1630 is not intended to limit the ability of covered entities to choose and maintain a qualified workforce. Employers can continue to use criteria that are job related and consistent with business necessity to select qualified employees, and can continue to hire employees who can perform the essential functions of the job.

The Amendments Act modified title I's nondiscrimination provision to replace the prohibition on discrimination ''against a qualified individual with a disability because of the disability of such individual'' with a prohibition on discrimination ''against a

qualified individual on the basis of disability.'' As the legislative history of the ADAAA explains: ''[T]he bill modifies the ADA to conform to the structure of Title VII and other civil rights laws by requiring an individual to demonstrate discrimination 'on the basis of disability' rather than discrimination 'against an individual with a disability' because of the individual's disability. We hope this will be an important signal to both lawyers and courts to spend less time and energy on the minutia of an individual's impairment, and more time and energy on the merits of the case—including whether discrimination occurred because of the disability, whether an individual was qualified for a job or eligible for a service, and whether a reasonable accommodation or modification was called for under the law.'' Joint Hoyer-Sensenbrenner Statement at 4; See also 2008 House Judiciary Report at 21 (''This change harmonizes the ADA with other civil rights laws by focusing on whether a person who has been discriminated against has proven that the discrimination was based on a personal characteristic (disability), not on whether he or she has proven that the characteristic exists.'').

Section 1630.5 Limiting, Segregating and Classifying

This provision and the several provisions that follow describe various specific forms of discrimination that are included within the general prohibition of §1630.4. The capabilities of qualified individuals must be determined on an individualized, case by case basis. Covered entities are also prohibited from segregating qualified employees into separate work areas or into separate lines of advancement on the basis of their disabilities.

Thus, for example, it would be a violation of this part for an employer to limit the duties of an employee with a disability based on a presumption of what is best for an individual with such a disability, or on a presumption about the abilities of an individual with such a disability. It would be a violation of this part for an employer to adopt a separate track of job promotion or progression for employees with disabilities based on a presumption that employees with disabilities are uninterested in, or incapable of, performing particular jobs. Similarly, it would be a violation for an employer to assign or reassign (as a reasonable accommodation) employees with disabilities to one particular office or installation, or to require that employees with disabilities only use particular employer provided non-work facilities such as segregated break-rooms, lunch rooms, or lounges. It would also be a violation of this part to deny employment to an applicant or employee with a disability based on generalized fears about the safety of an individual with such a disability, or based on generalized assumptions about the absenteeism rate of an individual with such a disability.

In addition, it should also be noted that this part is intended to require that employees with disabilities be accorded equal access to whatever health insurance coverage the employer provides to other employees. This part does not, however, affect pre-existing condition clauses included in health insurance policies offered by employers. Consequently, employers may continue to offer policies that contain such clauses, even if they adversely affect individuals with disabilities, so long as the clauses are not used as a subterfuge to evade the purposes of this part.

So, for example, it would be permissible for an employer to offer an insurance policy that limits coverage for certain procedures or treatments to a specified number per year. Thus, if a health insurance plan provided coverage for five blood transfusions a year to all covered employees, it would not be discriminatory to offer this plan simply because a hemophiliac employee may require more than five blood transfusions annually. However, it would not be permissible to limit or deny the hemophiliac employee coverage for other procedures, such as heart surgery or the setting of a broken leg, even though the plan would not have to provide coverage for the additional blood transfusions that may be involved in these procedures. Likewise, limits may be placed on reimbursements for certain procedures or on the types of drugs or procedures covered (e.g. limits on the number of permitted X-rays or non-coverage of experimental drugs or procedures), but that limitation must be applied equally to individuals with and without disabilities. See Senate Report at 28–29; House Labor Report at 58–59; House Judiciary Report at 36.

Leave policies or benefit plans that are uniformly applied do not violate this part simply because they do not address the special needs of every individual with a disability. Thus, for example, an employer that reduces the number of paid sick leave days that it will provide to all employees, or reduces the amount of medical insurance coverage that it will provide to all employees, is not in violation of this part, even if the benefits reduction has an impact on employees with disabilities in need of greater sick leave and medical coverage. Benefits reductions adopted for discriminatory reasons are in violation of this part. See *Alexander* v. *Choate*, 469 U.S. 287 (1985). See Senate Report at 85; House Labor Report at 137. (See also, the discussion at §1630.16(f) Health Insurance, Life Insurance, and Other Benefit Plans).

Section 1630.6 Contractual or Other Arrangements

An employer or other covered entity may not do through a contractual or other relationship what it is prohibited from doing directly. This provision does not affect the determination of whether or not one is a ''covered entity'' or ''employer'' as defined in §1630.2.

This provision only applies to situations where an employer or other covered entity has entered into a contractual relationship that has the effect of discriminating against its own employees or applicants with disabilities. Accordingly, it would be a violation for an employer to participate in a contractual relationship that results in discrimination against the employer's employees with disabilities in hiring, training, promotion, or in any other aspect of the employment relationship. This provision applies whether or not the employer or other covered entity intended for the contractual relationship to have the discriminatory effect.

Part 1630 notes that this provision applies to parties on either side of the contractual or other relationship. This is intended to highlight that an employer whose employees provide services to others, like an employer whose employees receive services, must ensure that those employees are not discriminated against on the basis of disability. For example, a copier company whose service representative is a dwarf could be required to provide a stepstool, as a reasonable accommodation, to enable him to perform the necessary repairs. However, the employer would not be required, as a reasonable accommodation, to make structural changes to its customer's inaccessible premises.

The existence of the contractual relationship adds no new obligations under part 1630. The employer, therefore, is not liable through the contractual arrangement for any discrimination by the contractor against the contractors own employees or applicants, although the contractor, as an employer, may be liable for such discrimination.

An employer or other covered entity, on the other hand, cannot evade the obligations imposed by this part by engaging in a contractual or other relationship. For example, an employer cannot avoid its responsibility to make reasonable accommodation subject to the undue hardship limitation through a contractual arrangement. See Conference Report at 59; House Labor Report at 59–61; House Judiciary Report at 36–37.

To illustrate, assume that an employer is seeking to contract with a company to provide training for its employees. Any responsibilities of reasonable accommodation applicable to the employer in providing the training remain with that employer even if it contracts with another company for this service. Thus, if the training company were planning to conduct the training at an inaccessible location, thereby making it impossible for an employee who uses a wheelchair to attend, the employer would have a duty to make reasonable accommodation unless to do so would impose an undue hardship. Under these circumstances, appropriate accommodations might include (1) having the training company identify accessible training sites and relocate the training program; (2) having the training company make the training site accessible; (3) directly making the training site accessible or providing the training company with the means by which to make the site accessible; (4) identifying and contracting with another training company that uses accessible sites; or (5) any other accommodation that would result in making the training available to the employee.

As another illustration, assume that instead of contracting with a training company, the employer contracts with a hotel to host a conference for its employees. The employer will have a duty to ascertain and ensure the accessibility of the hotel and its conference facilities. To fulfill this obligation the employer could, for example, inspect the hotel first-hand or ask a local disability group to inspect the hotel. Alternatively, the employer could ensure that the contract with the hotel specifies it will provide accessible guest rooms for those who need them and that all rooms to be used for the conference, including exhibit and meeting rooms, are accessible. If the hotel breaches this accessibility provision, the hotel may be liable to the employer, under a non-ADA breach of contract theory, for the cost of any accommodation needed to provide access to the hotel and conference, and for any other costs accrued by the employer. (In addition, the hotel may also be independently liable under title III of the ADA). However, this would not relieve the employer of its responsibility under this part nor shield it from charges of discrimination by its own employees. See House Labor Report at 40; House Judiciary Report at 37.

Section 1630.8 Relationship or Association With an Individual With a Disability

This provision is intended to protect any qualified individual, whether or not that individual has a disability, from discrimination because that person is known to have an association or relationship with an individual who has a known disability. This protection is not limited to those who have a familial relationship with an individual with a disability.

To illustrate the scope of this provision, assume that a qualified applicant without a disability applies for a job and discloses to the employer that his or her spouse has a

disability. The employer thereupon declines to hire the applicant because the employer believes that the applicant would have to miss work or frequently leave work early in order to care for the spouse. Such a refusal to hire would be prohibited by this provision. Similarly, this provision would prohibit an employer from discharging an employee because the employee does volunteer work with people who have AIDS, and the employer fears that the employee may contract the disease.

This provision also applies to other benefits and privileges of employment. For example, an employer that provides health insurance benefits to its employees for their dependents may not reduce the level of those benefits to an employee simply because that employee has a dependent with a disability. This is true even if the provision of such benefits would result in increased health insurance costs for the employer.

It should be noted, however, that an employer need not provide the applicant or employee without a disability with a reasonable accommodation because that duty only applies to qualified applicants or employees with disabilities. Thus, for example, an employee would not be entitled to a modified work schedule as an accommodation to enable the employee to care for a spouse with a disability. See Senate Report at 30; House Labor Report at 61–62; House Judiciary Report at 38–39.

Section 1630.9 Not Making Reasonable Accommodation

The obligation to make reasonable accommodation is a form of non-discrimination. It applies to all employment decisions and to the job application process. This obligation does not extend to the provision of adjustments or modifications that are primarily for the personal benefit of the individual with a disability. Thus, if an adjustment or modification is job-related, *e.g.,* specifically assists the individual in performing the duties of a particular job, it will be considered a type of reasonable accommodation. On the other hand, if an adjustment or modification assists the individual throughout his or her daily activities, on and off the job, it will be considered a personal item that the employer is not required to provide. Accordingly, an employer would generally not be required to provide an employee with a disability with a prosthetic limb, wheelchair, or eyeglasses. Nor would an employer have to provide as an accommodation any amenity or convenience that is not job-related, such as a private hot plate, hot pot or refrigerator that is not provided to employees without disabilities. See Senate Report at 31; House Labor Report at 62.

It should be noted, however, that the provision of such items may be required as a reasonable accommodation where such items are specifically designed or required to meet job-related rather than personal needs. An employer, for example, may have to provide an individual with a disabling visual impairment with eyeglasses specifically designed to enable the individual to use the office computer monitors, but that are not otherwise needed by the individual outside of the office.

The term ''supported employment,'' which has been applied to a wide variety of programs to assist individuals with severe disabilities in both competitive and non-competitive employment, is not synonymous with reasonable accommodation. Examples of supported employment include modified training materials, restructuring essential functions to enable an individual to perform a job, or hiring an outside professional (''job coach'') to assist in job training. Whether a particular form of assistance would be required as a reasonable accommodation must be determined on an individualized, case by case basis without regard to whether that assistance is referred to as ''supported employment.'' For example, an employer, under certain circumstances, may be required to provide modified training materials or a temporary ''job coach'' to assist in the training of an individual with a disability as a reasonable accommodation. However, an employer would not be required to restructure the essential functions of a position to fit the skills of an individual with a disability who is not otherwise qualified to perform the position, as is done in certain supported employment programs. See 34 CFR part 363. It should be noted that it would not be a violation of this part for an employer to provide any of these personal modifications or adjustments, or to engage in supported employment or similar rehabilitative programs.

The obligation to make reasonable accommodation applies to all services and programs provided in connection with employment, and to all non-work facilities provided or maintained by an employer for use by its employees. Accordingly, the obligation to accommodate is applicable to employer sponsored placement or counseling services, and to employer provided cafeterias, lounges, gymnasiums, auditoriums, transportation and the like.

The reasonable accommodation requirement is best understood as a means by which barriers to the equal employment opportunity of an individual with a disability are removed or alleviated. These barriers may, for example, be physical or structural obstacles that inhibit or prevent the access of an individual with a disability to job sites, facilities or equipment. Or they may be rigid work schedules that permit no flexibility as to when work is performed or when breaks may be taken, or inflexible job procedures

that unduly limit the modes of communication that are used on the job, or the way in which particular tasks are accomplished.

The term ''otherwise qualified'' is intended to make clear that the obligation to make reasonable accommodation is owed only to an individual with a disability who is qualified within the meaning of §1630.2(m) in that he or she satisfies all the skill, experience, education and other job-related selection criteria. An individual with a disability is ''otherwise qualified,'' in other words, if he or she is qualified for a job, except that, because of the disability, he or she needs a reasonable accommodation to be able to perform the job's essential functions.

For example, if a law firm requires that all incoming lawyers have graduated from an accredited law school and have passed the bar examination, the law firm need not provide an accommodation to an individual with a visual impairment who has not met these selection criteria. That individual is not entitled to a reasonable accommodation because the individual is not ''otherwise qualified'' for the position.

On the other hand, if the individual has graduated from an accredited law school and passed the bar examination, the individual would be ''otherwise qualified.'' The law firm would thus be required to provide a reasonable accommodation, such as a machine that magnifies print, to enable the individual to perform the essential functions of the attorney position, unless the necessary accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the law firm. See Senate Report at 33–34; House Labor Report at 64–65.

The reasonable accommodation that is required by this part should provide the individual with a disability with an equal employment opportunity. Equal employment opportunity means an opportunity to attain the same level of performance, or to enjoy the same level of benefits and privileges of employment as are available to the average similarly situated employee without a disability. Thus, for example, an accommodation made to assist an employee with a disability in the performance of his or her job must be adequate to enable the individual to perform the essential functions of the relevant position. The accommodation, however, does not have to be the ''best'' accommodation possible, so long as it is sufficient to meet the job-related needs of the individual being accommodated. Accordingly, an employer would not have to provide an employee disabled by a back impairment with a state-of-the art mechanical lifting device if it provided the employee with a less expensive or more readily available device that enabled the employee to perform the essential functions of the job. See Senate Report at 35; House Labor Report at 66; see also *Carter* v. *Bennett,* 840 F.2d 63 (DC Cir. 1988).

Employers are obligated to make reasonable accommodation only to the physical or mental limitations resulting from the disability of an individual with a disability that is known to the employer. Thus, an employer would not be expected to accommodate disabilities of which it is unaware. If an employee with a known disability is having difficulty performing his or her job, an employer may inquire whether the employee is in need of a reasonable accommodation. In general, however, it is the responsibility of the individual with a disability to inform the employer that an accommodation is needed. When the need for an accommodation is not obvious, an employer, before providing a reasonable accommodation, may require that the individual with a disability provide documentation of the need for accommodation.

See Senate Report at 34; House Labor Report at 65.

Process of Determining the Appropriate Reasonable Accommodation

Once an individual with a disability has requested provision of a reasonable accommodation, the employer must make a reasonable effort to determine the appropriate accommodation. The appropriate reasonable accommodation is best determined through a flexible, interactive process that involves both the employer and the individual with a disability. Although this process is described below in terms of accommodations that enable the individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of the position held or desired, it is equally applicable to accommodations involving the job application process, and to accommodations that enable the individual with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment. See Senate Report at 34–35; House Labor Report at 65–67.

When an individual with a disability has requested a reasonable accommodation to assist in the performance of a job, the employer, using a problem solving approach, should:

(1) Analyze the particular job involved and determine its purpose and essential functions;

(2) Consult with the individual with a disability to ascertain the precise job-related limitations imposed by the individual's disability and how those limitations could be overcome with a reasonable accommodation;

(3) In consultation with the individual to be accommodated, identify potential accommodations and assess the effectiveness each would have in enabling the individual to perform the essential functions of the position; and

(4) Consider the preference of the individual to be accommodated and select and implement the accommodation that is most appropriate for both the employee and the employer.

In many instances, the appropriate reasonable accommodation may be so obvious to either or both the employer and the individual with a disability that it may not be necessary to proceed in this step-by-step fashion. For example, if an employee who uses a wheelchair requests that his or her desk be placed on blocks to elevate the desktop above the arms of the wheelchair and the employer complies, an appropriate accommodation has been requested, identified, and provided without either the employee or employer being aware of having engaged in any sort of ''reasonable accommodation process.''

However, in some instances neither the individual requesting the accommodation nor the employer can readily identify the appropriate accommodation. For example, the individual needing the accommodation may not know enough about the equipment used by the employer or the exact nature of the work site to suggest an appropriate accommodation. Likewise, the employer may not know enough about the individual's disability or the limitations that disability would impose on the performance of the job to suggest an appropriate accommodation. Under such circumstances, it may be necessary for the employer to initiate a more defined problem solving process, such as the step-by-step process described above, as part of its reasonable effort to identify the appropriate reasonable accommodation.

This process requires the individual assessment of both the particular job at issue, and the specific physical or mental limitations of the particular individual in need of reasonable accommodation. With regard to assessment of the job, ''individual assessment'' means analyzing the actual job duties and determining the true purpose or object of the job. Such an assessment is necessary to ascertain which job functions are the essential functions that an accommodation must enable an individual with a disability to perform.

After assessing the relevant job, the employer, in consultation with the individual requesting the accommodation, should make an assessment of the specific limitations imposed by the disability on the individual's performance of the job's essential functions. This assessment will make it possible to ascertain the precise barrier to the employment opportunity which, in turn, will make it possible to determine the accommodation(s) that could alleviate or remove that barrier.

If consultation with the individual in need of the accommodation still does not reveal potential appropriate accommodations, then the employer, as part of this process, may find that technical assistance is helpful in determining how to accommodate the particular individual in the specific situation. Such assistance could be sought from the Commission, from State or local rehabilitation agencies, or from disability constituent organizations. It should be noted, however, that, as provided in §1630.9(c) of this part, the failure to obtain or receive technical assistance from the Federal agencies that administer the ADA will not excuse the employer from its reasonable accommodation obligation.

Once potential accommodations have been identified, the employer should assess the effectiveness of each potential accommodation in assisting the individual in need of the accommodation in the performance of the essential functions of the position. If more than one of these accommodations will enable the individual to perform the essential functions or if the individual would prefer to provide his or her own accommodation, the preference of the individual with a disability should be given primary consideration. However, the employer providing the accommodation has the ultimate discretion to choose between effective accommodations, and may choose the less expensive accommodation or the accommodation that is easier for it to provide. It should also be noted that the individual's willingness to provide his or her own accommodation does not relieve the employer of the duty to provide the accommodation should the individual for any reason be unable or unwilling to continue to provide the accommodation.

Reasonable Accommodation Process Illustrated

The following example illustrates the informal reasonable accommodation process. Suppose a Sack Handler position requires that the employee pick up fifty pound sacks and carry them from the company loading dock to the storage room, and that a sack handler who is disabled by a back impairment requests a reasonable accommodation. Upon receiving the request, the employer analyzes the Sack Handler job and determines that the essential function and purpose of the job is not the requirement that the job holder physically lift and carry the sacks, but the requirement that the job holder cause the sack to move from the loading dock to the storage room.

The employer then meets with the sack handler to ascertain precisely the barrier posed by the individual's specific disability to the performance of the job's essential function of relocating the sacks. At this meeting the employer learns that the individual can, in fact, lift the sacks to waist level, but is prevented by his or her disability from carrying the sacks from the loading dock to the storage room. The employer and the individual agree that any of a number of potential accommodations, such as the provision of a dolly, hand truck, or

cart, could enable the individual to transport the sacks that he or she has lifted.

Upon further consideration, however, it is determined that the provision of a cart is not a feasible effective option. No carts are currently available at the company, and those that can be purchased by the company are the wrong shape to hold many of the bulky and irregularly shaped sacks that must be moved. Both the dolly and the hand truck, on the other hand, appear to be effective options. Both are readily available to the company, and either will enable the individual to relocate the sacks that he or she has lifted. The sack handler indicates his or her preference for the dolly. In consideration of this expressed preference, and because the employer feels that the dolly will allow the individual to move more sacks at a time and so be more efficient than would a hand truck, the employer ultimately provides the sack handler with a dolly in fulfillment of the obligation to make reasonable accommodation.

Section 1630.9(b)

This provision states that an employer or other covered entity cannot prefer or select a qualified individual without a disability over an equally qualified individual with a disability merely because the individual with a disability will require a reasonable accommodation. In other words, an individual's need for an accommodation cannot enter into the employer's or other covered entity's decision regarding hiring, discharge, promotion, or other similar employment decisions, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the employer. See House Labor Report at 70.

Section 1630.9(d)

The purpose of this provision is to clarify that an employer or other covered entity may not compel an individual with a disability to accept an accommodation, where that accommodation is neither requested nor needed by the individual. However, if a necessary reasonable accommodation is refused, the individual may not be considered qualified. For example, an individual with a visual impairment that restricts his or her field of vision but who is able to read unaided would not be required to accept a reader as an accommodation. However, if the individual were not able to read unaided and reading was an essential function of the job, the individual would not be qualified for the job if he or she refused a reasonable accommodation that would enable him or her to read. See Senate Report at 34; House Labor Report at 65; House Judiciary Report at 71–72.

Section 1630.9(e)

The purpose of this provision is to incorporate the clarification made in the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 that an individual is not entitled to reasonable accommodation under the ADA if the individual is only covered under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of ''individual with a disability.'' However, if the individual is covered under both the ''regarded as'' prong and one or both of the other two prongs of the definition of disability, the ordinary rules concerning the provision of reasonable accommodation apply.

Section 1630.10 Qualification Standards, Tests, and Other Selection Criteria

Section 1630.10(a)—In General

The purpose of this provision is to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from job opportunities unless they are actually unable to do the job. It is to ensure that there is a fit between job criteria and an applicant's (or employee's) actual ability to do the job. Accordingly, job criteria that even unintentionally screen out, or tend to screen out, an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities because of their disability may not be used unless the employer demonstrates that those criteria, as used by the employer, are job related for the position to which they are being applied and are consistent with business necessity. The concept of ''business necessity'' has the same meaning as the concept of ''business necessity'' under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Selection criteria that exclude, or tend to exclude, an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities because of their disability but do not concern an essential function of the job would not be consistent with business necessity.

The use of selection criteria that are related to an essential function of the job may be consistent with business necessity. However, selection criteria that are related to an essential function of the job may not be used to exclude an individual with a disability if that individual could satisfy the criteria with the provision of a reasonable accommodation. Experience under a similar provision of the regulations implementing section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act indicates that challenges to selection criteria are, in fact, often resolved by reasonable accommodation.

This provision is applicable to all types of selection criteria, including safety requirements, vision or hearing requirements, walking requirements, lifting requirements, and employment tests. See 1989 Senate Report at 37–39; House Labor Report at 70–72; House Judiciary Report at 42. As previously noted, however, it is not the intent of this part to

second guess an employer's business judgment with regard to production standards. See §1630.2(n) (Essential Functions). Consequently, production standards will generally not be subject to a challenge under this provision.

The Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (UGESP) 29 CFR part 1607 do not apply to the Rehabilitation Act and are similarly inapplicable to this part.

Section 1630.10(b)—Qualification Standards and Tests Related to Uncorrected Vision

This provision allows challenges to qualification standards based on uncorrected vision, even where the person excluded by a standard has fully corrected vision with ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses. An individual challenging a covered entity's application of a qualification standard, test, or other criterion based on uncorrected vision need not be a person with a disability. In order to have standing to challenge such a standard, test, or criterion, however, a person must be adversely affected by such standard, test or criterion. The Commission also believes that such individuals will usually be covered under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of disability. Someone who wears eyeglasses or contact lenses to correct vision will still have an impairment, and a qualification standard that screens the individual out because of the impairment by requiring a certain level of uncorrected vision to perform a job will amount to an action prohibited by the ADA based on an impairment. (See §1630.2(l); appendix to §1630.2(l).)

In either case, a covered entity may still defend a qualification standard requiring a certain level of uncorrected vision by showing that it is job related and consistent with business necessity. For example, an applicant or employee with uncorrected vision of 20/100 who wears glasses that fully correct his vision may challenge a police department's qualification standard that requires all officers to have uncorrected vision of no less than 20/40 in one eye and 20/100 in the other, and visual acuity of 20/20 in both eyes with correction. The department would then have to establish that the standard is job related and consistent with business necessity.

Section 1630.11 Administration of Tests

The intent of this provision is to further emphasize that individuals with disabilities are not to be excluded from jobs that they can actually perform merely because a disability prevents them from taking a test, or negatively influences the results of a test, that is a prerequisite to the job. Read together with the reasonable accommodation requirement of section 1630.9, this provision requires that employment tests be administered to eligible applicants or employees with disabilities that impair sensory, manual, or speaking skills in formats that do not require the use of the impaired skill.

The employer or other covered entity is, generally, only required to provide such reasonable accommodation if it knows, prior to the administration of the test, that the individual is disabled and that the disability impairs sensory, manual or speaking skills. Thus, for example, it would be unlawful to administer a written employment test to an individual who has informed the employer, prior to the administration of the test, that he is disabled with dyslexia and unable to read. In such a case, as a reasonable accommodation and in accordance with this provision, an alternative oral test should be administered to that individual. By the same token, a written test may need to be substituted for an oral test if the applicant taking the test is an individual with a disability that impairs speaking skills or impairs the processing of auditory information.

Occasionally, an individual with a disability may not realize, prior to the administration of a test, that he or she will need an accommodation to take that particular test. In such a situation, the individual with a disability, upon becoming aware of the need for an accommodation, must so inform the employer or other covered entity. For example, suppose an individual with a disabling visual impairment does not request an accommodation for a written examination because he or she is usually able to take written tests with the aid of his or her own specially designed lens. When the test is distributed, the individual with a disability discovers that the lens is insufficient to distinguish the words of the test because of the unusually low color contrast between the paper and the ink, the individual would be entitled, at that point, to request an accommodation. The employer or other covered entity would, thereupon, have to provide a test with higher contrast, schedule a retest, or provide any other effective accommodation unless to do so would impose an undue hardship.

Other alternative or accessible test modes or formats include the administration of tests in large print or braille, or via a reader or sign interpreter. Where it is not possible to test in an alternative format, the employer may be required, as a reasonable accommodation, to evaluate the skill to be tested in another manner (*e.g.,* through an interview, or through education license, or work experience requirements). An employer may also be required, as a reasonable accommodation, to allow more time to complete the test. In addition, the employer's obligation to make reasonable accommodation extends to ensuring that the test site is accessible. (See §1630.9 Not Making Reasonable Accommodation) See Senate Report at 37–38; House Labor Report at 70–72; House Judiciary Report at 42; see also *Stutts* v. *Freeman,*

694 F.2d 666 (11th Cir. 1983); *Crane* v. *Dole,* 617 F. Supp. 156 (D.D.C. 1985).

This provision does not require that an employer offer every applicant his or her choice of test format. Rather, this provision only requires that an employer provide, upon advance request, alternative, accessible tests to individuals with disabilities that impair sensory, manual, or speaking skills needed to take the test.

This provision does not apply to employment tests that require the use of sensory, manual, or speaking skills where the tests are intended to measure those skills. Thus, an employer could require that an applicant with dyslexia take a written test for a particular position if the ability to read is the skill the test is designed to measure. Similarly, an employer could require that an applicant complete a test within established time frames if speed were one of the skills for which the applicant was being tested. However, the results of such a test could not be used to exclude an individual with a disability unless the skill was necessary to perform an essential function of the position and no reasonable accommodation was available to enable the individual to perform that function, or the necessary accommodation would impose an undue hardship.

Section 1630.13 Prohibited Medical Examinations and Inquiries

Section 1630.13(a) Pre-employment Examination or Inquiry

This provision makes clear that an employer cannot inquire as to whether an individual has a disability at the pre-offer stage of the selection process. Nor can an employer inquire at the pre-offer stage about an applicant's workers' compensation history.

Employers may ask questions that relate to the applicant's ability to perform job-related functions. However, these questions should not be phrased in terms of disability. An employer, for example, may ask whether the applicant has a driver's license, if driving is a job function, but may not ask whether the applicant has a visual disability. Employers may ask about an applicant's ability to perform both essential and marginal job functions. Employers, though, may not refuse to hire an applicant with a disability because the applicant's disability prevents him or her from performing marginal functions. See Senate Report at 39; House Labor Report at 72–73; House Judiciary Report at 42–43.

Section 1630.13(b) Examination or Inquiry of Employees

The purpose of this provision is to prevent the administration to employees of medical tests or inquiries that do not serve a legitimate business purpose. For example, if an employee suddenly starts to use increased amounts of sick leave or starts to appear sickly, an employer could not require that employee to be tested for AIDS, HIV infection, or cancer unless the employer can demonstrate that such testing is job-related and consistent with business necessity. See Senate Report at 39; House Labor Report at 75; House Judiciary Report at 44.

Section 1630.14 Medical Examinations and Inquiries Specifically Permitted

Section 1630.14(a) Pre-employment Inquiry

Employers are permitted to make pre-employment inquiries into the ability of an applicant to perform job-related functions. This inquiry must be narrowly tailored. The employer may describe or demonstrate the job function and inquire whether or not the applicant can perform that function with or without reasonable accommodation. For example, an employer may explain that the job requires assembling small parts and ask if the individual will be able to perform that function, with or without reasonable accommodation. See Senate Report at 39; House Labor Report at 73; House Judiciary Report at 43.

An employer may also ask an applicant to describe or to demonstrate how, with or without reasonable accommodation, the applicant will be able to perform job-related functions. Such a request may be made of all applicants in the same job category regardless of disability. Such a request may also be made of an applicant whose known disability may interfere with or prevent the performance of a job-related function, whether or not the employer routinely makes such a request of all applicants in the job category. For example, an employer may ask an individual with one leg who applies for a position as a home washing machine repairman to demonstrate or to explain how, with or without reasonable accommodation, he would be able to transport himself and his tools down basement stairs. However, the employer may not inquire as to the nature or severity of the disability. Therefore, for example, the employer cannot ask how the individual lost the leg or whether the loss of the leg is indicative of an underlying impairment.

On the other hand, if the known disability of an applicant will not interfere with or prevent the performance of a job-related function, the employer may only request a description or demonstration by the applicant if it routinely makes such a request of all applicants in the same job category. So, for example, it would not be permitted for an employer to request that an applicant with one leg demonstrate his ability to assemble small parts while seated at a table, if the employer does not routinely request that all applicants provide such a demonstration.

An employer that requires an applicant with a disability to demonstrate how he or

she will perform a job-related function must either provide the reasonable accommodation the applicant needs to perform the function or permit the applicant to explain how, with the accommodation, he or she will perform the function. If the job-related function is not an essential function, the employer may not exclude the applicant with a disability because of the applicant's inability to perform that function. Rather, the employer must, as a reasonable accommodation, either provide an accommodation that will enable the individual to perform the function, transfer the function to another position, or exchange the function for one the applicant is able to perform.

An employer may not use an application form that lists a number of potentially disabling impairments and ask the applicant to check any of the impairments he or she may have. In addition, as noted above, an employer may not ask how a particular individual became disabled or the prognosis of the individual's disability. The employer is also prohibited from asking how often the individual will require leave for treatment or use leave as a result of incapacitation because of the disability. However, the employer may state the attendance requirements of the job and inquire whether the applicant can meet them.

An employer is permitted to ask, on a test announcement or application form, that individuals with disabilities who will require a reasonable accommodation in order to take the test so inform the employer within a reasonable established time period prior to the administration of the test. The employer may also request that documentation of the need for the accommodation accompany the request. Requested accommodations may include accessible testing sites, modified testing conditions and accessible test formats. (See §1630.11 Administration of Tests).

Physical agility tests are not medical examinations and so may be given at any point in the application or employment process. Such tests must be given to all similarly situated applicants or employees regardless of disability. If such tests screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities, the employer would have to demonstrate that the test is job-related and consistent with business necessity and that performance cannot be achieved with reasonable accommodation. (See §1630.9 Not Making Reasonable Accommodation: Process of Determining the Appropriate Reasonable Accommodation).

As previously noted, collecting information and inviting individuals to identify themselves as individuals with disabilities as required to satisfy the affirmative action requirements of section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act is not restricted by this part. (See §1630.1 (b) and (c) Applicability and Construction).

Section 1630.14(b) Employment Entrance Examination

An employer is permitted to require post-offer medical examinations before the employee actually starts working. The employer may condition the offer of employment on the results of the examination, provided that all entering employees in the same job category are subjected to such an examination, regardless of disability, and that the confidentiality requirements specified in this part are met.

This provision recognizes that in many industries, such as air transportation or construction, applicants for certain positions are chosen on the basis of many factors including physical and psychological criteria, some of which may be identified as a result of post-offer medical examinations given prior to entry on duty. Only those employees who meet the employer's physical and psychological criteria for the job, with or without reasonable accommodation, will be qualified to receive confirmed offers of employment and begin working.

Medical examinations permitted by this section are not required to be job-related and consistent with business necessity. However, if an employer withdraws an offer of employment because the medical examination reveals that the employee does not satisfy certain employment criteria, either the exclusionary criteria must not screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities, or they must be job-related and consistent with business necessity. As part of the showing that an exclusionary criteria is job-related and consistent with business necessity, the employer must also demonstrate that there is no reasonable accommodation that will enable the individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job. See Conference Report at 59–60; Senate Report at 39; House Labor Report at 73–74; House Judiciary Report at 43.

As an example, suppose an employer makes a conditional offer of employment to an applicant, and it is an essential function of the job that the incumbent be available to work every day for the next three months. An employment entrance examination then reveals that the applicant has a disabling impairment that, according to reasonable medical judgment that relies on the most current medical knowledge, will require treatment that will render the applicant unable to work for a portion of the three month period. Under these circumstances, the employer would be able to withdraw the employment offer without violating this part.

The information obtained in the course of a permitted entrance examination or inquiry is to be treated as a confidential medical record and may only be used in a manner not inconsistent with this part. State workers'

compensation laws are not preempted by the ADA or this part. These laws require the collection of information from individuals for State administrative purposes that do not conflict with the ADA or this part. Consequently, employers or other covered entities may submit information to State workers' compensation offices or second injury funds in accordance with State workers' compensation laws without violating this part.

Consistent with this section and with §1630.16(f) of this part, information obtained in the course of a permitted entrance examination or inquiry may be used for insurance purposes described in §1630.16(f).

Section 1630.14(c) Examination of Employees

This provision permits employers to make inquiries or require medical examinations (fitness for duty exams) when there is a need to determine whether an employee is still able to perform the essential functions of his or her job. The provision permits employers or other covered entities to make inquiries or require medical examinations necessary to the reasonable accommodation process described in this part. This provision also permits periodic physicals to determine fitness for duty or other medical monitoring if such physicals or monitoring are required by medical standards or requirements established by Federal, State, or local law that are consistent with the ADA and this part (or in the case of a Federal standard, with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act) in that they are job-related and consistent with business necessity.

Such standards may include Federal safety regulations that regulate bus and truck driver qualifications, as well as laws establishing medical requirements for pilots or other air transportation personnel. These standards also include health standards promulgated pursuant to the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, or other similar statutes that require that employees exposed to certain toxic and hazardous substances be medically monitored at specific intervals. See House Labor Report at 74–75.

The information obtained in the course of such examination or inquiries is to be treated as a confidential medical record and may only be used in a manner not inconsistent with this part.

Section 1630.14(d)(1): Health Program

Part 1630 permits voluntary medical examinations and inquiries, including voluntary medical histories, as part of employee health programs. These health programs include many wellness programs, which often incorporate, for example: A health risk assessment (HRA) consisting of a medical questionnaire, with or without medical examinations, to determine risk factors; medical screening for high blood pressure, cholesterol, or glucose; classes to help employees stop smoking or lose weight; physical activities in which employees can engage (such as walking or exercising daily); coaching to help employees meet health goals; and/or the administration of flu shots. Many employers offer wellness programs as part of a group health plan as a means of improving overall employee health with the goal of realizing lower health care costs. Other employers offer wellness programs that are available to all employees, regardless of whether they are in enrolled in a group health plan, while some employers offer wellness programs but do not sponsor a group health plan or group health insurance.

It is not sufficient for a covered entity merely to claim that its collection of medical information is part of a wellness program; the program, including any disability-related inquiries and medical examinations that are part of such program, must be reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease. In order to meet this standard, the program must have a reasonable chance of improving the health of, or preventing disease in, participating employees, and must not be overly burdensome, a subterfuge for violating the ADA or other laws prohibiting employment discrimination, or highly suspect in the method chosen to promote health or prevent disease. Asking employees to complete a HRA and/or undergo a biometric screening for the purpose of alerting them to health risks of which they may have been unaware would meet this standard, as would the use of aggregate information from HRAs by an employer to design and offer health programs aimed at specific conditions identified by the information collected. An employer might conclude from aggregate information, for example, that a significant number of its employees have diabetes or high blood pressure and might design specific programs that would enable employees to treat or manage these conditions. On the other hand, collecting medical information on a health questionnaire without providing employees meaningful follow-up information or advice, such as providing feedback about specific risk factors or using aggregate information to design programs or treat any specific conditions, would not be reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease. Additionally, a program is not reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease if it imposes, as a condition to obtaining a reward, an overly burdensome amount of time for participation, requires unreasonably intrusive procedures, or places significant costs related to medical examinations on employees. A program also is not reasonably designed if it exists mainly to shift costs from the covered entity to targeted

employees based on their health or simply to give an employer information to estimate future health care costs.

Section 1630.14(d)(2): Definition of ''Voluntary''

Section 1630.14(d)(2)(i) through (iii) of this part says that participation in employee health programs that include disability-related inquiries or medical examinations (such as disability-related inquiries or medical examinations that are part of a HRA) must be voluntary in order to comply with the ADA. This means that covered entities may not require employees to participate in such programs, may not deny employees access to health coverage under any of their group health plans or particular benefits packages within a group health plan for nonparticipation, may not limit coverage under their health plans for such employees, except to the extent the limitation (*e.g.,* having to pay a higher deductible) may be the result of forgoing a financial incentive permissible under §1630.14(d)(3), and may not take any other adverse action against employees who choose not to answer disability-related inquiries or undergo medical examinations. Additionally, covered entities may not retaliate against, interfere with, coerce, intimidate, or threaten employees within the meaning of Section 503 of the ADA, codified at 42 U.S.C. 12203. For example, an employer may not retaliate against an employee who declines to participate in a health program or files a charge with the EEOC concerning the program, may not coerce an employee into participating in a health program or into giving the employer access to medical information collected as part of the program, and may not threaten an employee with discipline if the employee does not participate in a health program. *See* 42 U.S.C. 12203(a),(b); 29 CFR 1630.12.

Section 1630.14(d)(2)(iv) of this part also states that for a wellness program that includes disability-related inquiries or medical examinations to be voluntary, an employer must provide employees with a notice clearly explaining what medical information will be obtained, how the medical information will be used, who will receive the medical information, the restrictions on its disclosure, and the methods the covered entity uses to prevent improper disclosure of medical information.

Section 1630.14(d)(3): Limitations on Incentives

The ADA, interpreted in light of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), as amended by the Affordable Care Act, does not prohibit the use of incentives to encourage participation in employee health programs, but it does place limits on them. In general, the use of limited incentives (which include both financial and in-kind incentives, such as time-off awards, prizes, or other items of value) in a wellness program will not render a wellness program involuntary. However, the maximum allowable incentive for a participatory program that involves asking disability-related questions or conducting medical examinations (such as having employees complete a HRA) or for a health-contingent program that requires participants to satisfy a standard related to a health factor may not exceed: (i) 30 Percent of the total cost of self-only coverage (including both the employee's and employer's contribution) where participation in a wellness program depends on enrollment in a particular health plan; (ii) 30 percent of the total cost of self-only coverage when the covered entity offers only one group health plan and participation in a wellness program is offered to all employees regardless of whether they are enrolled in the plan; (iii) 30 percent of the total cost of the lowest cost self-only coverage under a major medical group health plan where the covered entity offers more than one group health plan but participation in the wellness program is offered to employees whether or not they are enrolled in a particular plan; or (iv) 30 percent of the cost to a 40-year-old non-smoker of the second lowest cost Silver Plan (available under the Affordable Care Act) in the location that the employer identifies as its principal place of business, where the covered entity does not offer a group health plan or group health insurance coverage. The following examples illustrate how to calculate the permissible incentive limits in each of these situations.

Where an employee participates in a wellness program that is only offered to employees enrolled in a group health plan and the total cost of self-only coverage under that plan is $6,000 annually, the maximum allowable incentive is $1,800 (30 percent of $6,000). The same incentive would be available if this employer offers only one group health plan and allowed employees to participate in the wellness program regardless of whether they are enrolled in the health plan. Suppose, however, an employer offers three different group health plans with the total cost of self-only coverage under its major medical group health plans ranging in cost from $5,000 to $8,000 annually and wants to offer employees incentives for participating in a wellness program that includes a HRA and medical examination regardless of whether they are enrolled in a particular health plan. In that case, the maximum allowable incentive is $1,500 (30 percent of the total cost of the lowest cost self-only coverage under a major medical group health plan). Finally, if the employer does not offer health insurance but wants to offer an incentive for employees to participate in a

wellness program that includes disability-related inquiries or medical examinations, the maximum allowable incentive is 30 percent of what it would cost a 40-year-old nonsmoker to purchase the second lowest cost Silver Plan on the federal or state health care Exchange in the location that the employer identifies as its principal place of business. Thus, if such a plan would cost $4,000, the maximum allowable incentive would be $1,200.

Not all wellness programs require disability-related inquiries or medical examinations in order to earn an incentive. Examples may include attending nutrition, weight loss, or smoking cessation classes. These types of programs are not subject to the ADA incentive rules discussed here, although programs that qualify as health-contingent programs (such as an activity-based program that requires employees to exercise or walk) and that are part of a group health plan are subject to HIPAA incentive limits.

Under the ADA, regardless of whether a wellness program includes disability-related inquiries or medical examinations, reasonable accommodations must be provided, absent undue hardship, to enable employees with disabilities to earn whatever financial incentive an employer or other covered entity offers. Providing a reasonable alternative standard and notice to the employee of the availability of a reasonable alternative under HIPAA and the Affordable Care Act as part of a health-contingent program would generally fulfill a covered entity's obligation to provide a reasonable accommodation under the ADA. However, under the ADA, a covered entity would have to provide a reasonable accommodation for a participatory program even though HIPAA and the Affordable Care Act do not require such programs to offer a reasonable alternative standard, and reasonable alternative standards are not required at all if the program is not part of a group health plan.

For example, an employer that offers employees a financial incentive to attend a nutrition class, regardless of whether they reach a healthy weight as a result, would have to provide a sign language interpreter so that an employee who is deaf and who needs an interpreter to understand the information communicated in the class could earn the incentive, as long as providing the interpreter would not result in undue hardship to the employer. Similarly, an employer would, absent undue hardship, have to provide written materials that are part of a wellness program in an alternate format, such as in large print or on computer disk, for someone with a vision impairment. An individual with a disability also may need a reasonable accommodation to participate in a wellness program that includes disability-related inquiries or medical examinations, including a waiver of a generally applicable requirement. For example, an employer that offers a reward for completing a biometric screening that includes a blood draw would have to provide an alternative test (or certification requirement) so that an employee with a disability that makes drawing blood dangerous can participate and earn the incentive.

Application of Section 1630.14(d)(3) to Smoking Cessation Programs

Regulations implementing the wellness provisions in HIPAA, as amended by the Affordable Care Act, permit covered entities to offer incentives as high as 50 percent of the total cost of self-only coverage for tobacco-related wellness programs, such as smoking cessation programs. As noted above, the incentive rules in paragraph 1630.14(d)(3) apply only to employee health programs that include disability-related inquiries or medical examinations. A smoking cessation program that merely asks employees whether or not they use tobacco (or whether or not they ceased using tobacco upon completion of the program) is not an employee health program that includes disability-related inquiries or medical examinations. The incentive rules in §1630.14(d)(3) would not apply to incentives a covered entity could offer in connection with such a program. Therefore, a covered entity would be permitted to offer incentives as high as 50 percent of the cost of self-only coverage for that smoking cessation program, pursuant to the regulations implementing HIPAA, as amended by the Affordable Care Act, without implicating the disability-related inquiries or medical examinations provision of the ADA. The ADA nondiscrimination requirements, such as the need to provide reasonable accommodations that provide employees with disabilities equal access to benefits, would still apply.

By contrast, a biometric screening or other medical examination that tests for the presence of nicotine or tobacco is a medical examination. The ADA financial incentive rules discussed *supra* would therefore apply to a wellness program that included such a screening.

Section 1630.14(d)(4)(i) Through (v): Confidentiality

Paragraphs (d)(4)(i) and (ii) say that medical records developed in the course of providing voluntary health services to employees, including wellness programs, must be maintained in a confidential manner and must not be used for any purpose in violation of this part, such as limiting insurance eligibility. *See* House Labor Report at 75; House Judiciary Report at 43–44. Further, although an exception to confidentiality that tracks the language of the ADA itself states that information gathered in the course of providing employees with voluntary health

services may be disclosed to managers and supervisors in connection with necessary work restrictions or accommodations, such an exception would rarely, if ever, apply to medical information collected as part of a wellness program, and sharing such information could be inconsistent with the definition of an employee health program. In addition, as described more fully below, certain disclosures that are permitted for employee health programs generally may not be permissible under the HIPAA Privacy Rule for wellness programs that are part of a group health plan without the written authorization of the individual.

Section 1630.14(d)(4)(iii) says that a covered entity only may receive information collected as part of an employee health program in aggregate form that does not disclose, and is not reasonably likely to disclose, the identity of specific individuals except as is necessary to administer the plan or as permitted by §1630.14(d)(4)(i). Notably, both employers that sponsor employee health programs and the employee health programs themselves (if they are administered by the employer or qualify as the employer's agent) are responsible for ensuring compliance with this provision.

Where a wellness program is part of a group health plan, the individually identifiable health information collected from or created about participants as part of the wellness program is protected health information (PHI) under the HIPAA Privacy, Security, and Breach Notification Rules. (45 CFR parts 160 and 164.) The HIPAA Privacy, Security, and Breach Notification Rules apply to HIPAA covered entities, which include group health plans, and generally protect identifiable health information maintained by or on behalf of such entities, by among other provisions, setting limits and conditions on the uses and disclosures that may be made of such information.

PHI is information, including demographic data that identifies the individual or for which there is a reasonable basis to believe it can be used to identify the individual (including, for example, address, birth date, or social security number), and that relates to: An individual's past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition; the provision of health care to the individual; or the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to the individual. HIPAA covered entities may not disclose PHI to an individual's employer except in limited circumstances. For example, as discussed more fully below, an employer that sponsors a group health plan may receive PHI to administer the plan (without authorization of the individual), but only if the employer certifies to the plan that it will safeguard the information and not improperly use or share the information. *See Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information* (''Privacy Rule''), Public Law 104–191; 45 CFR part 160 and Part 164, Subparts A and E. However, there are no restrictions on the use or disclosure of health information that has been de-identified in accordance with the HIPAA Privacy Rule. Individuals may file a complaint with HHS if they believe a health plan fails to comply with privacy requirements and HHS may require corrective action or impose civil money penalties for noncompliance.

A wellness program that is part of a HIPAA covered entity likely will be able to comply with its obligation under §1630.14(d)(4)(iii) by complying with the HIPAA Privacy Rule. An employer that is a health plan sponsor and receives individually identifiable health information from or on behalf of the group health plan, as permitted by HIPAA when the plan sponsor is administering aspects of the plan, may generally satisfy its requirement to comply with §1630.14(d)(4)(iii) by certifying to the group health plan, as provided by 45 CFR 164.504(f)(2)(ii), that it will not use or disclose the information for purposes not permitted by its plan documents and the Privacy Rule, such as for employment purposes, and abiding by that certification. Further, if an employer is not performing plan administration functions on behalf of the group health plan, it may receive aggregate information from the wellness program under §1630.14(d)(4)(iii) only so long as the information is de-identified in accordance with the HIPAA Privacy Rule. In addition, disclosures of protected health information from the wellness program may only be made in accordance with the Privacy Rule. Thus, certain disclosures that are otherwise permitted under §1630.14(d)(4)(i) and (ii) for employee health programs generally may not be permissible under the Privacy Rule for wellness programs that are part of a group health plan without the written authorization of the individual. For example, the ADA allows disclosures of medical information when an employee needs a reasonable accommodation or requires emergency treatment at work.

Section 1630.14(d)(4)(iv) says that a covered entity may not require an employee to agree to the sale, exchange, sharing, transfer, or other disclosure of medical information (except to the extent permitted by this part to carry out specific activities related to the wellness program), or waive confidentiality protections available under the ADA as a condition for participating in a wellness program or receiving a wellness program incentive.

Employers and wellness program providers must take steps to protect the confidentiality of employee medical information provided as part of an employee health program. Some of the following steps may be required by law; others may be best practices. It is critical to properly train all individuals who

handle medical information about the requirements of the ADA and, as applicable, HIPAA's privacy, security, and breach requirements and any other privacy laws. Employers and program providers should have clear privacy policies and procedures related to the collection, storage, and disclosure of medical information. On-line systems and other technology should guard against unauthorized access, such as through use of encryption for medical information stored electronically. Breaches of confidentiality should be reported to affected employees immediately and should be thoroughly investigated. Employers should make clear that individuals responsible for disclosures of confidential medical information will be disciplined and should consider discontinuing relationships with vendors responsible for breaches of confidentiality.

Individuals who handle medical information that is part of an employee health program should not be responsible for making decisions related to employment, such as hiring, termination, or discipline. Use of a third-party vendor that maintains strict confidentiality and data security procedures may reduce the risk that medical information will be disclosed to individuals who make employment decisions, particularly for employers whose organizational structure makes it difficult to provide adequate safeguards. If an employer uses a third-party vendor, it should be familiar with the vendor's privacy policies for ensuring the confidentiality of medical information. Employers that administer their own wellness programs need adequate firewalls in place to prevent unintended disclosure. If individuals who handle medical information obtained through a wellness program do act as decision-makers (which may be the case for a small employer that administers its own wellness program), they may not use the information to discriminate on the basis of disability in violation of the ADA.

Section 1630.14(d)(5): Compliance With Other Employment Nondiscrimination Laws

Section 1630.14(d)(5) clarifies that compliance with the requirements of paragraph (d) of this section, including the limits on incentives applicable under the ADA, does not mean that a covered entity complies with other federal employment nondiscrimination laws, such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, 29 U.S.C. 206(d), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, 29 U.S.C. 621 *et seq.*, Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, 42 U.S.C. 2000ff *et seq.*, and other sections of Title I of the ADA. Thus, even though an employer's wellness program might comply with the incentive limits set out in paragraph (d)(3), the employer would violate federal nondiscrimination statutes if that program discriminates on the basis of race, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, transgender status, and sexual orientation), color, religion, national origin, or age. Additionally, if a wellness program requirement (such as a particular blood pressure or glucose level or body mass index) disproportionately affects individuals on the basis of some protected characteristic, an employer may be able to avoid a disparate impact claim by offering and providing a reasonable alternative standard.

Section 1630.14(d)(6): Inapplicability of the ADA's Safe Harbor Provision

Finally, section 1630.14(d)(6) states that the ''safe harbor'' provision, set forth in section 501(c) of the ADA, 42 U.S.C. 12201(c), that allows insurers and benefit plans to classify, underwrite, and administer risks, does not apply to wellness programs, even if such programs are part of a covered entity's health plan. The safe harbor permits insurers and employers (as sponsors of health or other insurance benefits) to treat individuals differently based on disability, but only where justified according to accepted principles of risk classification (some of which became unlawful subsequent to passage of the ADA). *See* Senate Report at 85–86; House Education and Labor Report at 137–38. It does not apply simply because a covered entity asserts that it used information collected as part of a wellness program to estimate, or to try to reduce, its risks or health care costs.

Section 1630.15 Defenses

The section on defenses in part 1630 is not intended to be exhaustive. However, it is intended to inform employers of some of the potential defenses available to a charge of discrimination under the ADA and this part.

Section 1630.15(a) Disparate Treatment Defenses

The ''traditional'' defense to a charge of disparate treatment under title VII, as expressed in *McDonnell Douglas Corp.* v. *Green*, 411 U.S. 792 (1973), *Texas Department of Community Affairs* v. *Burdine*, 450 U.S. 248 (1981), and their progeny, may be applicable to charges of disparate treatment brought under the ADA. See *Prewitt* v. *U.S. Postal Service*, 662 F.2d 292 (5th Cir. 1981). Disparate treatment means, with respect to title I of the ADA, that an individual was treated differently on the basis of his or her disability. For example, disparate treatment has occurred where an employer excludes an employee with a severe facial disfigurement from staff meetings because the employer does not like to look at the employee. The individual is being treated differently because of the employer's attitude towards his

or her perceived disability. Disparate treatment has also occurred where an employer has a policy of not hiring individuals with AIDS regardless of the individuals' qualifications.

The crux of the defense to this type of charge is that the individual was treated differently not because of his or her disability but for a legitimate nondiscriminatory reason such as poor performance unrelated to the individual's disability. The fact that the individual's disability is not covered by the employer's current insurance plan or would cause the employer's insurance premiums or workers' compensation costs to increase, would not be a legitimate nondiscriminatory reason justifying disparate treatment of an individual with a disability. Senate Report at 85; House Labor Report at 136 and House Judiciary Report at 70. The defense of a legitimate nondiscriminatory reason is rebutted if the alleged nondiscriminatory reason is shown to be pretextual.

Section 1630.15 (b) and (c) Disparate Impact Defenses

Disparate impact means, with respect to title I of the ADA and this part, that uniformly applied criteria have an adverse impact on an individual with a disability or a disproportionately negative impact on a class of individuals with disabilities. Section 1630.15(b) clarifies that an employer may use selection criteria that have such a disparate impact, *i.e.*, that screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities only when they are job-related and consistent with business necessity.

For example, an employer interviews two candidates for a position, one of whom is blind. Both are equally qualified. The employer decides that while it is not essential to the job it would be convenient to have an employee who has a driver's license and so could occasionally be asked to run errands by car. The employer hires the individual who is sighted because this individual has a driver's license. This is an example of a uniformly applied criterion, having a driver's permit, that screens out an individual who has a disability that makes it impossible to obtain a driver's permit. The employer would, thus, have to show that this criterion is job-related and consistent with business necessity. See House Labor Report at 55.

However, even if the criterion is job-related and consistent with business necessity, an employer could not exclude an individual with a disability if the criterion could be met or job performance accomplished with a reasonable accommodation. For example, suppose an employer requires, as part of its application process, an interview that is job-related and consistent with business necessity. The employer would not be able to refuse to hire a hearing impaired applicant because he or she could not be interviewed. This is so because an interpreter could be provided as a reasonable accommodation that would allow the individual to be interviewed, and thus satisfy the selection criterion.

With regard to safety requirements that screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities, an employer must demonstrate that the requirement, as applied to the individual, satisfies the ''direct threat'' standard in §1630.2(r) in order to show that the requirement is job-related and consistent with business necessity.

Section 1630.15(c) clarifies that there may be uniformly applied standards, criteria and policies not relating to selection that may also screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities. Like selection criteria that have a disparate impact, non-selection criteria having such an impact may also have to be job-related and consistent with business necessity, subject to consideration of reasonable accommodation.

It should be noted, however, that some uniformly applied employment policies or practices, such as leave policies, are not subject to challenge under the adverse impact theory. ''No-leave'' policies (*e.g.*, no leave during the first six months of employment) are likewise not subject to challenge under the adverse impact theory. However, an employer, in spite of its ''no-leave'' policy, may, in appropriate circumstances, have to consider the provision of leave to an employee with a disability as a reasonable accommodation, unless the provision of leave would impose an undue hardship. See discussion at §1630.5 Limiting, Segregating and Classifying, and §1630.10 Qualification Standards, Tests, and Other Selection Criteria.

Section 1630.15(d) Defense To Not Making Reasonable Accommodation

An employer or other covered entity alleged to have discriminated because it did not make a reasonable accommodation, as required by this part, may offer as a defense that it would have been an undue hardship to make the accommodation.

It should be noted, however, that an employer cannot simply assert that a needed accommodation will cause it undue hardship, as defined in §1630.2(p), and thereupon be relieved of the duty to provide accommodation. Rather, an employer will have to present evidence and demonstrate that the accommodation will, in fact, cause it undue hardship. Whether a particular accommodation will impose an undue hardship for a particular employer is determined on a case by case basis. Consequently, an accommodation that poses an undue hardship for one employer at a particular time may not pose an undue hardship for another employer, or

even for the same employer at another time. Likewise, an accommodation that poses an undue hardship for one employer in a particular job setting, such as a temporary construction worksite, may not pose an undue hardship for another employer, or even for the same employer at a permanent worksite. See House Judiciary Report at 42.

The concept of undue hardship that has evolved under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and is embodied in this part is unlike the ''undue hardship'' defense associated with the provision of religious accommodation under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. To demonstrate undue hardship pursuant to the ADA and this part, an employer must show substantially more difficulty or expense than would be needed to satisfy the ''de minimis'' title VII standard of undue hardship. For example, to demonstrate that the cost of an accommodation poses an undue hardship, an employer would have to show that the cost is undue as compared to the employer's budget. Simply comparing the cost of the accommodation to the salary of the individual with a disability in need of the accommodation will not suffice. Moreover, even if it is determined that the cost of an accommodation would unduly burden an employer, the employer cannot avoid making the accommodation if the individual with a disability can arrange to cover that portion of the cost that rises to the undue hardship level, or can otherwise arrange to provide the accommodation. Under such circumstances, the necessary accommodation would no longer pose an undue hardship. See Senate Report at 36; House Labor Report at 68–69; House Judiciary Report at 40–41.

Excessive cost is only one of several possible bases upon which an employer might be able to demonstrate undue hardship. Alternatively, for example, an employer could demonstrate that the provision of a particular accommodation would be unduly disruptive to its other employees or to the functioning of its business. The terms of a collective bargaining agreement may be relevant to this determination. By way of illustration, an employer would likely be able to show undue hardship if the employer could show that the requested accommodation of the upward adjustment of the business' thermostat would result in it becoming unduly hot for its other employees, or for its patrons or customers. The employer would thus not have to provide this accommodation. However, if there were an alternate accommodation that would not result in undue hardship, the employer would have to provide that accommodation.

It should be noted, moreover, that the employer would not be able to show undue hardship if the disruption to its employees were the result of those employees fears or prejudices toward the individual's disability and not the result of the provision of the accommodation. Nor would the employer be able to demonstrate undue hardship by showing that the provision of the accommodation has a negative impact on the morale of its other employees but not on the ability of these employees to perform their jobs.

Section 1630.15(e) Defense—Conflicting Federal Laws and Regulations

There are several Federal laws and regulations that address medical standards and safety requirements. If the alleged discriminatory action was taken in compliance with another Federal law or regulation, the employer may offer its obligation to comply with the conflicting standard as a defense. The employer's defense of a conflicting Federal requirement or regulation may be rebutted by a showing of pretext, or by showing that the Federal standard did not require the discriminatory action, or that there was a nonexclusionary means to comply with the standard that would not conflict with this part. See House Labor Report at 74.

Section 1630.15(f) Claims Based on Transitory and Minor Impairments Under the ''Regarded As'' Prong

It may be a defense to a charge of discrimination where coverage would be shown solely under the ''regarded as'' prong of the definition of disability that the impairment is (in the case of an actual impairment) or would be (in the case of a perceived impairment) both transitory and minor. Section 1630.15(f)(1) explains that an individual cannot be ''regarded as having such an impairment'' if the impairment is both transitory (defined by the ADAAA as lasting or expected to last less than six months) and minor. Section 1630.15(f)(2) explains that the determination of ''transitory and minor'' is made objectively. For example, an individual who is denied a promotion because he has a minor back injury would be ''regarded as'' an individual with a disability if the back impairment lasted or was expected to last more than six months. Although minor, the impairment is not transitory. Similarly, if an employer discriminates against an employee based on the employee's bipolar disorder (an impairment that is not transitory and minor), the employee is ''regarded as'' having a disability even if the employer subjectively believes that the employee's disorder is transitory and minor.

Section 1630.16 Specific Activities Permitted

Section 1630.16(a) Religious Entities

Religious organizations are not exempt from title I of the ADA or this part. A religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society may give a preference

in employment to individuals of the particular religion, and may require that applicants and employees conform to the religious tenets of the organization. However, a religious organization may not discriminate against an individual who satisfies the permitted religious criteria because that individual is disabled. The religious entity, in other words, is required to consider individuals with disabilities who are qualified and who satisfy the permitted religious criteria on an equal basis with qualified individuals without disabilities who similarly satisfy the religious criteria. See Senate Report at 42; House Labor Report at 76–77; House Judiciary Report at 46.

Section 1630.16(b) Regulation of Alcohol and Drugs

This provision permits employers to establish or comply with certain standards regulating the use of drugs and alcohol in the workplace. It also allows employers to hold alcoholics and persons who engage in the illegal use of drugs to the same performance and conduct standards to which it holds all of its other employees. Individuals disabled by alcoholism are entitled to the same protections accorded other individuals with disabilities under this part. As noted above, individuals currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs are not individuals with disabilities for purposes of part 1630 when the employer acts on the basis of such use.

Section 1630.16(c) Drug Testing

This provision reflects title I's neutrality toward testing for the illegal use of drugs. Such drug tests are neither encouraged, authorized nor prohibited. The results of such drug tests may be used as a basis for disciplinary action. Tests for the illegal use of drugs are not considered medical examinations for purposes of this part. If the results reveal information about an individual's medical condition beyond whether the individual is currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs, this additional information is to be treated as a confidential medical record. For example, if a test for the illegal use of drugs reveals the presence of a controlled substance that has been lawfully prescribed for a particular medical condition, this information is to be treated as a confidential medical record. See House Labor Report at 79; House Judiciary Report at 47.

Section 1630.16(e) Infectious and Communicable Diseases; Food Handling Jobs

This provision addressing food handling jobs applies the ''direct threat'' analysis to the particular situation of accommodating individuals with infectious or communicable diseases that are transmitted through the handling of food. The Department of Health and Human Services is to prepare a list of infectious and communicable diseases that are transmitted through the handling of food. If an individual with a disability has one of the listed diseases and works in or applies for a position in food handling, the employer must determine whether there is a reasonable accommodation that will eliminate the risk of transmitting the disease through the handling of food. If there is an accommodation that will not pose an undue hardship, and that will prevent the transmission of the disease through the handling of food, the employer must provide the accommodation to the individual. The employer, under these circumstances, would not be permitted to discriminate against the individual because of the need to provide the reasonable accommodation and would be required to maintain the individual in the food handling job.

If no such reasonable accommodation is possible, the employer may refuse to assign, or to continue to assign the individual to a position involving food handling. This means that if such an individual is an applicant for a food handling position the employer is not required to hire the individual. However, if the individual is a current employee, the employer would be required to consider the accommodation of reassignment to a vacant position not involving food handling for which the individual is qualified. Conference Report at 61–63. (See §1630.2(r) Direct Threat).

Section 1630.16(f) Health Insurance, Life Insurance, and Other Benefit Plans

This provision is a limited exemption that is only applicable to those who establish, sponsor, observe or administer benefit plans, such as health and life insurance plans. It does not apply to those who establish, sponsor, observe or administer plans not involving benefits, such as liability insurance plans.

The purpose of this provision is to permit the development and administration of benefit plans in accordance with accepted principles of risk assessment. This provision is not intended to disrupt the current regulatory structure for self-insured employers. These employers may establish, sponsor, observe, or administer the terms of a bona fide benefit plan not subject to State laws that regulate insurance. This provision is also not intended to disrupt the current nature of insurance underwriting, or current insurance industry practices in sales, underwriting, pricing, administrative and other services, claims and similar insurance related activities based on classification of risks as regulated by the States.

The activities permitted by this provision do not violate part 1630 even if they result in limitations on individuals with disabilities, provided that these activities are not used as a subterfuge to evade the purposes of this part. Whether or not these activities are

being used as a subterfuge is to be determined without regard to the date the insurance plan or employee benefit plan was adopted.

However, an employer or other covered entity cannot deny an individual with a disability who is qualified equal access to insurance or subject an individual with a disability who is qualified to different terms or conditions of insurance based on disability alone, if the disability does not pose increased risks. Part 1630 requires that decisions not based on risk classification be made in conformity with non-discrimination requirements. See Senate Report at 84–86; House Labor Report at 136–138; House Judiciary Report at 70–71. See the discussion of §1630.5 Limiting, Segregating and Classifying.

[56 FR 35734, July 26, 1991, as amended at 65 FR 36327, June 8, 2000; 76 FR 17003, Mar. 25, 2011; 81 FR 31140, May 17, 2016]

PART 1635—GENETIC INFORMATION NONDISCRIMINATION ACT OF 2008

Sec.
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AUTHORITY: 110 Stat. 233; 42 U.S.C. 2000ff.

SOURCE: 75 FR 68932, Nov. 9, 2010, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1635.1 Purpose.

(a) The purpose of this part is to implement Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, 42 U.S.C. 2000ff, *et seq*. Title II of GINA:

(1) Prohibits use of genetic information in employment decision-making;

(2) Restricts employers and other entities subject to Title II of GINA from requesting, requiring, or purchasing genetic information;

(3) Requires that genetic information be maintained as a confidential medical record, and places strict limits on disclosure of genetic information; and

(4) Provides remedies for individuals whose genetic information is acquired, used, or disclosed in violation of its protections.

(b) This part does not apply to actions of covered entities that do not pertain to an individual's status as an employee, member of a labor organization, or participant in an apprenticeship program. For example, this part would not apply to:

(1) A medical examination of an individual for the purpose of diagnosis and treatment unrelated to employment, which is conducted by a health care professional at the hospital or other health care facility where the individual is an employee; or

(2) Activities of a covered entity carried on in its capacity as a law enforcement agency investigating criminal conduct, even where the subject of the investigation is an employee of the covered entity.

§ 1635.2 Definitions—general.

(a) *Commission* means the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, as established by section 705 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–4.

(b) *Covered Entity* means an employer, employing office, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee.

(c) *Employee* means an individual employed by a covered entity, as well as an applicant for employment and a former employee. An employee, including an applicant for employment and a former employee, is:

(1) As defined by section 701 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, an individual employed by a person engaged in an industry affecting commerce who has fifteen or more employees for each working day in each of twenty or more calendar weeks in the current or preceding calendar year and any agent of such a person;

(2) As defined by section 304(a) of the Government Employee Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16c(a), a person chosen or appointed by an individual elected to public office by a State or political subdivision of a State to serve as part of the personal staff of the elected official, to serve the elected official on a policy-making level, or to serve the

elected official as the immediate advisor on the exercise of the elected official's constitutional or legal powers.

(3) As defined by section 101 of the Congressional Accountability Act, 2 U.S.C. 1301, any employee of the House of Representatives, the Senate, the Capitol Guide Service, the Capitol Police, the Congressional Budget Office, the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, the Office of the Attending Physician, the Office of Compliance, or the Office of Technology Assessment;

(4) As defined by, and subject to the limitations in, section 2(a) of the Presidential and Executive Office Accountability Act, 3 U.S.C. 411(c), any employee of the executive branch not otherwise covered by section 717 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16, section 15 of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, 29 U.S.C. 633a, or section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 791, whether appointed by the President or any other appointing authority in the executive branch, including an employee of the Executive Office of the President;

(5) As defined by, and subject to the limitations in, section 717 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16, and regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission at 29 CFR 1614.103, an employee of a federal executive agency, the United States Postal Service and the Postal Rate Commission, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Corps, the Government Printing Office, and the Smithsonian Institution; an employee of the federal judicial branch having a position in the competitive service; and an employee of the Library of Congress.

(d) *Employer* means any person that employs an employee defined in §1635.2(c) of this part, and any agent of such person, except that, as limited by section 701(b)(1) and (2) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e(b)(1) and (2), an employer does not include an Indian tribe, or a bona fide private club (other than a labor organization) that is exempt from taxation under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(e) *Employing office* is defined in the Congressional Accountability Act, 2 U.S.C. 1301(9), to mean the personal office of a Member of the House of Representatives or of a Senator; a committee of the House of Representatives or the Senate or a joint committee; any other office headed by a person with the final authority to appoint, hire, discharge, and set the terms, conditions, or privileges of the employment of an employee of the House of Representatives or the Senate; or the Capitol Guide Board, the Capitol Police Board, the Congressional Budget Office, the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, the Office of the Attending Physician, the Office of Compliance, and the Office of Technology Assessment.

(f) *Employment agency* is defined in 42 U.S.C. 2000e(c) to mean any person regularly undertaking with or without compensation to procure employees for an employer or to procure for employees opportunities to work for an employer and includes an agent of such a person.

(g) *Joint labor-management committee* is defined as an entity that controls apprenticeship or other training or retraining programs, including on-the-job training programs.

(h) *Labor organization* is defined at 42 U.S.C. 2000e(d) to mean an organization with fifteen or more members engaged in an industry affecting commerce, and any agent of such an organization in which employees participate and which exists for the purpose, in whole or in part, of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours, or other terms or conditions of employment.

(i) *Member* includes, with respect to a labor organization, an applicant for membership.

(j) *Person* is defined at 42 U.S.C. 2000e(a) to mean one or more individuals, governments, governmental agencies, political subdivisions, labor unions, partnerships, associations, corporations, legal representatives, mutual companies, joint-stock companies, trusts, unincorporated organizations, trustees, trustees in cases under title 11, or receivers.

(k) *State* is defined at 42 U.S.C. 2000e(i) and includes a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands,

American Samoa, Guam, Wake Island, the Canal Zone, and Outer Continental Shelf lands defined in the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 *et seq.*).

§ 1635.3 Definitions specific to GINA.

(a) *Family member* means with respect to any individual:

(1) A person who is a dependent of that individual as the result of marriage, birth, adoption, or placement for adoption; or

(2) A first-degree, second-degree, third-degree, or fourth-degree relative of the individual, or of a dependent of the individual as defined in §1635.3(a)(1).

(i) First-degree relatives include an individual's parents, siblings, and children.

(ii) Second-degree relatives include an individual's grandparents, grandchildren, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, and half-siblings.

(iii) Third-degree relatives include an individual's great-grandparents, great grandchildren, great uncles/aunts, and first cousins.

(iv) Fourth-degree relatives include an individual's great-great-grandparents, great-great-grandchildren, and first cousins once-removed (i.e., the children of the individual's first cousins).

(b) *Family medical history*. Family medical history means information about the manifestation of disease or disorder in family members of the individual.

(c) *Genetic information*. (1) Genetic information means information about:

(i) An individual's genetic tests;

(ii) The genetic tests of that individual's family members;

(iii) The manifestation of disease or disorder in family members of the individual (family medical history);

(iv) An individual's request for, or receipt of, genetic services, or the participation in clinical research that includes genetic services by the individual or a family member of the individual; or

(v) The genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or by a pregnant woman who is a family member of the individual and the genetic information of any embryo legally held by the individual or family member using an assisted reproductive technology.

(2) Genetic information does not include information about the sex or age of the individual, the sex or age of family members, or information about the race or ethnicity of the individual or family members that is not derived from a genetic test.

(d) *Genetic monitoring* means the periodic examination of employees to evaluate acquired modifications to their genetic material, such as chromosomal damage or evidence of increased occurrence of mutations, caused by the toxic substances they use or are exposed to in performing their jobs, in order to identify, evaluate, and respond to the effects of, or to control adverse environmental exposures in the workplace.

(e) *Genetic services*. Genetic services means a genetic test, genetic counseling (including obtaining, interpreting, or assessing genetic information), or genetic education.

(f) *Genetic test*—(1) *In general*. ''Genetic test'' means an analysis of human DNA, RNA, chromosomes, proteins, or metabolites that detects genotypes, mutations, or chromosomal changes.

(2) Genetic tests include, but are not limited to:

(i) A test to determine whether someone has the BRCA1 or BRCA2 variant evidencing a predisposition to breast cancer, a test to determine whether someone has a genetic variant associated with hereditary nonpolyposis colon cancer, and a test for a genetic variant for Huntington's Disease;

(ii) Carrier screening for adults using genetic analysis to determine the risk of conditions such as cystic fibrosis, sickle cell anemia, spinal muscular atrophy, or fragile X syndrome in future offspring;

(iii) Amniocentesis and other evaluations used to determine the presence of genetic abnormalities in a fetus during pregnancy;

(iv) Newborn screening analysis that uses DNA, RNA, protein, or metabolite analysis to detect or indicate genotypes, mutations, or chromosomal changes, such as a test for PKU performed so that treatment can begin before a disease manifests;

(v) Preimplantation genetic diagnosis performed on embryos created using invitro fertilization;

(vi) Pharmacogenetic tests that detect genotypes, mutations, or chromosomal changes that indicate how an individual will react to a drug or a particular dosage of a drug;

(vii) DNA testing to detect genetic markers that are associated with information about ancestry; and

(viii) DNA testing that reveals family relationships, such as paternity.

(3) The following are examples of tests or procedures that are not genetic tests:

(i) An analysis of proteins or metabolites that does not detect genotypes, mutations, or chromosomal changes;

(ii) A medical examination that tests for the presence of a virus that is not composed of human DNA, RNA, chromosomes, proteins, or metabolites;

(iii) A test for infectious and communicable diseases that may be transmitted through food handling;

(iv) Complete blood counts, cholesterol tests, and liver-function tests.

(4) Alcohol and Drug Testing—

(i) A test for the presence of alcohol or illegal drugs is not a genetic test.

(ii) A test to determine whether an individual has a genetic predisposition for alcoholism or drug use is a genetic test.

(g) *Manifestation* or *manifested* means, with respect to a disease, disorder, or pathological condition, that an individual has been or could reasonably be diagnosed with the disease, disorder, or pathological condition by a health care professional with appropriate training and expertise in the field of medicine involved. For purposes of this part, a disease, disorder, or pathological condition is not manifested if the diagnosis is based principally on genetic information.

§ 1635.4 Prohibited practices—in general.

(a) It is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against an individual on the basis of the genetic information of the individual in regard to hiring, discharge, compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment.

(b) It is unlawful for an employment agency to fail or refuse to refer any individual for employment or otherwise discriminate against any individual because of genetic information of the individual.

(c) It is unlawful for a labor organization to exclude or to expel from the membership of the organization, or otherwise to discriminate against, any member because of genetic information with respect to the member.

(d) It is an unlawful employment practice for any employer, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining programs, including on-the-job training programs to discriminate against any individual because of the individual's genetic information in admission to, or employment in, any program established to provide apprenticeship or other training or retraining.

§ 1635.5 Limiting, segregating, and classifying.

(a) A covered entity may not limit, segregate, or classify an individual, or fail or refuse to refer for employment any individual, in any way that would deprive or tend to deprive the individual of employment opportunities or otherwise affect the status of the individual as an employee, because of genetic information with respect to the individual. A covered entity will not be deemed to have violated this section if it limits or restricts an employee's job duties based on genetic information because it was required to do so by a law or regulation mandating genetic monitoring, such as regulations administered by the Occupational and Safety Health Administration (OSHA). See 1635.8(b)(5) and 1635.11(a).

(b) Notwithstanding any language in this part, a cause of action for disparate impact within the meaning of section 703(k) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–2(k), is not available under this part.

§ 1635.6 Causing a covered entity to discriminate.

A covered entity may not cause or attempt to cause another covered entity, or its agent, to discriminate against an individual in violation of this part, including with respect to the

individual's participation in an apprenticeship or other training or retraining program, or with respect to a member's participation in a labor organization.

§ 1635.7 Retaliation.

A covered entity may not discriminate against any individual because such individual has opposed any act or practice made unlawful by this title or because such individual made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this title.

§ 1635.8 Acquisition of genetic information.

(a) *General prohibition.* A covered entity may not request, require, or purchase genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically provided in paragraph (b) of this section. ''Request'' includes conducting an Internet search on an individual in a way that is likely to result in a covered entity obtaining genetic information; actively listening to third-party conversations or searching an individual's personal effects for the purpose of obtaining genetic information; and making requests for information about an individual's current health status in a way that is likely to result in a covered entity obtaining genetic information.

(b) *Exceptions.* The general prohibition against requesting, requiring, or purchasing genetic information does not apply:

(1) Where a covered entity inadvertently requests or requires genetic information of the individual or family member of the individual.

(i) Requests for Medical Information:

(A) If a covered entity acquires genetic information in response to a lawful request for medical information, the acquisition of genetic information will not generally be considered inadvertent unless the covered entity directs the individual and/or health care provider from whom it requested medical information (in writing, or verbally, where the covered entity does not typically make requests for medical information in writing) not to provide genetic information.

(B) If a covered entity uses language such as the following, any receipt of genetic information in response to the request for medical information will be deemed inadvertent: ''The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA Title II from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we are asking that you not provide any genetic information when responding to this request for medical information. 'Genetic information' as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.''

(C) A covered entity's failure to give such a notice or to use this or similar language will not prevent it from establishing that a particular receipt of genetic information was inadvertent if its request for medical information was not ''likely to result in a covered entity obtaining genetic information'' (for example, where an overly broad response is received in response to a tailored request for medical information).

(D) Situations to which the requirements of subsection (b)(1)(i) apply include, but are not limited to the following:

(*1*) Where a covered entity requests documentation to support a request for reasonable accommodation under Federal, State, or local law, as long as the covered entity's request for such documentation is lawful. A request for documentation supporting a request for reasonable accommodation is lawful only when the disability and/or the need for accommodation is not obvious; the documentation is no more than is sufficient to establish that an individual has a disability and needs a reasonable accommodation; and the documentation relates only to the impairment that the individual claims to be a disability that requires reasonable accommodation;

(*2*) Where an employer requests medical information from an individual as required, authorized, or permitted by Federal, State, or local law, such as where an employee requests leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to attend to the employee's own serious health condition or where an employee complies with the FMLA's employee return to work certification requirements; or

(*3*) Where a covered entity requests documentation to support a request for leave that is not governed by Federal, State, or local laws requiring leave, as long as the documentation required to support the request otherwise complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and other laws limiting a covered entity's access to medical information.

(ii) The exception for inadvertent acquisition of genetic information also applies in, but is not necessarily limited to, situations where—

(A) A manager, supervisor, union representative, or employment agency representative learns genetic information about an individual by overhearing a conversation between the individual and others;

(B) A manager, supervisor, union representative, or employment agency representative learns genetic information about an individual by receiving it from the individual or third-parties during a casual conversation, including in response to an ordinary expression of concern that is the subject of the conversation. For example, the exception applies when the covered entity, acting through a supervisor or other official, receives family medical history directly from an individual following a general health inquiry (e.g., ''How are you?'' or ''Did they catch it early?'' asked of an employee who was just diagnosed with cancer) or a question as to whether the individual has a manifested condition. Similarly, a casual question between colleagues, or between a supervisor and subordinate, concerning the general well-being of a parent or child would not violate GINA (*e.g.*, ''How's your son feeling today?'', ''Did they catch it early?'' asked of an employee whose family member was just diagnosed with cancer, or ''Will your daughter be OK?''). However, this exception does not apply where an employer follows up a question concerning a family member's general health with questions that are probing in nature, such as whether other family members have the condition, or whether the individual has been tested for the condition, because the covered entity should know that these questions are likely to result in the acquisition of genetic information;

(C) A manager, supervisor, union representative, or employment agency representative learns genetic information from the individual or a third-party without having solicited or sought the information (*e.g.*, where a manager or supervisor receives an unsolicited email about the health of an employee's family member from a coworker); or

(D) A manager, supervisor, union representative, or employment agency representative inadvertently learns genetic information from a social media platform which he or she was given permission to access by the creator of the profile at issue (*e.g.*, a supervisor and employee are connected on a social networking site and the employee provides family medical history on his page).

(2) Where a covered entity offers health or genetic services, including such services offered as part of a voluntary wellness program.

(i) This exception applies only where—

(A) The health or genetic services, including any acquisition of genetic information that is part of those services, are reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease. A program satisfies this standard if it has a reasonable chance of improving the health of, or preventing disease in, participating individuals, and it is not overly burdensome, is not a subterfuge for violating Title II of GINA or other laws prohibiting employment discrimination, and is not highly suspect in the method chosen to promote health or prevent disease. A program is not reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease if it imposes a penalty or disadvantage on an individual because a spouse's manifestation of disease or disorder prevents or inhibits the spouse from participating or from

achieving a certain health outcome. For example, an employer may not deny an employee an inducement for participation of either the employee or the spouse in an employer-sponsored wellness program because the employee's spouse has blood pressure, a cholesterol level, or a blood glucose level that the employer considers too high. In addition, a program consisting of a measurement, test, screening, or collection of health-related information without providing participants with results, follow-up information, or advice designed to improve the participant's health is not reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease, unless the collected information actually is used to design a program that addresses at least a subset of conditions identified. Whether health or genetic services are reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease is evaluated in light of all the relevant facts and circumstances.

(B) The provision of genetic information by the individual is voluntary, meaning the covered entity neither requires the individual to provide genetic information nor penalizes those who choose not to provide it;

(C) The individual provides prior knowing, voluntary, and written authorization, which may include authorization in electronic format. This requirement is only met if the covered entity uses an authorization form that:

(*1*) Is written so that the individual from whom the genetic information is being obtained is reasonably likely to understand it;

(*2*) Describes the type of genetic information that will be obtained and the general purposes for which it will be used; and

(*3*) Describes the restrictions on disclosure of genetic information;

(D) Individually identifiable genetic information is provided only to the individual (or family member if the family member is receiving genetic services) and the licensed health care professionals or board certified genetic counselors involved in providing such services, and is not accessible to managers, supervisors, or others who make employment decisions, or to anyone else in the workplace; and

(E) Any individually identifiable genetic information provided under paragraph (b)(2) of this section is only available for purposes of such services and is not disclosed to the covered entity except in aggregate terms that do not disclose the identity of specific individuals (a covered entity will not violate the requirement that it receive information only in aggregate terms if it receives information that, for reasons outside the control of the provider or the covered entity (such as the small number of participants), makes the genetic information of a particular individual readily identifiable with no effort on the covered entity's part).

(ii) Consistent with, and in addition to, the requirements of paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section, a covered entity may not offer an inducement (financial or in-kind), whether in the form of a reward or penalty, for individuals to provide genetic information, except as described in paragraphs (b)(2)(iii) and (iv) of this section, but may offer inducements for completion of health risk assessments that include questions about family medical history or other genetic information, provided the covered entity makes clear, in language reasonably likely to be understood by those completing the health risk assessment, that the inducement will be made available whether or not the participant answers questions regarding genetic information.

(A) A covered entity offers $150 to employees who complete a health risk assessment with 100 questions, the last 20 of them concerning family medical history and other genetic information. The instructions for completing the health risk assessment make clear that the inducement will be provided to all employees who respond to the first 80 questions, whether or not the remaining 20 questions concerning family medical history and other genetic information are answered. This health risk assessment does not violate Title II of GINA.

(B) Same facts as the previous example, except that the instructions do not

indicate which questions request genetic information; nor does the assessment otherwise make clear which questions must be answered in order to obtain the inducement. This health risk assessment violates Title II of GINA.

(iii) [Reserved]

(iv) A covered entity may not, however, condition participation in an employer-sponsored wellness program or provide any inducement to an employee, or the spouse or other covered dependent of the employee, in exchange for an agreement permitting the sale, exchange, sharing, transfer, or other disclosure of genetic information, including information about the manifestation of disease or disorder of an employee's family member (except to the extent permitted by paragraph (b)(2)(i)(D)) of this section, or otherwise waiving the protections of §1635.9.

(v) A covered entity may not deny access to health insurance or any package of health insurance benefits to an employee, or the spouse or other covered dependent of the employee, or retaliate against an employee, due to a spouse's refusal to provide information about his or her manifestation of disease or disorder to an employer-sponsored wellness program.

(vi) A covered entity may offer financial inducements to encourage individuals who have voluntarily provided genetic information (*e.g.*, family medical history) that indicates that they are at increased risk of acquiring a health condition in the future to participate in disease management programs or other programs that promote healthy lifestyles, and/or to meet particular health goals as part of a health or genetic service. However, to comply with Title II of GINA, these programs must also be offered to individuals with current health conditions and/or to individuals whose lifestyle choices put them at increased risk of developing a condition. For example:

(A) Employees who voluntarily disclose a family medical history of diabetes, heart disease, or high blood pressure on a health risk assessment that meets the requirements of (b)(2)(ii) of this section and employees who have a current diagnosis of one or more of these conditions are offered $150 to participate in a wellness program designed to encourage weight loss and a healthy lifestyle. This does not violate Title II of GINA.

(B) The program in the previous example offers an additional inducement to individuals who achieve certain health outcomes. Participants may earn points toward ''prizes'' totaling $150 in a single year for lowering their blood pressure, glucose, and cholesterol levels, or for losing weight. This inducement would not violate Title II of GINA.

(vii) Nothing contained in paragraphs (b)(2)(ii) through (v) of this section limits the rights or protections of an individual under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended, or other applicable civil rights laws, or under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), as amended by GINA. For example, if an employer offers an inducement for participation in disease management programs or other programs that promote healthy lifestyles and/or require individuals to meet particular health goals, the employer must make reasonable accommodations to the extent required by the ADA; that is, the employer must make modifications or adjustments that enable a covered entity's employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by its other similarly situated employees without disabilities unless such covered entity can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its business. *See* 29 CFR 1630.2(o)(1)(iii) and 29 CFR 1630.9(a). In addition, if the employer's wellness program provides (directly, through reimbursement, or otherwise) medical care (including genetic counseling), the program may constitute a group health plan and must comply with the special requirements for employer-sponsored wellness programs that condition rewards on an individual satisfying a standard related to a health factor, including the requirement to provide an individual with a reasonable alternative (or waiver of the otherwise applicable standard) under HIPAA, when it is unreasonably difficult due to a medical condition to

satisfy or medically inadvisable to attempt to satisfy the otherwise applicable standard. *See* section 9802 of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 9802, 26 CFR 54.9802–1 and 54.9802–3T), section 702 of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) (29 U.S.C. 1182, 29 CFR 2590.702 and 2590.702–1), and section 2705 of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act (45 CFR 146.121, 146.122, and 147.110), as amended by section 1201 of the Affordable Care Act.

(3) Where the covered entity requests family medical history to comply with the certification provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. 2601 *et seq.*) or State or local family and medical leave laws, or pursuant to a policy (even in the absence of requirements of Federal, State, or local leave laws) that permits the use of leave to care for a sick family member and that requires all employees to provide information about the health condition of the family member to substantiate the need for leave.

(4) Where the covered entity acquires genetic information from documents that are commercially and publicly available for review or purchase, including newspapers, magazines, periodicals, or books, or through electronic media, such as information communicated through television, movies, or the Internet, except that this exception does not apply—

(i) To medical databases, court records, or research databases available to scientists on a restricted basis;

(ii) To genetic information acquired through sources with limited access, such as social networking sites and other media sources which require permission to access from a specific individual or where access is conditioned on membership in a particular group, unless the covered entity can show that access is routinely granted to all who request it;

(iii) To genetic information obtained through commercially and publicly available sources if the covered entity sought access to those sources with the intent of obtaining genetic information; or

(iv) To genetic information obtained through media sources, whether or not commercially and publicly available, if the covered entity is likely to acquire genetic information by accessing those sources, such as Web sites and on-line discussion groups that focus on issues such as genetic testing of individuals and genetic discrimination.

(5) Where the covered entity acquires genetic information for use in the genetic monitoring of the biological effects of toxic substances in the workplace. In order for this exception to apply, the covered entity must provide written notice of the monitoring to the individual and the individual must be informed of the individual monitoring results. The covered entity may not retaliate or otherwise discriminate against an individual due to his or her refusal to participate in genetic monitoring that is not required by federal or state law. This exception further provides that such monitoring:

(i) Is either required by federal or state law or regulation, or is conducted only where the individual gives prior knowing, voluntary and written authorization. The requirement for individual authorization is only met if the covered entity uses an authorization form that:

(A) Is written so that the individual from whom the genetic information is being obtained is reasonably likely to understand the form;

(B) Describes the genetic information that will be obtained; and

(C) Describes the restrictions on disclosure of genetic information;

(ii) Is conducted in compliance with any Federal genetic monitoring regulations, including any regulations that may be promulgated by the Secretary of Labor pursuant to the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 651 *et seq.*), the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 801 *et seq.*), or the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2011 *et seq.*); or State genetic monitoring regulations, in the case of a State that is implementing genetic monitoring regulations under the authority of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 651 *et seq.*); and

(iii) Provides for reporting of the results of the monitoring to the covered entity, excluding any licensed health care professional or board certified genetic counselor involved in the genetic

monitoring program, only in aggregate terms that do not disclose the identity of specific individuals.

(6) Where an employer conducts DNA analysis for law enforcement purposes as a forensic laboratory or for purposes of human remains identification and requests or requires genetic information of its employees, apprentices, or trainees, but only to the extent that the genetic information is used for analysis of DNA identification markers for quality control to detect sample contamination and is maintained and disclosed in a manner consistent with such use.

(c) *Inquiries Made of Family Members Concerning a Manifested Disease, Disorder, or Pathological Condition.* (1) A covered entity does not violate this section when it requests, requires, or purchases information about a manifested disease, disorder, or pathological condition of an employee, member, or apprenticeship program participant whose family member is an employee for the same employer, a member of the same labor organization, or a participant in the same apprenticeship program. For example, an employer will not violate this section by asking someone whose sister also works for the employer to take a post-offer medical examination that does not include requests for genetic information.

(2) A covered entity does not violate this section when it requests, requires, or purchases genetic information or information about the manifestation of a disease, disorder, or pathological condition of an individual's family member who is receiving health or genetic services on a voluntary basis, as long as the requirements of paragraph (b)(2) of this section, including those concerning authorization and inducements, are met. For example, an employer does not unlawfully acquire genetic information about an employee when it asks the employee's family member who is receiving health services from the employer if her diabetes is under control. Nor does an employer unlawfully acquire genetic information about an employee when it seeks information—through a medical questionnaire, a medical examination, or both—about the manifestation of disease, disorder, or pathological condition of the employee's family member who is completing a health risk assessment on a voluntary basis in connection with the family member's receipt of health or genetic services (including health or genetic services provided as part of an employer-sponsored wellness program) offered by the employer in compliance with paragraph (b)(2) of this section.

(d) *Medical examinations related to employment.* The prohibition on acquisition of genetic information, including family medical history, applies to medical examinations related to employment. A covered entity must tell health care providers not to collect genetic information, including family medical history, as part of a medical examination intended to determine the ability to perform a job, and must take additional reasonable measures within its control if it learns that genetic information is being requested or required. Such reasonable measures may depend on the facts and circumstances under which a request for genetic information was made, and may include no longer using the services of a health care professional who continues to request or require genetic information during medical examinations after being informed not to do so.

(e) A covered entity may not use genetic information obtained pursuant to subparagraphs (b) or (c) of this section to discriminate, as defined by §§1635.4, 1635.5, or 1635.6, and must keep such information confidential as required by §1635.9.

[75 FR 68932, Nov. 9, 2010, as amended at 81 FR 31157, May 17, 2016; 83 FR 65297, Dec. 20, 2018]

§1635.9 Confidentiality.

(a) *Treatment of genetic information.* (1) A covered entity that possesses genetic information in writing about an employee or member must maintain such information on forms and in medical files (including where the information exists in electronic forms and files) that are separate from personnel files and treat such information as a confidential medical record.

(2) A covered entity may maintain genetic information about an employee or member in the same file in which it maintains confidential medical information subject to section 102(d)(3)(B) of

the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. 12112(d)(3)(B).

(3) Genetic information that a covered entity receives orally need not be reduced to writing, but may not be disclosed, except as permitted by this part.

(4) Genetic information that a covered entity acquires through sources that are commercially and publicly available, as provided by, and subject to the limitations in, 1635.8(b)(4) of this part, is not considered confidential genetic information, but may not be used to discriminate against an individual as described in §§1635.4, 1635.5, or 1635.6 of this part.

(5) Genetic information placed in personnel files prior to November 21, 2009 need not be removed and a covered entity will not be liable under this part for the mere existence of the information in the file. However, the prohibitions on use and disclosure of genetic information apply to all genetic information that meets the statutory definition, including genetic information requested, required, or purchased prior to November 21, 2009.

(b) *Exceptions to limitations on disclosure.* A covered entity that possesses any genetic information, regardless of how the entity obtained the information (except for genetic information acquired through commercially and publicly available sources), may not disclose it except:

(1) To the employee or member (or family member if the family member is receiving the genetic services) about whom the information pertains upon receipt of the employee's or member's written request;

(2) To an occupational or other health researcher if the research is conducted in compliance with the regulations and protections provided for under 45 CFR part 46;

(3) In response to an order of a court, except that the covered entity may disclose only the genetic information expressly authorized by such order; and if the court order was secured without the knowledge of the employee or member to whom the information refers, the covered entity shall inform the employee or member of the court order and any genetic information that was disclosed pursuant to such order;

(4) To government officials investigating compliance with this title if the information is relevant to the investigation;

(5) To the extent that such disclosure is made in support of an employee's compliance with the certification provisions of section 103 of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. 2613) or such requirements under State family and medical leave laws; or

(6) To a Federal, State, or local public health agency only with regard to information about the manifestation of a disease or disorder that concerns a contagious disease that presents an imminent hazard of death or life-threatening illness, provided that the individual whose family member is the subject of the disclosure is notified of such disclosure.

(c) *Relationship to HIPAA Privacy Regulations.* Pursuant to §1635.11(d) of this part, nothing in this section shall be construed as applying to the use or disclosure of genetic information that is protected health information subject to the regulations issued pursuant to section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

§1635.10 Enforcement and remedies.

(a) *Powers and procedures:* The following powers and procedures shall apply to allegations that Title II of GINA has been violated:

(1) The powers and procedures provided to the Commission, the Attorney General, or any person by sections 705 through 707 and 709 through 711 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–4 through 2000e–6 and 2000e–8 through 2000e–10, where the alleged discrimination is against an employee defined in 1635.2(c)(1) of this part or against a member of a labor organization;

(2) The powers and procedures provided to the Commission and any person by sections 302 and 304 of the Government Employees Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16b and 2000e–16c, and in regulations at 29 CFR part 1603, where the alleged discrimination is against an employee as defined in §1635.2(c)(2) of this part;

(3) The powers and procedures provided to the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance and to any person

under the Congressional Accountability Act, 2 U.S.C. 1301 *et seq.* (including the provisions of Title 3 of that act, 2 U.S.C. 1381 *et seq.*), where the alleged discrimination is against an employee defined in §1635.2(c)(3) of this part;

(4) The powers and procedures provided in 3 U.S.C. 451 *et seq.*, to the President, the Commission, or any person in connection with an alleged violation of section 3 U.S.C. 411(a)(1), where the alleged discrimination is against an employee defined in §1635.2(c)(4) of this part;

(5) The powers and procedures provided to the Commission, the Librarian of Congress, and any person by section 717 of the Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16, where the alleged discrimination is against an employee defined in §1635.2(c)(5) of this part.

(b) *Remedies.* The following remedies are available for violations of GINA sections 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, and 207(f):

(1) Compensatory and punitive damages as provided for, and limited by, 42 U.S.C. 1981a(a)(1) and (b);

(2) Reasonable attorney's fees, including expert fees, as provided for, and limited by, 42 U.S.C. 1988(b) and (c); and

(3) Injunctive relief, including reinstatement and hiring, back pay, and other equitable remedies as provided for, and limited by, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–5(g).

(c) *Posting of Notices.* (1) Every covered entity shall post and keep posted in conspicuous places upon its premises where notices to employees, applicants for employment, and members are customarily posted a notice to be prepared or approved by the Commission setting forth excerpts from or, summaries of, the pertinent provisions of this regulation and information pertinent to the filing of a complaint.

(2) A willful violation of this requirement shall be punishable by a fine of not more than $100 for each separate offense.

§1635.11 Construction.

(a) *Relationship to other laws, generally.* This part does not—

(1) Limit the rights or protections of an individual under any other Federal, State, or local law that provides equal or greater protection to an individual than the rights or protections provided for under this part, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 *et seq.*), and State and local laws prohibiting genetic discrimination or discrimination on the basis of disability;

(2) Apply to the Armed Forces Repository of Specimen Samples for the Identification of Remains;

(3) Limit or expand the protections, rights, or obligations of employees or employers under applicable workers' compensation laws;

(4) Limit the authority of a Federal department or agency to conduct or sponsor occupational or other health research in compliance with the regulations and protections provided for under 45 CFR part 46;

(5) Limit the statutory or regulatory authority of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration or the Mine Safety and Health Administration to promulgate or enforce workplace safety and health laws and regulations; or

(6) Require any specific benefit for an employee or member or a family member of an employee or member (such as additional coverage for a particular health condition that may have a genetic basis) under any group health plan or health insurance issuer offering group health insurance coverage in connection with a group health plan.

(b) *Relation to certain Federal laws governing health coverage*—(1) *General:* Nothing in GINA Title II provides for enforcement of, or penalties for, violation of any requirement or prohibition of a covered entity subject to enforcement under:

(i) Amendments made by Title I of GINA.

(ii) Section 701(a) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (29 U.S.C. 1181) (ERISA), section 2704(a) of the Public Health Service Act, and section 9801(a) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 9801(a)), as such sections apply with respect to genetic information pursuant to section 701(b)(1)(B) of ERISA, section 2704(b)(1)(B) of the Public Health Service Act, and section 9801(b)(1)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code, respectively, of such sections, which prohibit a group health plan or a health insurance issuer in the group market from imposing a preexisting condition exclusion

based solely on genetic information, in the absence of a diagnosis of a condition;

(iii) Section 702(a)(1)(F) of ERISA (29 U.S.C. 1182(a)(1)(F)), section 2705(a)(6) of the PHS Act, as amended by section 1201 of the Affordable Care Act and section 9802(a)(1)(F) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 9802(a)(1)(F)), which prohibit a group health plan or a health insurance issuer in the group or individual market from discriminating against individuals in eligibility and continued eligibility for benefits based on genetic information; or

(iv) Section 702(b)(1) of ERISA (29 U.S.C. 1182(b)(1)), section 2705(b)(1) of the PHS Act, as amended by section 1201 of the Affordable Care Act and section 9802(b)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 9802(b)(1)), as such sections apply with respect to genetic information as a health status-related factor, which prohibit a group health plan or a health insurance issuer in the group or individual market from discriminating against individuals in premium or contribution rates under the plan or coverage based on genetic information.

(2) *Application.* The application of paragraph (b)(1) of this section is intended to prevent Title II causes of action from being asserted regarding matters subject to enforcement under Title I or the other genetics provisions for group coverage in ERISA, the Public Health Service Act, and the Internal Revenue Code. The firewall seeks to ensure that health plan or issuer provisions or actions are addressed and remedied through ERISA, the Public Health Service Act, or the Internal Revenue Code, while actions taken by employers and other GINA Title II covered entities are remedied through GINA Title II. Employers and other GINA Title II covered entities would remain liable for any of their actions that violate Title II, even where those actions involve access to health benefits, because such benefits are within the definition of compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. For example, an employer that fires an employee because of anticipated high health claims based on genetic information remains subject to liability under Title II. On the other hand, health plan or issuer provisions or actions related to the imposition of a preexisting condition exclusion; a health plan's or issuer's discrimination in health plan eligibility, benefits, or premiums based on genetic information; a health plan's or issuer's request that an individual undergo a genetic test; and/or a health plan's or issuer's collection of genetic information remain subject to enforcement under Title I exclusively. For example:

(i) If an employer contracts with a health insurance issuer to request genetic information, the employer has committed a Title II violation. In addition, the issuer may have violated Title I of GINA.

(ii) If an employer directs his employees to undergo mandatory genetic testing in order to be eligible for health benefits, the employer has committed a Title II violation.

(iii) If an employer or union amends a health plan to require an individual to undergo a genetic test, then the employer or union is liable for a violation of Title II. In addition, the health plan's implementation of the requirement may subject the health plan to liability under Title I.

(c) *Relationship to authorities under GINA Title I.* GINA Title II does not prohibit any group health plan or health insurance issuer offering group health insurance coverage in connection with a group health plan from engaging in any action that is authorized under any provision of law noted in §1635.11(b) of this part, including any implementing regulations noted in §1635.11(b).

(d) *Relationship to HIPAA Privacy Regulations.* This part does not apply to genetic information that is protected health information subject to the regulations issued by the Secretary of Health and Human Services pursuant to section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

[75 FR 68932, Nov. 9, 2010, as amended at 81 FR 31159, May 17, 2016]

§1635.12 Medical information that is not genetic information.

(a) *Medical information about a manifested disease, disorder, or pathological condition.* (1) A covered entity shall not

be considered to be in violation of this part based on the use, acquisition, or disclosure of medical information that is not genetic information about a manifested disease, disorder, or pathological condition of an employee or member, even if the disease, disorder, or pathological condition has or may have a genetic basis or component.

(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (a)(1) of this section, the acquisition, use, and disclosure of medical information that is not genetic information about a manifested disease, disorder, or pathological condition is subject to applicable limitations under sections 103(d)(1)–(4) of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12112(d)(1)–(4)), and regulations at 29 CFR 1630.13, 1630.14, and 1630.16.

(b) *Genetic information related to a manifested disease, disorder, or pathological condition.* Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this section, genetic information about a manifested disease, disorder, or pathological condition is subject to the requirements and prohibitions in sections 202 through 206 of GINA and §§1635.4 through 1635.9 of this part.

PART 1636—PREGNANT WORKERS FAIRNESS ACT

Sec.

1636.1 Purpose.
1636.2 Definitions—general.
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APPENDIX A TO PART 1636—INTERPRETIVE GUIDANCE ON THE PREGNANT WORKERS FAIRNESS ACT

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 2000gg *et seq.*

SOURCE: 89 FR 29182, Apr. 19, 2024, unless otherwise noted.

§1636.1 Purpose.

(a) The purpose of this part is to implement the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg *et seq.* (PWFA).

(b) The PWFA:

(1) Requires a covered entity to make reasonable accommodation to the known limitations of a qualified employee related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, absent undue hardship;

(2) Prohibits a covered entity from requiring a qualified employee to accept an accommodation, other than a reasonable accommodation arrived at through the interactive process;

(3) Prohibits the denial of employment opportunities based on the need of the covered entity to make reasonable accommodation to the known limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of a qualified employee;

(4) Prohibits a covered entity from requiring a qualified employee to take leave if another reasonable accommodation can be provided to the known limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of the employee;

(5) Prohibits a covered entity from taking adverse actions in terms, conditions, or privileges of employment against a qualified employee on account of the employee requesting or using a reasonable accommodation for known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions;

(6) Prohibits discrimination against an employee for opposing unlawful discrimination under the PWFA or participating in a proceeding under the PWFA;

(7) Prohibits coercion of individuals in the exercise of their rights under the PWFA; and

(8) Provides remedies for individuals whose rights under the PWFA are violated.

§1636.2 Definitions—general.

(a) *Commission* means the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission established by section 705 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–4.

(b) *Covered entity* means *respondent* as defined in section 701(n) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e(n), and includes:

(1) *Employer*, which is a person engaged in an industry affecting commerce who has 15 or more employees, as defined in section 701(b) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e(b);

(2) *Employing office*, as defined in section 101 of the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, 2 U.S.C. 1301, and 3 U.S.C. 411(c);

(3) An entity employing a State employee (or the employee of a political subdivision of a State) described in section 304(a) of the Government Employee Rights Act of 1991, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16c(a); and

(4) An entity to which section 717(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16(a), applies.

(c) *Employee* means:

(1) An employee (including an applicant), as defined in section 701(f) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e(f);

(2) [Reserved]

(3) A covered employee (including an applicant), as defined in 3 U.S.C. 411(c);

(4) A State employee (including an applicant) (or the employee or applicant of a political subdivision of a State) described in section 304(a) of the Government Employee Rights Act of 1991, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16c(a); and

(5) An employee (including an applicant) to which section 717(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16(a), applies.

(d) *Person* means person as defined by section 701(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e(a).

§ 1636.3 Definitions—specific to the PWFA.

(a) *Known limitation. Known limitation* means a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions that the employee or the employee's representative has communicated to the covered entity, whether or not such condition meets the definition of disability specified in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. 12102.

(1) *Known,* in terms of limitation, means the employee or the employee's representative has communicated the limitation to the employer.

(2) *Limitation* means a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, of the specific employee in question. ''Physical or mental condition'' is an impediment or problem that may be modest, minor, and/or episodic. The physical or mental condition may be that an employee affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions has a need or a problem related to maintaining their health or the health of the pregnancy. The definition also includes when an employee is seeking health care related to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition itself. The physical or mental condition can be a limitation whether or not such condition meets the definition of disability specified in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. 12102.

(b) *Pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.* ''Pregnancy'' and ''childbirth'' refer to the pregnancy or childbirth of the specific employee in question and include, but are not limited to, current pregnancy; past pregnancy; potential or intended pregnancy (which can include infertility, fertility treatment, and the use of contraception); labor; and childbirth (including vaginal and cesarean delivery). ''Related medical conditions'' are medical conditions relating to the pregnancy or childbirth of the specific employee in question. The following are examples of conditions that are, or may be, ''related medical conditions'': termination of pregnancy, including via miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion; ectopic pregnancy; preterm labor; pelvic prolapse; nerve injuries; cesarean or perineal wound infection; maternal cardiometabolic disease; gestational diabetes; preeclampsia; HELLP (hemolysis, elevated liver enzymes and low platelets) syndrome; hyperemesis gravidarum; anemia; endometriosis; sciatica; lumbar lordosis; carpal tunnel syndrome; chronic migraines; dehydration; hemorrhoids; nausea or vomiting; edema of the legs, ankles, feet, or fingers; high blood pressure; infection; antenatal (during pregnancy) anxiety, depression, or psychosis; postpartum depression, anxiety, or psychosis; frequent urination; incontinence; loss of balance; vision changes; varicose veins; changes in hormone levels; vaginal bleeding; menstruation; and lactation and conditions related to lactation, such as low milk supply, engorgement, plugged ducts, mastitis, or fungal infections. This list is non-exhaustive.

(c) *Employee's representative. Employee's representative* means a family member, friend, union representative, health care provider, or other representative of the employee.

(d) *Communicated to the employer. Communicated to the employer,* with respect to a known limitation, means an employee or the employee's representative has made the employer aware of the limitation by communicating with a supervisor, a manager, someone who has supervisory authority for the employee or who regularly directs the employee's tasks (or the equivalent for an applicant), human resources personnel, or another appropriate official, or by following the steps in the covered entity's policy to request an accommodation.

(1) The communication may be made orally, in writing, or by another effective means.

(2) The communication need not be in writing, be in a specific format, use specific words, or be on a specific form in order for it to be considered ''communicated to the employer.''

(e) *Consideration of mitigating measures.* (1) The determination of whether an employee has a limitation shall be made without regard to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures.

(2) The non-ameliorative effects of mitigating measures, such as negative side effects of medication or burdens associated with following a particular treatment regimen, may be considered when determining whether an employee has a limitation.

(f) *Qualified employee. Qualified employee* with respect to an employee with a known limitation under the PWFA means:

(1) An employee who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the employment position. With respect to leave as an accommodation, the relevant inquiry is whether the employee is reasonably expected to be able to perform the essential functions, with or without a reasonable accommodation, at the end of the leave, if time off is granted, or if the employee is qualified as set out in paragraph (f)(2) of this section after returning from leave.

(2) Additionally, an employee shall be considered qualified if they cannot perform one or more essential functions if:

(i) Any inability to perform an essential function(s) is for a temporary period, where ''temporary'' means lasting for a limited time, not permanent, and may extend beyond ''in the near future'';

(ii) The essential function(s) could be performed in the near future. This determination is made on a case-by-case basis. If the employee is pregnant, it is presumed that the employee could perform the essential function(s) in the near future because they could perform the essential function(s) within generally 40 weeks of its suspension; and

(iii) The inability to perform the essential function(s) can be reasonably accommodated. This may be accomplished by temporary suspension of the essential function(s) and the employee performing the remaining functions of their position or, depending on the position, other arrangements, including, but not limited to: the employee performing the remaining functions of their position and other functions assigned by the covered entity; the employee performing the functions of a different job to which the covered entity temporarily transfers or assigns the employee; or the employee being assigned to light duty or modified duty or participating in the covered entity's light or modified duty program.

(g) *Essential functions. Essential functions* mean the fundamental job duties of the employment position the employee with a known limitation under the PWFA holds or desires. The term ''essential functions'' does not include the marginal functions of the position.

(1) A job function may be considered essential for any of several reasons, including but not limited to the following:

(i) The function may be essential because the reason the position exists is to perform that function;

(ii) The function may be essential because of the limited number of employees available among whom the performance of that job function can be distributed; and/or

(iii) The function may be highly specialized so that the incumbent in the position is hired for their expertise or

ability to perform the particular function.

(2) Evidence of whether a particular function is essential includes, but is not limited to:

(i) The employer's judgment as to which functions are essential;

(ii) Written job descriptions prepared before advertising or interviewing applicants for the job;

(iii) The amount of time that would be spent on the job performing the function during the time the requested accommodation will be in effect;

(iv) The consequences of not requiring the incumbent to perform the function;

(v) The terms of a collective bargaining agreement;

(vi) The work experience of past incumbents in the job; and/or

(vii) The current work experience of incumbents in similar jobs.

(h) *Reasonable accommodation—generally*. (1) With respect to an employee or applicant with a known limitation under the PWFA, reasonable accommodation includes:

(i) Modifications or adjustments to a job application process that enable a qualified applicant with a known limitation under the PWFA to be considered for the position such qualified applicant desires;

(ii) Modifications or adjustments to the work environment, or to the manner or circumstances under which the position held or desired is customarily performed, that enable a qualified employee with a known limitation under the PWFA to perform the essential functions of that position;

(iii) Modifications or adjustments that enable a covered entity's employee with a known limitation under the PWFA to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by its other similarly situated employees without known limitations; or

(iv) Temporary suspension of essential function(s) and/or modifications or adjustments that permit the temporary suspension of essential function(s).

(2) To request a reasonable accommodation, the employee or the employee's representative need only communicate to the covered entity that the employee needs an adjustment or change at work due to their limitation (a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions).

(i) The communication may be made to any of the individuals in paragraph (d) of this section. The provisions of paragraphs (d)(1) and (2) of this section, which define what it means to communicate a limitation to a covered entity, apply to communications under this paragraph (h)(2).

(ii) An employee's request does not have to identify a medical condition, whether from paragraph (b) of this section or otherwise, or use medical terms.

(3) To determine the appropriate reasonable accommodation, it may be necessary for the covered entity to initiate an informal, interactive process as explained in paragraph (k) of this section.

(i) *Reasonable accommodation—examples*. Reasonable accommodation may include, but is not limited to:

(1) Making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by employees with known limitations under the PWFA;

(2) Job restructuring; part-time or modified work schedules; reassignment to a vacant position; breaks for use of the restroom, drinking, eating, and/or resting; acquisition or modification of equipment, uniforms, or devices, including devices that assist with lifting or carrying for jobs that involve lifting or carrying; modifying the work environment; providing seating for jobs that require standing, or allowing standing for jobs that require sitting; appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations or policies; permitting the use of paid leave (whether accrued, as part of a short-term disability program, or any other employer benefit) or providing unpaid leave for reasons including, but not limited to, recovery from childbirth, miscarriage, stillbirth, or medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth, or to attend health care appointments or receive health care treatment related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; placement in the covered entity's light or modified duty

program or assignment to light duty or modified work; telework, remote work, or change of work site; adjustments to allow an employee to work without increased pain or increased risk to the employee's health or the health of the pregnancy; temporarily suspending one or more essential functions of the position; providing a reserved parking space if the employee is otherwise entitled to use employer-provided parking; and other similar accommodations for employees with known limitations under the PWFA.

(3) The reasonable accommodation of leave includes, but is not limited to, the examples in paragraphs (i)(3)(i) through (iii) of this section.

(i) The ability to use paid leave (whether accrued, short-term disability, or another employer benefit) or unpaid leave, including, but not limited to, leave during pregnancy; to recover from childbirth, miscarriage, stillbirth, or other related medical conditions; and to attend health care appointments or receive health care treatments related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions;

(ii) The ability to use paid leave (whether accrued, short-term disability, or another employer benefit) or unpaid leave for a known limitation under the PWFA; and

(iii) The ability to choose whether to use paid leave (whether accrued, short-term disability or another employer benefit) or unpaid leave to the extent that the covered entity allows employees using leave for reasons not related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions to choose between the use of paid leave and unpaid leave.

(4) Reasonable accommodation related to lactation includes, but is not limited to:

(i) Breaks, a space for lactation, and other related modifications as required under the Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act) (Pub. L. 117–328, Div. KK, 136 Stat. 4459, 6093 (2022)), if not otherwise provided under the PUMP Act;

(ii) Accommodations related to pumping, such as, but not limited to, ensuring that the area for lactation is in reasonable proximity to the employee's usual work area; that it is a place other than a bathroom; that it is shielded from view and free from intrusion; that it is regularly cleaned; that it has electricity, appropriate seating, and a surface sufficient to place a breast pump; and that it is in reasonable proximity to a sink, running water, and a refrigerator for storing milk;

(iii) Accommodations related to nursing during work hours (where the regular location of the employee's workplace makes nursing during work hours a possibility because the child is in close proximity); and

(iv) Other reasonable accommodations, including those listed in paragraphs (i)(1) through (3) of this section.

(5) The temporary suspension of one or more essential functions of the position in question, as defined in paragraph (g) of this section, is a reasonable accommodation if an employee with a known limitation under the PWFA is unable to perform one or more essential functions with or without a reasonable accommodation and the conditions set forth in paragraph (f)(2) of this section are met.

(j) *Undue hardship*—(1) *In general.* Undue hardship means, with respect to the provision of an accommodation, significant difficulty or expense incurred by a covered entity, when considered in light of the factors set forth in paragraph (j)(2) of this section.

(2) *Factors to be considered.* In determining whether an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on a covered entity, factors to be considered, with no one factor to be dispositive, include:

(i) The nature and net cost of the accommodation needed under the PWFA;

(ii) The overall financial resources of the facility or facilities involved in the provision of the reasonable accommodation, the number of persons employed at such facility, and the effect on expenses and resources;

(iii) The overall financial resources of the covered entity, the overall size of the business of the covered entity with respect to the number of its employees, and the number, type, and location of its facilities;

(iv) The type of operation or operations of the covered entity, including

the composition, structure, and functions of the workforce of such entity, and the geographic separateness and administrative or fiscal relationship of the facility or facilities in question to the covered entity; and

(v) The impact of the accommodation upon the operation of the facility, including the impact on the ability of other employees to perform their duties and the impact on the facility's ability to conduct business.

(3) *Temporary suspension of an essential function(s).* If an employee with a known limitation under the PWFA meets the definition of ''qualified employee'' under paragraph (f)(2) of this section and needs one or more essential functions of the relevant position to be temporarily suspended, the covered entity must provide the accommodation unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the covered entity when considered in light of the factors provided in paragraphs (j)(2)(i) through (v) of this section as well as the following additional factors where they are relevant and with no one factor to be dispositive:

(i) The length of time that the employee will be unable to perform the essential function(s);

(ii) Whether, through the factors listed in paragraph (f)(2)(iii) of this section or otherwise, there is work for the employee to accomplish;

(iii) The nature of the essential function(s), including its frequency;

(iv) Whether the covered entity has provided other employees in similar positions who are unable to perform the essential function(s) of their position with temporary suspensions of the essential function(s);

(v) If necessary, whether there are other employees, temporary employees, or third parties who can perform or be hired to perform the essential function(s); and

(vi) Whether the essential function(s) can be postponed or remain unperformed for any length of time and, if so, for how long.

(4) *Predictable assessments.* The individualized assessment of whether a modification listed in paragraphs (j)(4)(i) through (iv) of this section is a reasonable accommodation that would cause undue hardship will, in virtually all cases, result in a determination that the four modifications are reasonable accommodations that will not impose an undue hardship under the PWFA when they are requested as workplace accommodations by an employee who is pregnant. Therefore, with respect to these modifications, the individualized assessment should be particularly simple and straightforward:

(i) Allowing an employee to carry or keep water near and drink, as needed;

(ii) Allowing an employee to take additional restroom breaks, as needed;

(iii) Allowing an employee whose work requires standing to sit and whose work requires sitting to stand, as needed; and

(iv) Allowing an employee to take breaks to eat and drink, as needed.

(k) *Interactive process. Interactive process* means an informal, interactive process between the covered entity and the employee seeking an accommodation under the PWFA. This process should identify the known limitation under the PWFA and the adjustment or change at work that is needed due to the limitation, if either of these is not clear from the request, and potential reasonable accommodations. There are no rigid steps that must be followed.

(l) *Limits on supporting documentation.* (1) A covered entity is not required to seek supporting documentation. A covered entity may seek supporting documentation from an employee who requests an accommodation under the PWFA only when it is reasonable under the circumstances for the covered entity to determine whether the employee has a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (a limitation) and needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation. The following situations are examples of when it is not reasonable under the circumstances to seek supporting documentation:

(i) When the physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (a limitation), and the adjustment or change at work

needed due to the limitation are obvious and the employee provides self-confirmation as defined in paragraph (l)(4) of this section;

(ii) When the employer already has sufficient information to determine whether the employee has a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (a limitation) and needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation;

(iii) When the employee is pregnant and seeks one of the modifications listed in paragraphs (j)(4)(i) through (iv) of this section due to a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy (a limitation) and the employee provides self-confirmation as defined in paragraph (l)(4) of this section;

(iv) When the reasonable accommodation is related to a time and/or place to pump at work, other modifications related to pumping at work, or a time to nurse during work hours (where the regular location of the employee's workplace makes nursing during work hours a possibility because the child is in close proximity), and the employee provides self-confirmation, as defined in paragraph (l)(4) of this section; or

(v) When the requested accommodation is available to employees without known limitations under the PWFA pursuant to a covered entity's policies or practices without submitting supporting documentation.

(2) When it is reasonable under the circumstances, based on paragraph (l)(1) of this section, to seek supporting documentation, the covered entity is limited to seeking reasonable documentation.

(i) *Reasonable documentation* means the minimum that is sufficient to:

(A) Confirm the physical or mental condition (*i.e.*, an impediment or problem that may be modest, minor, and/or episodic; a need or a problem related to maintaining the employee's health or the health of the pregnancy; or an employee seeking health care related to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition itself) whether or not such condition meets the definition of disability specified in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. 12102;

(B) Confirm that the physical or mental condition is related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (together with paragraph (l)(2)(i)(A) of this section, ''a limitation''); and

(C) Describe the adjustment or change at work that is needed due to the limitation.

(ii) Covered entities may not require that supporting documentation be submitted on a specific form.

(3) When it is reasonable under the circumstances, based on paragraph (l)(1) of this section, to seek supporting documentation, a covered entity may require that the reasonable documentation comes from a health care provider, which may include, but is not limited to: doctors, midwives, nurses, nurse practitioners, physical therapists, lactation consultants, doulas, occupational therapists, vocational rehabilitation specialists, therapists, industrial hygienists, licensed mental health professionals, psychologists, or psychiatrists. The health care provider may be a telehealth provider. The covered entity may not require that the health care provider submitting documentation be the provider treating the condition at issue. The covered entity may not require that the employee seeking the accommodation be examined by a health care provider selected by the covered entity.

(4) *Self-confirmation* means a simple statement where the employee confirms, for purposes of paragraph (l)(1)(i), (iii), or (iv) of this section, the physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (a limitation), and the adjustment or change at work needed due to the limitation. The statement can be made in any manner and can be made as part of the request for reasonable accommodation under paragraph (h)(2) of this section. A covered entity may not require that the statement be in a specific format, use specific words, or be on a specific form.

§ 1636.4 Nondiscrimination with regard to reasonable accommodations related to pregnancy.

(a) It is an unlawful employment practice for a covered entity not to

make reasonable accommodations to the known limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of a qualified employee, unless such covered entity can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the business of such covered entity.

(1) An unnecessary delay in providing a reasonable accommodation to the known limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of a qualified employee may result in a violation of the PWFA, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1), even if the covered entity eventually provides the reasonable accommodation. In determining whether there has been an unnecessary delay, factors to be considered, with no one factor to be dispositive, include:

(i) The reason for the delay;

(ii) The length of the delay;

(iii) The length of time that the accommodation is needed. If the accommodation is needed for a short time, unnecessary delay in providing it may effectively mean failure to provide the accommodation;

(iv) How much the employee and the covered entity each contributed to the delay;

(v) Whether the covered entity was engaged in actions related to the reasonable accommodation request during the delay;

(vi) Whether the accommodation was or would be simple or complex to provide. There are certain accommodations, set forth in §1636.3(j)(4), that are common and easy to provide. Delay in providing these accommodations will virtually always result in a finding of unnecessary delay; and

(vii) Whether the covered entity offered the employee an interim reasonable accommodation during the interactive process or while waiting for the covered entity's response. For the purposes of this factor, the interim reasonable accommodation should be one that allows the employee to continue working. Leave will not be considered an interim reasonable accommodation supporting this factor, unless the employee selects or requests leave as an interim reasonable accommodation.

(2) An employee with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions is not required to accept an accommodation. However, if such employee rejects a reasonable accommodation that is necessary to enable the employee to perform an essential function(s) of the position held or desired or to apply for the position, or rejects the temporary suspension of an essential function(s) if the employee is qualified under §1636.3(f)(2), and, as a result of that rejection, cannot perform an essential function(s) of the position, or cannot apply, the employee will not be considered ''qualified.''

(3) A covered entity cannot justify failing to provide a reasonable accommodation or the unnecessary delay in providing a reasonable accommodation to a qualified employee with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions based on the employee failing to provide supporting documentation, unless:

(i) The covered entity seeks the supporting documentation;

(ii) Seeking the supporting documentation is reasonable under the circumstances as set out in §1636.3(l)(1);

(iii) The supporting documentation is ''reasonable documentation'' as defined in §1636.3(l)(2); and

(iv) The covered entity provides the employee sufficient time to obtain and provide the supporting documentation.

(4) When choosing among effective accommodations, the covered entity must choose an accommodation that provides the qualified employee with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions equal employment opportunity to attain the same level of performance, or to enjoy the same level of benefits and privileges as are available to the average employee without a known limitation who is similarly situated. The similarly situated average employee without a known limitation may include the employee requesting an accommodation at a time prior to communicating the limitation.

(b) It is an unlawful employment practice for a covered entity to require a qualified employee affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical

conditions to accept an accommodation other than any reasonable accommodation arrived at through the interactive process referred to in 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(7) and described in § 1636.3(k).

(c) It is an unlawful employment practice for a covered entity to deny employment opportunities to a qualified employee if such denial is based on the need, or potential need, of the covered entity to make reasonable accommodations to the known limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of the qualified employee.

(d) It is an unlawful employment practice for a covered entity:

(1) To require a qualified employee to take leave, whether paid or unpaid, if another reasonable accommodation can be provided to the known limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of the qualified employee that does not result in an undue hardship for the covered entity; but

(2) Nothing in paragraph (d)(1) of this section prohibits leave as a reasonable accommodation if that is the reasonable accommodation requested or selected by the employee, or if it is the only reasonable accommodation that does not cause an undue hardship.

(e) It is an unlawful employment practice for a covered entity:

(1) To take adverse action in terms, conditions, or privileges of employment against a qualified employee on account of the employee requesting or using a reasonable accommodation to the known limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of the employee.

(2) Nothing in paragraph (e)(1) of this section limits the rights available under 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f).

§ 1636.5 Remedies and enforcement.

(a) *Employees covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*—(1) *In general.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in sections 705, 706, 707, 709, 710, and 711 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–4 *et seq.*, to the Commission, the Attorney General, or any person alleging a violation of Title VII of such Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*, shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures the PWFA provides to the Commission, the Attorney General, or any person, respectively, alleging an unlawful employment practice in violation of the PWFA against an employee described in 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(3)(A), except as provided in paragraphs (a)(2) and (3) of this section.

(2) *Costs and fees.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in subsections (b) and (c) of section 722 of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1988, shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures the PWFA provides to the Commission, the Attorney General, or any person alleging such practice.

(3) *Damages.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in section 1977A of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1981a, including the limitations contained in subsection (b)(3) of such section 1977A, shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures the PWFA provides to the Commission, the Attorney General, or any person alleging such practice (not an employment practice specifically excluded from coverage under section 1977A(a)(1) of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1981a(a)(1)).

(b) [Reserved]

(c) *Employees covered by Chapter 5 of Title 3, United States Code*—(1) *In general.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in chapter 5 of title 3, United States Code, to the President, the Commission, the Merit Systems Protection Board, or any person alleging a violation of section 411(a)(1) of such title shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures this section provides to the President, the Commission, the Board, or any person, respectively, alleging an unlawful employment practice in violation of this section against an employee described in 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(3)(C), except as provided in paragraphs (c)(2) and (3) of this section.

(2) *Costs and fees.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in subsections (b) and (c) of section 722 of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1988, shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures this section provides to the President, the Commission, the Board, or any person alleging such practice.

(3) *Damages.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in section 1977A of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C.

1981a, including the limitations contained in subsection (b)(3) of such section 1977A, shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures this section provides to the President, the Commission, the Board, or any person alleging such practice (not an employment practice specifically excluded from coverage under section 1977A(a)(1) of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1981a(a)(1)).

(d) *Employees covered by Government Employee Rights Act of 1991*—(1) *In general.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in sections 302 and 304 of the Government Employee Rights Act of 1991, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16b and 2000e–16c, to the Commission or any person alleging a violation of section 302(a)(1) of such Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16b(a)(1), shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures the PWFA provides to the Commission or any person, respectively, alleging an unlawful employment practice in violation of the PWFA against an employee described in 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(3)(D), except as provided in paragraphs (d)(2) and (3) of this section.

(2) *Costs and fees.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in subsections (b) and (c) of section 722 of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1988, shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures the PWFA provides to the Commission or any person alleging such practice.

(3) *Damages.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in section 1977A of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1981a, including the limitations contained in subsection (b)(3) of such section 1977A, shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures the PWFA provides to the Commission or any person alleging such practice (not an employment practice specifically excluded from coverage under section 1977A(a)(1) of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1981a(a)(1)).

(e) *Employees covered by Section 717 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*—(1) *In general.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in section 717 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16, to the Commission, the Attorney General, the Librarian of Congress, or any person alleging a violation of that section shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures the PWFA provides to the Commission, the Attorney General, the Librarian of Congress, or any person, respectively, alleging an unlawful employment practice in violation of the PWFA against an employee described in 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(3)(E), except as provided in paragraphs (e)(2) and (3) of this section.

(2) *Costs and fees.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in subsections (b) and (c) of section 722 of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1988, shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures the PWFA provides to the Commission, the Attorney General, the Librarian of Congress, or any person alleging such practice.

(3) *Damages.* The powers, remedies, and procedures provided in section 1977A of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1981a, including the limitations contained in subsection (b)(3) of such section 1977A, shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures the PWFA provides to the Commission, the Attorney General, the Librarian of Congress, or any person alleging such practice (not an employment practice specifically excluded from coverage under section 1977A(a)(1) of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1981a(a)(1)).

(f) *Prohibition against retaliation*—(1) *Prohibition against retaliation.* No person shall discriminate against any employee because such employee has opposed any act or practice made unlawful by the PWFA or because such employee made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under the PWFA.

(i) An employee need not be a qualified employee with a known limitation under the PWFA to bring an action under this paragraph (f)(1).

(ii) A request for reasonable accommodation for a known limitation under the PWFA constitutes protected activity under this paragraph (f)(1).

(iii) An employee does not actually have to be deterred from exercising or enjoying rights under the PWFA in order for the retaliation to be actionable.

(2) *Prohibition against coercion.* It shall be unlawful to coerce, intimidate, threaten, harass, or interfere with any individual in the exercise or enjoyment

of, or on account of such individual having exercised or enjoyed, or on account of such individual having aided or encouraged any other individual in the exercise or enjoyment of, any right granted or protected by the PWFA.

(i) An individual need not be a qualified employee with a known limitation under the PWFA to bring an action under this paragraph (f)(2).

(ii) An individual does not actually have to be deterred from exercising or enjoying rights under the PWFA for the coercion, intimidation, threats, harassment, or interference to be actionable.

(3) *Remedy*. The remedies and procedures otherwise provided for under this section shall be available to aggrieved individuals with respect to violations of this section regarding retaliation or coercion.

(g) *Limitation on monetary damages*. Notwithstanding paragraphs (a)(3), (c)(3), (d)(3), and (e)(3) of this section, if an unlawful employment practice involves the provision of a reasonable accommodation pursuant to the PWFA or this part, damages may not be awarded under section 1977A of the Revised Statutes, 42 U.S.C. 1981a, if the covered entity demonstrates good faith efforts, in consultation with the qualified employee with known limitations related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions who has informed the covered entity that accommodation is needed, to identify and make a reasonable accommodation that would provide such employee with an equally effective opportunity and would not cause an undue hardship on the operation of the business of the covered entity.

§ 1636.6 Waiver of State immunity.

A State shall not be immune under the 11th Amendment to the Constitution from an action in a Federal or State court of competent jurisdiction for a violation of the PWFA. In any action against a State for a violation of the PWFA, remedies (including remedies both at law and in equity) are available for such a violation to the same extent such remedies are available for such a violation in an action against any public or private entity other than a State.

§ 1636.7 Relationship to other laws.

(a) *In general*. (1) The PWFA and this part do not invalidate or limit the powers, remedies, and procedures under any Federal law, State law, or the law of any political subdivision of any State or jurisdiction that provides greater or equal protection for individuals affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

(2) The PWFA and this part do not require an employer-sponsored health plan to pay for or cover any particular item, procedure, or treatment, or affect any right or remedy available under any other Federal, State, or local law with respect to any such payment or coverage requirement.

(b) *Rule of construction*. The PWFA and this part are subject to the applicability to religious employment set forth in section 702(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–1(a).

(1) Nothing in 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–5(b) or this part should be interpreted to limit a covered entity's rights under the U.S. Constitution.

(2) Nothing in 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–5(b) or this part should be interpreted to limit an employee's rights under other civil rights statutes.

§ 1636.8 Severability.

(a) The Commission intends that, if any provision of the PWFA or the application of that provision to particular persons or circumstances is held invalid or found to be unconstitutional, the remainder of the statute and the application of that provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

(b) The Commission intends that, if any provision of this part that uses the same language as the statute, or the application of that provision to particular persons or circumstances, is held invalid or found to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this part and the application of that provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

(c) The Commission intends that, if any provision of this part or the interpretive guidance in appendix A to this part that provides additional guidance

to implement the PWFA, including examples of reasonable accommodations, or the application of that provision to particular persons or circumstances, is held invalid or found to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this part or the interpretive guidance and the application of that provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

APPENDIX A TO PART 1636—INTERPRETIVE GUIDANCE ON THE PREGNANT WORKERS FAIRNESS ACT

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) requires a covered entity to provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified employee's known limitation related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, absent undue hardship on the operation of the business of the covered entity. Although employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions have certain rights under existing civil rights laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), as amended by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 (PDA), 42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA or Amendments Act), 42 U.S.C. 12111 *et seq.*,[1] Congress determined that the legal protections offered by these two statutes, particularly as interpreted by the courts, were ''insufficient to ensure that pregnant workers receive the accommodations they need.'' [2]

2. The PWFA, at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–3, directs the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC or Commission) to promulgate regulations to implement the PWFA.

3. This Interpretive Guidance addresses the major provisions of the PWFA and its regulation and explains the major concepts pertaining to nondiscrimination with respect to reasonable accommodations for known limitations (physical or mental conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions) under the statute. The Interpretive Guidance represents the Commission's interpretation of the issues addressed within it, and the Commission will be guided by the regulation and the Interpretive Guidance when enforcing the PWFA.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION AND TERMS USED IN THE REGULATION AND INTERPRETIVE GUIDANCE

1. The PWFA at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(3) uses the term ''employee (including an applicant)'' in its definition of ''employee.'' [3] Thus, throughout the statute, the final regulation, and this Interpretive Guidance, the term ''employee'' should be understood to include ''applicant'' where relevant. Because the PWFA relies on Title VII for its definition of ''employee,'' that term also includes ''former employee,'' where relevant.[4] The PWFA defines ''covered entity'' using the definition of ''employer'' from different statutes, including Title VII.[5] Thus ''covered entities'' under the PWFA include public or private employers with 15 or more employees, unions, employment agencies, and the Federal Government.[6] In the regulation and this Interpretive Guidance, the Commission uses the terms ''covered entity'' and ''employer'' interchangeably.

2. This Interpretive Guidance contains many examples to illustrate situations under the PWFA. The examples do not, and are not intended to, cover every limitation or possible accommodation under the PWFA. Depending on the facts in the examples, the same facts could lead to claims also being brought under other statutes that the Commission enforces, such as Title VII and the ADA. Moreover, the situations in specific examples could implicate other Federal laws, including, but not limited to, the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, 29 U.S.C. 2601 *et seq.* (FMLA); the Occupational Safety and Health Act, 29 U.S.C. 651 *et seq.* (OSH Act); and the Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act) (Pub. L. 117–328, Div. KK, 136 Stat. 4459, 6093

[1] References to the ADA throughout this part and the Interpretive Guidance in this appendix are intended to apply equally to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as all nondiscrimination standards under title I of the ADA also apply to Federal agencies under section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act. *See* 29 U.S.C. 791(f).

[2] H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 12 (2021).

[3] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(3).

[4] *Robinson* v. *Shell Oil Co.*, 519 U.S. 337, 346 (1997).

[5] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(2)(A), (B)(i), (B)(iii), (B)(iv). The other statutes are the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 and 3 U.S.C. 411(c).

[6] The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(2) provides that the term ''covered entity'' has the meaning given the term ''respondent'' under 42 U.S.C. 2000e(n) and includes employers as defined in 42 U.S.C. 2000e(b), 2000e–16c(a), and 2000e–16(a). The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–5(b) provides as a rule of construction that the chapter is subject to the applicability to religious employment set forth in 42 U.S.C. 2000e–1(a) [section 702(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964].

(2022)).[7] Finally, although some examples state that the described actions ''would violate'' the PWFA, additional facts not described in the examples could change that determination.[8]

III. 1636. Definitions—Specific to the PWFA

1636.3(a) Known Limitation

1. Section 1636.3(a) reiterates the definition of ''known limitation'' from 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4) of the PWFA and then provides definitions for the operative terms.

1636.3(a)(1) Known

2. Paragraph (a)(1) adopts the definition of ''known'' from the PWFA and thus defines it to mean that the employee, or the employee's representative, has communicated the limitation to the covered entity.[9]

1636.3(a)(2) Limitation

3. Paragraph (a)(2) adopts the definition of ''limitation'' from the PWFA and thus defines it to mean a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.[10] The limitation must be of the specific employee in question. The ''physical or mental condition'' that is the limitation may be a modest, minor, and/or episodic impediment or problem. The definition encompasses when an employee affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions has a need or a problem related to maintaining their health or the health of the pregnancy.[11]

4. The definition of ''limitation'' also includes when an employee is seeking health care related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition itself. Under the ADA, when an individual has an actual or a record of a disability, employers often may be required to provide the reasonable accommodation of leave so that an employee can obtain medical treatment.[12] Similarly, under the PWFA, an employee may require a reasonable accommodation of leave to attend health care appointments or receive treatment for or recover from their pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.[13] In passing the PWFA, Congress sought, in part, to help pregnant employees maintain their health.[14] Thus, the PWFA covers situations when an employee requests an accommodation in order to maintain their health

[7] To the extent that an accommodation in an example is required under another law, like the OSH Act, the example should not be read to suggest that such a requirement is not applicable.

[8] In this part and the Interpretive Guidance, the Commission uses the terms ''leave'' and ''time off'' and intends those terms to cover leave however it is identified by the specific employer. Additionally, in this part and the Interpretive Guidance, the Commission uses the term ''light duty.'' The Commission recognizes that ''light duty'' programs, or other programs providing modified duties, can vary depending on the covered entity. *See* EEOC, *Enforcement Guidance: Workers' Compensation and the ADA*, text preceding Question 27 (1996) [hereinafter *Enforcement Guidance: Workers' Compensation*], *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-workers-compensation-and-ada*. The Commission intends ''light duty'' to include the types of programs included in Questions 27 and 28 of the *Enforcement Guidance: Workers' Compensation* and any other policy, practice, or system that a covered entity has for accommodating employees, including when one or more essential functions of a position are temporarily excused.

[9] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4).

[10] *Id.*

[11] In §1636.3(a)(2) and the Interpretive Guidance, the Commission uses the phrase ''maintaining their health or the health of the pregnancy.'' This includes avoiding risk to the employee's health or to the health of the pregnancy.

[12] EEOC, *Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the ADA*, at text after n.49 (2002) [hereinafter *Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation*], *http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-reasonable-accommodation-and-undue-hardship-under-ada*.

[13] *See, e.g.*, U.S. Dep't of Health & Hum. Servs., Off. of Women's Health, *Prenatal Care*, *https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/prenatal-care* (last updated Feb. 22, 2021) (stating that during pregnancy usually visits are once a month until week 28, twice a month from weeks 28–36 and once a week from week 36 to birth); Am. Coll. of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, Comm. Opinion No. 736, *Optimizing Postpartum Care* (reaff'd 2021), *https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2018/05/optimizing-postpartum-care* (stating the importance of regular postpartum care); and Opinion No. 826, *Protecting and Expanding Medicaid to Improve Women's Health* (2021), *https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2021/06/protecting-and-expanding-medicaid-to-improve-womens-health* (encouraging the expansion of Medicaid to improve postpartum care).

[14] *See* Markup of the Paycheck Fairness Act; Pregnant Workers Fairness Act; Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act, YouTube (2021), at 54:46 (statement of Rep. Kathy E. Manning) (stating that a goal of the PWFA is to help pregnant workers ''deliver healthy babies while maintaining their jobs''); at

or the health of their pregnancy and avoid negative consequences, and when an employee seeks health care for their pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Practically, allowing for accommodations to maintain health and attend medical appointments may decrease the need for a more extensive accommodation because the employee may be able to avoid more serious complications.

5. The physical or mental condition (the limitation) required to trigger the obligation to provide a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA does not need to meet the definition of a ''disability'' under the ADA.[15] In other words, an employee need not have an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity to be entitled to a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA, nor does an employee need to have an ''impairment'' as defined in the regulation implementing the ADA.[16] The PWFA can cover physical or mental conditions that also are covered under the ADA. In these situations, an individual may be entitled to an accommodation under the ADA as well as the PWFA.

6. The PWFA does not create a right to reasonable accommodation based on an individual's association with someone else who may have a PWFA-covered limitation. Nor is a qualified employee entitled to accommodation because they have a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of someone else's pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. For example, a spouse experiencing anxiety due to a partner's pregnancy is not covered by the PWFA. Time for bonding or time for childcare also is not covered by the PWFA.

7. Whether an employee has a ''physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions'' shall be construed broadly to the maximum extent permitted by the PWFA.

Related to, Affected by, or Arising Out of

8. The PWFA's use of the inclusive terms ''related to, affected by, or arising out of''[17] means that pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions do not need to be the sole, the original, or a substantial cause of the physical or mental condition at issue for the physical or mental condition to be ''related to, affected by, or arising out of'' pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

9. Whether a physical or mental condition is related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions will be apparent in the majority of cases. Pregnancy and childbirth cause systemic changes that not only create new physical and mental conditions but also can exacerbate preexisting conditions and can cause additional pain or risk.[18] Thus, a connection between an employee's physical or mental condition and their pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions will be readily ascertained when an employee is currently pregnant or the employee is experiencing or has just experienced childbirth.

10. For example, if an employee is pregnant and as a result has pain when standing for

21:50 (statement of Rep. Robert C. Scott) (''[W]ithout [these] basic protections, too many workers are forced to choose between a healthy pregnancy and their paychecks.''); at 1:35:01 (statement of Rep. Lucy McBath) (''[N]o mother should ever have to choose between the health of herself/themselves and their child or a paycheck.''); and at 1:37:38 (statement of Rep. Suzanne Bonamici) (''[P]regnant workers should not have to choose between a healthy pregnancy and a paycheck.''), *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6Ie2S9sTxs; see also* H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 12 (workers whose pregnancy-related impairments substantially limit a major life activity are covered by the ADA; ''this standard leaves women with less serious pregnancy-related impairments, and who need accommodations, without legal recourse''); *id.* at 22–23 (accommodations are frequently needed by, and should be provided to, people with healthy pregnancies); *id.* at 23 (example of an ''uneventful pregnancy'' in which a woman needed more bathroom breaks); *id.* at 14–21 (outlining the gaps created by court interpretations of Title VII and the ADA that the PWFA is intended to fill so that pregnant workers can receive reasonable accommodations); *id.* at 56 (noting that a ''minor limitation'' can be covered because it presumably requires only minor accommodations).

[15] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4).

[16] *See* 29 CFR 1630.2(h).

[17] The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4) defines the term ''known limitation'' as a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Most of the prohibited acts in the statute, however, use the phrase ''known limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.'' *See* 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1), (3)–(5). Thus, the Commission will define ''related to, affected by, or arising out of'' as one phrase and will not attempt to define each of the parts of it separately.

[18] *See, e.g.*, Danforth's Obstetrics & Gynecology 286 (Ronald S. Gibbs et al. eds., 10th ed. 2008) (''Normal pregnancy entails many physiologic changes . . . .''); Clinical Anesthesia 1138 (Paul G. Barash et al. eds., 6th ed. 2009) (''During pregnancy, there are major alterations in nearly every maternal organ system.'')

long periods of time, the employee's physical or mental condition (pain when standing for a protracted period) is related to, affected by, or arising out of the employee's pregnancy. An employee who is pregnant and because of the pregnancy cannot lift more than 20 pounds has a physical condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, because lifting is associated with low back pain and musculoskeletal disorders that may be exacerbated by physical changes associated with pregnancy.[19] An employee who is pregnant and seeks time off for prenatal health care appointments is attending medical appointments related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy. An employee who requests an accommodation to attend therapy appointments for postpartum depression has a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth (postpartum depression) and is obtaining health care related to, affected by, or arising out of a related medical condition. A pregnant employee who is seeking an accommodation to limit exposure to secondhand smoke to protect the health of their pregnancy has a physical or mental condition (trying to maintain the employee's health or the health of their pregnancy, or to address increased sensitivity to secondhand smoke) related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy. A lactating employee who seeks an accommodation to take breaks to eat has a related medical condition (lactation) and a physical condition related to, affected by, or arising out of it (increased nutritional needs). A pregnant employee seeking time off in order to have an amniocentesis procedure is attending a medical appointment related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy. An employee who requests leave for in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatment for the employee to get pregnant has a limitation, either related to potential or intended pregnancy or a medical condition related to pregnancy (difficulty in becoming pregnant or infertility), and is seeking health care related to, affected by, or arising out of it. An employee whose pregnancy is causing fatigue has a physical condition (fatigue) related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy. An employee whose pregnancy is causing back pain has a physical condition (back pain) related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy. This is not by any means a complete list of physical or mental conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, but rather a discussion of examples to illustrate application of the legal rule.

11. The Commission recognizes that some physical or mental conditions (which can be ''limitations'' as defined by the PWFA[20]), including some of those in the examples in paragraph 10 of this section, may occur even if they are not related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (e.g., attending medical appointments, increased nutritional needs, constraints on lifting). The Commission anticipates that confirming whether a physical or mental condition is related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions usually will be straightforward and can be accomplished through the interactive process. If a physical or mental condition is not covered by the PWFA, it may be that the physical or mental condition constitutes a disability that is covered by the ADA.

12. There may be situations where a physical or mental condition begins as something that is related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, and, once the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions resolve, the physical or mental condition remains, evolves, or worsens. To confirm whether the employee's physical or mental condition is still related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, the employer and the employee can engage in the interactive process.

13. There will be situations where an individual with a physical or mental condition that is no longer related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions has an ''actual'' or ''record of'' disability under the ADA. In those situations, an individual may seek an accommodation under the ADA and the reasonable accommodation process would follow the ADA.[21]

14. Finally, there may be situations where the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions exacerbate existing conditions that may be disabilities under the ADA. In those situations, an employee can seek an accommodation under the PWFA or the ADA, or both statutes.

[19] Am. Coll. of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, Comm. Opinion No. 733, *Employment Considerations During Pregnancy and the Postpartum Period* (reaff'd 2023), *https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2018/04/employment-considerations-during-pregnancy-and-the-postpartum-period*.

[20] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4) (providing that a ''known limitation'' is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions that the employee or employee's representative has communicated to the employer).

[21] *See, e.g.*, 29 CFR 1630.2(o)(3); 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(o)(3) and 1630.9.

1636.3(b) Pregnancy, Childbirth, or Related Medical Conditions

15. The PWFA uses the term ''pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions,'' which appears in Title VII's definition of ''sex.'' [22] Because Congress chose to write the PWFA using the same language as Title VII, §1636.3(b) gives the term ''pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions'' the same meaning as under Title VII.[23]

16. The non-exhaustive list of examples in §1636.3(b) for the definition of ''pregnancy'' and ''childbirth'' includes current pregnancy, past pregnancy, potential or intended pregnancy (which can include infertility, fertility treatments, and the use of contraception), and labor and childbirth (including vaginal delivery and cesarean section).[24]

[22] *See* 42 U.S.C. 2000e(k).

[23] *See, e.g., Tex. Dep't of Hous. & Cmty. Affs.* v. *Inclusive Cmtys. Project, Inc.*, 576 U.S. 519, 536 (2015) (''If a word or phrase has been . . . given a uniform interpretation by inferior courts . . . , a later version of that act perpetuating the wording is presumed to carry forward that interpretation.'') (omissions in original) (quoting Antonin Scalia & Bryan A. Garner, *Reading Law: The Interpretation of Legal Texts* 322 (2012)); *Bragdon* v. *Abbott*, 524 U.S. 624, 645 (1998) (''When administrative and judicial interpretations have settled the meaning of an existing statutory provision, repetition of the same language in a new statute indicates, as a general matter, the intent to incorporate its administrative and judicial interpretations as well.''); *Lorillard* v. *Pons*, 434 U.S. 575, 581 (1978) (''[W]here, as here, Congress adopts a new law incorporating sections of a prior law, Congress normally can be presumed to have had knowledge of the interpretation given to the incorporated law, at least insofar as it affects the new statute.''); *Hall* v. *U.S. Dep't of Agric.*, 984 F.3d 825, 840 (9th Cir. 2020) (''Congress is presumed to be aware of an agency's interpretation of a statute. We most commonly apply that presumption when an agency's interpretation of a statute has been officially published and consistently followed. If Congress thereafter reenacts the same language, we conclude that it has adopted the agency's interpretation.'') (internal citations and quotation marks omitted); Antonin Scalia & Bryan A. Garner, *Reading Law: The Interpretation of Legal Texts* 323 (2012) (''[W]hen a statute uses the very same terminology as an earlier statute—especially in the very same field, such as securities law or civil-rights law—it is reasonable to believe that the terminology bears a consistent meaning.''); H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 11–17 (discussing the history of the passage of the PDA; explaining that, due to court decisions, the PDA did not fulfill its promise to protect pregnant employees; and that the PWFA was intended to rectify this problem and protect the same employees covered by the PDA).

[24] EEOC, *Enforcement Guidance on Pregnancy Discrimination and Related Issues*, (I)(A) (2015) [hereinafter *Enforcement Guidance on Pregnancy Discrimination*], *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-pregnancy-discrimination-and-related-issues* (providing that the phrase ''pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions'' includes current pregnancy, past pregnancy, potential or intended pregnancy, infertility treatment, use of contraception, lactation, breastfeeding, and the decision to have or not have an abortion, among other conditions); *see, e.g., Kocak* v. *Cmty. Health Partners of Ohio, Inc.*, 400 F.3d 466, 470 (6th Cir. 2005) (reasoning that the plaintiff ''cannot be refused employment on the basis of her potential pregnancy''); *Piraino* v. *Int'l Orientation Res., Inc.*, 84 F.3d 270, 274 (7th Cir. 1996) (rejecting ''surprising claim'' by the defendant that no pregnancy discrimination can be shown where the challenged action occurred after the birth of the plaintiff's baby); *Pacourek* v. *Inland Steel Co.*, 858 F. Supp. 1393, 1397, 1402–04 (N.D. Ill. 1994) (observing that the PDA gives a woman ''the right . . . to be financially and legally protected before, during, and after her pregnancy'' and stating ''[a]s a general matter, a woman's medical condition rendering her unable to become pregnant naturally is a medical condition related to pregnancy and childbirth for purposes of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act'') (internal citations and quotation marks omitted); *Donaldson* v. *Am. Banco Corp., Inc.*, 945 F. Supp. 1456, 1464 (D. Colo. 1996) (''It would make little sense to prohibit an employer from firing a woman during her pregnancy but permit the employer to terminate her the day after delivery if the reason for termination was that the woman became pregnant in the first place. The plain language of the statute does not require it, and common sense precludes it.''); *Neessen* v. *Arona Corp.*, 708 F. Supp. 2d 841, 851 (N.D. Iowa 2010) (finding the plaintiff covered by the PDA where the defendant allegedly refused to hire her because she had recently been pregnant and given birth); EEOC, *Commission Decision on Coverage of Contraception*, at (I)(A) (Dec. 14, 2000), *https://www.eeoc.gov/commission-decision-coverage-contraception* (''The PDA's prohibition on discrimination against women based on their ability to become pregnant thus necessarily includes a prohibition on discrimination related to a woman's use of contraceptives.''); *Cooley* v. *DaimlerChrysler Corp.*, 281 F. Supp. 2d 979, 984–85 (E.D. Mo. 2003) (determining that, although the defendant employer's policy was facially neutral, denying a prescription

Continued

17. ''Related medical conditions'' are medical conditions that relate to pregnancy or childbirth.[25] To be a related medical condition, the medical condition need not be caused solely, originally, or substantially by pregnancy or childbirth.

18. There are some medical conditions where the relation to pregnancy will be readily apparent. They can include, but are not limited to, lactation (including breastfeeding and pumping), miscarriage, stillbirth, having or choosing not to have an abortion, preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, and HELLP (hemolysis, elevated liver enzymes and low platelets) syndrome.[26] Pregnancy causes systemic changes that can create new medical conditions and risks and can exacerbate preexisting conditions and the risks posed by such conditions.[27] Thus, the fact that a medical condition is related to pregnancy will usually be evident when the medical condition develops, is exacerbated, or poses a new risk during an employee's current pregnancy. Additionally, the relation will be apparent in many cases where the medical condition develops, is exacerbated, or poses a new risk during an employee's childbirth or during the employee's postpartum period.

19. However, simply because a condition is listed as one that may be a related medical condition does not mean it necessarily meets the definition of ''related medical conditions'' for the purposes of the PWFA. To be a related medical condition for the PWFA, the employee's medical condition must relate to pregnancy or childbirth. If an employee has a condition but, in their situation, it does not relate to pregnancy or childbirth, the condition is not covered under the PWFA. For example, if an employee who gave birth 2 weeks ago is vomiting because of food poisoning, that medical condition is not related to pregnancy or childbirth and the employee is not eligible on that basis for a PWFA reasonable accommodation.

20. Related medical conditions may include conditions that existed before pregnancy or childbirth and for which an individual may already receive an ADA reasonable accommodation. Pregnancy or childbirth may exacerbate the condition, such that additional or different accommodations are needed. For example, an employee who received extra breaks to eat or drink due to Type 2 diabetes

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medication that allows an employee to control their potential to become pregnant is ''necessarily a sex-based exclusion'' that violates Title VII, as amended by the PDA, because only people who have the capacity to become pregnant use prescription contraceptives, and the exclusion of prescription contraceptives may treat medication needed for a sex-specific condition less favorably than medication necessary for other medical conditions); *Erickson* v. *Bartell Drug Co.*, 141 F. Supp. 2d 1266, 1271–72 (W.D. Wash. 2001) (determining that the selective exclusion of prescription contraceptives from an employer's generally comprehensive prescription drug plan violated the PDA because only people who have the capacity to become pregnant use prescription contraceptives).

[25] *Enforcement Guidance on Pregnancy Discrimination, supra* note 24, at (I)(A)(4).

[26] *Id.*; *see also Hicks* v. *City of Tuscaloosa*, 870 F.3d 1253, 1259–60 (11th Cir. 2017) (finding lactation and breastfeeding covered under the PDA, and asserting that ''[t]he PDA would be rendered a nullity if women were protected during a pregnancy but then could be readily terminated for breastfeeding—an important pregnancy-related 'physiological process' '') (internal citation omitted); *EEOC* v. *Houston Funding II, Ltd.*, 717 F.3d 425, 428 (5th Cir. 2013) (holding that ''lactation is a related medical condition of pregnancy for purposes of the PDA''); *Doe* v. *C.A.R.S. Prot. Plus, Inc.*, 527 F.3d 358, 364 (3d Cir. 2008) (holding that the PDA prohibits an employer from discriminating against a female employee because she has exercised her right to have an abortion); *Turic* v. *Holland Hosp., Inc.*, 85 F.3d 1211, 1214 (6th Cir. 1996) (finding the termination of the employment of a pregnant employee because she contemplated having an abortion violated the PDA); *Carney* v. *Martin Luther Home, Inc.*, 824 F.2d 643, 648 (8th Cir. 1987) (referencing the PDA's legislative history and noting commentator agreement that ''[b]y broadly defining pregnancy discrimination, Congress clearly intended to extend protection beyond the simple fact of an employee's pregnancy to include 'related medical conditions' such as nausea or potential miscarriage'') (internal citations and quotation marks omitted); *Ducharme* v. *Crescent City Déjà Vu, LLC*, 406 F. Supp. 3d 548, 556 (E.D. La. 2019) (finding that ''abortion is encompassed within the statutory text prohibiting adverse employment actions 'because of or on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions' ''); 29 CFR part 1604, appendix, Questions 34–37 (1979) (addressing coverage of abortion under the PDA); H.R. Rep. No. 95–1786, at 4 (1978), *as reprinted in* 1978 U.S.C.C.A.N. 4749, 4766 (''Because the bill applies to all situations in which women are 'affected by pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions,' its basic language covers decisions by women who chose to terminate their pregnancies. Thus, no employer may, for example, fire or refuse to hire a woman simply because she has exercised her right to have an abortion.'').

[27] *See supra* note 18.

before pregnancy (an ADA reasonable accommodation) may need additional accommodations during pregnancy to monitor and manage the diabetes more closely to avoid or minimize adverse health consequences to the employee or the pregnancy. As another example, an employee may have had high blood pressure that could be managed with medication prior to pregnancy, but once the employee is pregnant, the high blood pressure may pose a risk to the employee or their pregnancy such that the employee needs bed rest. In these situations, an employee could request a continued or an additional accommodation under the ADA and/or an accommodation under the PWFA.

21. The Commission emphasizes that the list of ''pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions'' in §1636.3(b) is non-exhaustive; to receive an accommodation a qualified employee does not have to specify a condition on this list or use medical terms to describe a condition.

22. When an employer has received a request for an accommodation under the PWFA, the employer and employee can engage in the interactive process, if necessary, in order to confirm whether a medical condition is related to pregnancy or childbirth.

1636.3(c) Employee's Representative

23. The limitation may be communicated to the covered entity by the employee or the employee's representative. The term ''employee's representative'' encompasses any representative of the employee, including a family member, friend, union representative, health care provider, or other representative. In most instances, the Commission expects that the representative will have the employee's permission before communicating the limitation to the covered entity, but there may be some situations, for example if the employee is incapacitated, where that is not the case. Once the covered entity is made aware of the limitation, the representative's participation in any aspect of the reasonable accommodation process is at the discretion of the employee, and the employee may decide not to have the representative participate at any time. In most instances, the Commission expects that the covered entity will engage directly with the employee, even where the employee's representative began the process, but acknowledges that in some situations, for example, when the employee is incapacitated or the representative is the employee's attorney, the covered entity will need to continue to engage with the representative rather than the employee.

1636.3(d) Communicated to the Employer and 1636.3(h)(2) How To Request a Reasonable Accommodation

24. Section 1636.3(d) and (h)(2) sets out how an employee informs a covered entity of their limitation in order to make it ''known'' and how an employee requests a reasonable accommodation. In practice, the Commission expects that these actions—communicating the limitation to the employer and requesting a reasonable accommodation—will take place at the same time.

25. Informing the employer of the limitation and requesting a reasonable accommodation should not be complicated or difficult. The covered entity must permit an employee to do both through various avenues and means, as set forth in §1636.3(d). Given that many accommodations requested under the PWFA will be straightforward—like additional bathroom breaks or access to water—the Commission emphasizes the importance of employees being able to obtain accommodations by communicating with the employer representative(s) with whom they would normally consult if they had questions or concerns about work matters. Employees should not be made to wait for a reasonable accommodation, especially one that is simple and imposes negligible cost or is temporary, because they spoke to the ''wrong'' supervisor. The individuals to whom an employee can communicate to seek accommodation include persons with supervisory authority for or who regularly direct the employee's work (or the equivalent for the applicant) and human resources personnel. Depending on the situation, employees also may communicate with other appropriate officials such as an agent of the employer (e.g., a search firm, staffing agency, or third-party benefits administrator).

26. Section 1636.3(d)(1) and (2) explains that the communication informing the covered entity of the limitation does not need to be in writing, be in a specific format, use specific words, or be on a specific form in order for it to be considered ''communicated to the employer.''

27. Just as the communication informing the covered entity of the limitation does not need to be in writing or use specific phrases, the same is true for the request for a reasonable accommodation. Employees may inform the employer of the limitation and request an accommodation in a conversation or may use another mode of communication to inform the employer.[28] A covered entity may choose to confirm a request in writing or may ask the employee to fill out a form or otherwise confirm the request in writing. However, the covered entity cannot ignore or close an initial request that satisfies §1636.3(h)(2) if the employee does not complete such confirmation procedures, because that initial request is sufficient to place the

[28] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at Questions 1–3 (addressing requests for accommodation under the ADA).

employer on notice.[29] If a form is used, the form should be a simple one that does not deter the employee from pursuing the request and does not delay the provision of an accommodation. Additionally, although employees are not required to communicate limitations or request reasonable accommodations in writing, an employee may choose email or other written means to submit a request for an accommodation, which can promote clarity and create a record of their request. Finally, the request for accommodation does not need to be in the form of a ''request,'' *i.e.*, an employee does not need to ''ask'' but may provide a statement of their need for an accommodation.

28. The requirement that no specific words or phrases are necessary to communicate a limitation or request a reasonable accommodation includes not needing to specifically identify whether a condition is ''pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions'' or whether it is a ''physical or mental condition.'' The statutory definition of ''limitation'' uses the words ''condition'' and ''related'' twice (''known limitation'' means a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.).[30] Under §1636.3(d), ''physical or mental conditions'' are impediments or problems affecting an employee that may be modest or minor.[31] A ''physical or mental condition'' includes when an employee affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions has a need or a problem related to maintaining their health or the health of the pregnancy; or is seeking health care related to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition itself.[32] ''Related medical conditions'' are conditions related to the pregnancy or childbirth of the specific employee in question.

29. Many, but not all, conditions related to pregnancy and childbirth can be both a ''limitation'' and a ''related medical condition.'' For example, hyperemesis gravidarum experienced during pregnancy is a ''condition'' that could be classified as either a ''limitation'' (nausea and vomiting that arises out of pregnancy), or a ''related medical condition'' (a condition that is related to pregnancy); similarly, incontinence could be a ''limitation'' (for example, when someone who is pregnant becomes less able to comfortably hold urine and thus requires more frequent bathroom breaks), or a ''related medical condition'' (for example, when the medical condition of incontinence arises out of or is exacerbated as a result of pregnancy or childbirth).[33] Either way, such needs can be a reason for a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA.

30. Because the statute uses the same term (''condition'') to define both ''limitation'' and ''related medical conditions'' and because some ''conditions'' can be both a ''limitation'' and a ''related medical condition,'' an employee does not have to identify whether a particular condition is a ''limitation'' or a ''related medical condition'' when requesting a reasonable accommodation. For example, where an employee is experiencing nausea and vomiting in connection with a pregnancy, the employee need not determine whether this is a ''limitation'' or a ''related medical condition'' in order to request an accommodation under the PWFA. Similarly, there is no need for the employer to make such a determination before granting an accommodation under the PWFA.

31. Finally, PWFA limitations also may be ADA disabilities.[34] Therefore, an employee is not required to identify the statute under which they are requesting a reasonable accommodation. Doing so would require that employees seeking accommodations use specific words or phrases, which §1636.3(d) prohibits.

1636.3(e) Consideration of Mitigating Measures

32. There may be steps that an employee can take to mitigate, or lessen, the effects of a known limitation such as taking medication, getting extra rest, or using a reasonable accommodation. Paragraph (e) of §1636.3 explains that the ameliorative, or positive, effects of ''mitigating measures,'' as that term is defined in the ADA,[35] shall not be considered when determining whether the employee has a limitation under the PWFA. By contrast, the detrimental or non-ameliorative effects of mitigating measures, such as negative side effects of medication, the burden of following a particular treatment regimen, and complications that arise from surgery, may be considered when determining whether an employee has a limitation under the PWFA.[36] Both the positive and negative effects of mitigating measures may be considered when determining what accommodation an employee may need.

[29] *See id.*

[30] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4); 29 CFR 1636.3(a)(2).

[31] 29 CFR 1636.3(a)(2).

[32] *Id.*

[33] By contrast, normal weight gain during pregnancy that necessitates a larger uniform would be a ''limitation'' but not a ''related medical condition.''

[34] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4); *see also infra* in the Interpretive Guidance in section *1636.7(a)(1)* under *The PWFA and the ADA.*

[35] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12102(4)(E).

[36] *See* 29 CFR 1630.2(j)(1)(vi) and (j)(4)(ii); *see also* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(j)(1)(vi).

1636.3(f) Qualified Employee

33. An employee must meet the definition of ''qualified'' in the PWFA in one of two ways.[37] Paragraph (f) of §1636.3 reiterates the statutory language that ''qualified employee'' means an employee who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the position.[38] Additionally, following the statute, §1636.3(f) also states that an employee shall be considered qualified if: (1) any inability to perform an essential function(s) is for a temporary period; (2) the essential function(s) could be performed in the near future; and (3) the inability to perform the essential function(s) can be reasonably accommodated.[39]

34. For both definitions of qualified, the determination of whether an employee with a known limitation is qualified should be based on the capabilities of the employee at the time of the relevant employment decision.[40] The determination of qualified should not be based on speculation that the employee may become unable in the future to perform certain tasks, may cause increased health insurance premiums or workers' compensation costs, or may require leave.[41]

1636.3(f)(1) Qualified Employee—With or Without Reasonable Accommodation

35. The first way that an employee can be ''qualified'' under 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6) is if they can perform the essential functions of their job with or without reasonable accommodation, which is the same language as in the ADA and is interpreted accordingly. ''Reasonable'' has the same meaning as under the ADA on this topic—an accommodation that ''seems reasonable on its face, *i.e.,* ordinarily or in the run of cases,'' ''feasible,'' or ''plausible.''[42] Many employees will meet this part of the PWFA definition of qualified. For example, a pregnant cashier who needs a stool to perform the job will be qualified with the reasonable accommodation of a stool. A teacher recovering from childbirth who needs additional bathroom breaks will be qualified with a reasonable accommodation that allows such breaks.

''Qualified'' for the Reasonable Accommodation of Leave

36. When determining whether an employee who needs leave as a reasonable accommodation meets the definition of ''qualified,'' the relevant inquiry is whether the employee would be able to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation (or, if not, if the inability to perform the essential function(s) is for a temporary period, the essential function(s) could be performed in the near future, and the inability to perform the essential function(s) can be reasonably accommodated), with the benefit of a period of leave (e.g., intermittent leave, part-time work, or a period of leave or time off). Thus, an employee who needs some form of leave to recover from a known limitation related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions can readily meet the definition of ''qualified'' under the first part of the PWFA definition because it is reasonable to conclude that once they return from the period of leave (or during the time they are working if it is intermittent leave), they will be able to perform the essential functions of the job, with or without additional reasonable accommodations, or will be ''qualified'' under the second part of the PWFA definition.[43]

1636.3(f)(2) Qualified Employee—Temporary Suspension of an Essential Function(s)

37. The PWFA provides that an employee can meet the definition of ''qualified'' even if they cannot perform one or more essential functions of the position in question with or without a reasonable accommodation, provided three conditions are met: (1) the inability to perform an essential function(s) is for a temporary period; (2) the essential function(s) could be performed in the near future; and (3) the inability to perform the

[37] The PWFA does not address prerequisites for a position. Whether an employee is qualified for the position in question is determined based on whether the employee can perform the essential functions of the position, with or without a reasonable accommodation, or based on the second part of the PWFA's definition of ''qualified.'' 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6).

[38] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6).

[39] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6)(A)–(C).

[40] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(m).

[41] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(m).

[42] *US Airways, Inc.* v. *Barnett,* 535 U.S. 391, 401–02 (2002); *see, e.g., Shapiro* v. *Twp. of Lakewood,* 292 F.3d 356, 360 (3d Cir. 2002) (citing the definition from *Barnett*); *Osborne* v. *Baxter Healthcare Corp.,* 798 F.3d 1260, 1267 (10th Cir. 2015) (citing the definition from *Barnett*); *EEOC* v. *United Airlines, Inc.,* 693 F.3d 760, 762 (7th Cir. 2012) (citing the definition from *Barnett*); *see also Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at text accompanying nn.8–9 (citing the definition from *Barnett*).

[43] If the employee will not be able to perform all of the essential functions at the end of the leave period, with or without accommodation, the employee may still be qualified under the second part of the PWFA's definition of qualified employee. 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6).

essential function(s) can be reasonably accommodated.[44]

38. Based on the overall structure and wording of the statute, the second part of the definition of ''qualified'' is relevant only when an employee cannot perform one or more essential functions of the job in question, even with a reasonable accommodation, due to a known limitation under the PWFA. It is not relevant in any other circumstance. If the employee can perform the essential functions of the position with or without a reasonable accommodation, the first definition of ''qualified'' applies (*i.e.*, able to do the job with or without a reasonable accommodation). For example, if a pregnant employee requests additional restroom breaks, they are qualified if they can perform the essential functions of the job with the reasonable accommodation of additional restroom breaks, and, if so, there is no need to reach the second part of the definition of ''qualified,'' *i.e.,* to apply definitions of ''temporary'' or ''in the near future,'' or to determine whether the inability to perform an essential function(s) can be reasonably accommodated (as no such inability exists).

39. By contrast, some examples of situations where the second part of the definition of ''qualified'' may be relevant include: (1) a pregnant construction worker is told by their health care provider to avoid lifting more than 20 pounds during the second through ninth months of pregnancy, an essential function of the worker's job requires lifting more than 20 pounds, and there is not a reasonable accommodation that will allow the employee to perform that function without lifting more than 20 pounds; and (2) a pregnant police officer is unable because of their pregnancy to perform patrol duties during the third through ninth months of pregnancy, patrol duties are an essential function of the job, and there is not a reasonable accommodation that will allow the employee to perform the patrol duties.

40. This definition is solely concerned with determining whether an individual is ''qualified.'' An employer may still defend the failure to provide the reasonable accommodation based on undue hardship.

1636.3(f)(2)(i) Temporary

41. ''Temporary'' means that the need to suspend one or more essential functions is ''lasting for a limited time,[45] not permanent, and may extend beyond 'in the near future.'" How long it may take before the essential function(s) can be performed is further limited by the definition of ''in the near future.''

1636.3(f)(2)(ii) In the Near Future

42. An employee can be qualified under the exception in 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6)(A)–(C) if they could perform the essential function(s) ''in the near future.'' In explaining the inclusion of this additional definition of ''qualified,'' the House Report analogized the suspension of an essential function under the PWFA to cases under the ADA regarding leave; ''in the near future'' is a term some courts have used in the context of determining whether an employee can perform the essential functions of the job with a reasonable accommodation of leave and, therefore, is qualified under the ADA.[46] These ADA leave cases provide some helpful guideposts to interpret this term in the PWFA. Under the ADA, courts have concluded that an employee who needs indefinite leave (that is, leave for a period of time that they cannot reasonably estimate under the circumstances) cannot perform essential job functions ''in the near future.''[47] Similarly, the Commission concludes that a need under the PWFA to indefinitely suspend an essential function(s) cannot reasonably be considered to meet the

[44] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6); *see* H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 27 (''[T]he temporary inability to perform essential functions due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions does not render a worker 'unqualified.' . . . [T]here may be a need for a pregnant worker to temporarily perform other tasks or otherwise be excused from performing essential functions before fully returning to her position once she is able.'').

[45] *Temporary*, *Merriam-Webster.com*, *https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/temporary* (last visited Mar. 13, 2024) (defining ''temporary'' as ''lasting for a limited time''). This definition is consistent with logic in the House Report, which states that ''the temporary inability to perform essential functions due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions does not render a worker 'unqualified' '' and cites to *Robert* v. *Board of County Commissioners of Brown County,* 691 F.3d 1211, 1218 (10th Cir. 2012). *See* H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 27, n.109.

[46] H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 27–28. As explained *infra,* this definition of ''qualified'' at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6)(A)–(C) is not used to determine ''qualified'' for the purposes of leave under the PWFA.

[47] *See, e.g.*, *Herrmann* v. *Salt Lake City Corp.*, 21 F.4th 666, 676–77 (10th Cir. 2021); *Cisneros* v. *Wilson,* 226 F.3d 1113, 1129 (10th Cir. 2000), *overruled on other grounds by Bd. of Trs. of Univ. of Ala.* v. *Garrett,* 531 U.S. 356 (2001). The Commission cites these ADA cases because they use the term ''in the near future'' in a related context (employees are ''qualified'' for leave under the ADA because the leave will allow them to return to work and perform essential functions ''in the near future''). The Commission emphasizes its position, as discussed below, that under both the

standard of an employee who could perform the essential function(s) ''in the near future.'' [48]

43. Pregnancy is a temporary condition with an ascertainable end date; the request to temporarily suspend an essential function(s) due to a current pregnancy will never be indefinite and will not be more than generally 40 weeks. Thus, for a current pregnancy, §1636.3(f) defines ''in the near future'' to mean generally 40 weeks from the start of the temporary suspension of an essential function(s). To define ''in the near future'' as less than generally 40 weeks—*i.e.,* the duration of a full-term pregnancy—would run counter to a central purpose of the PWFA of keeping pregnant employees in the workforce even when pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions necessitate the reasonable accommodation of temporarily suspending the performance of one or more essential functions of a job.[49]

44. The Commission emphasizes that the definition in §1636.3(f)(2)(ii) does not mean that the essential function(s) always must be suspended for 40 weeks, or that if an employee seeks the temporary suspension of an essential function(s) for 40 weeks the employer must automatically grant it. The actual length of the temporary suspension of the essential function(s) will depend upon what the employee requires, and the covered entity always has available the defense that it would create an undue hardship. However, the mere fact that the temporary suspension of one or more essential functions is needed for any time period up to and including generally 40 weeks for a pregnant employee will not, on its own, render an employee unqualified under the PWFA.

45. For conditions other than a current pregnancy, the Commission is not setting a specific length of time for ''in the near future'' because, unlike a current pregnancy, there is not a consistent measure of how long these diverse conditions can generally last, and thus, what ''in the near future'' might mean in different instances.

46. The Commission notes that beyond an agreement that an indefinite amount of time does not meet the standard of ''in the near future,'' how long a period of leave may be under the ADA and still be a reasonable accommodation (thus, allowing the individual to remain qualified) varies.[50] The Commission believes, however, that depending on the

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PWFA and the ADA, leave provided as an accommodation does not constitute a suspension of an essential function. Thus, under the PWFA, in determining whether an essential function could be performed ''in the near future,'' the period of time during which an employee may be on leave is not included in the assessment. Likewise, in determining whether an individual is qualified for leave as a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA, the statutory term ''in the near future'' is not relevant.

[48] However, the Commission notes that the employee's inability to pinpoint the exact date when they expect to be able to perform the essential functions of the position, or their ability to provide only an estimated range of dates, does not make the temporary suspension of the essential function(s) ''indefinite'' or mean that they cannot perform the job's essential functions ''in the near future.'' The fact that an exact date is not necessary is supported by the language in the statute, which requires that the essential function(s) ''could'' be performed in the near future. 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6)(B).

[49] *See* H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 5 (''When pregnant workers do not have access to reasonable workplace accommodations, they are often forced to choose between their financial security and a healthy pregnancy. Ensuring that pregnant workers have access to reasonable accommodations will promote the economic well-being of working mothers and their families and promote healthy pregnancies.''); *id.* at 22 (''When pregnant workers are not provided reasonable accommodations on the job, they are oftentimes forced to choose between economic security and their health or the health of their babies.''); *id.* at 24 (''Ensuring pregnant workers have reasonable accommodations helps ensure that pregnant workers remain healthy and earn an income when they need it the most.''); *id.* at 33 (''The PWFA is about ensuring that pregnant workers can stay safe and healthy on the job by being provided reasonable accommodations for pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions . . . . The PWFA is one crucial step needed to reduce the disparities pregnant workers face by ensuring that pregnant women, and especially pregnant women of color, can remain safe and healthy at work.'').

[50] *See, e.g., Robert,* 691 F.3d at 1218 (citing a case in which a 6-month leave request was too long to be a reasonable accommodation but declining to address whether, in the instant case, a further exemption following the 6-month temporary accommodation at issue would exceed ''reasonable durational bounds'') (citing *Epps* v. *City of Pine Lawn,* 353 F.3d 588, 593 (8th Cir. 2003)); *see also Blanchet* v. *Charter Commc'ns, LLC,* 27 F.4th 1221, 1225–26, 1230–31 (6th Cir. 2022) (determining that a pregnant employee who developed postpartum depression and requested a 5-month leave after her initial return date, and was fired after requesting an additional 60 days of leave could still be ''qualified,'' as additional leave could have been a reasonable accommodation); *Cleveland* v. *Fed. Express Corp.,* 83 F. App'x 74, 76–81 (6th Cir. 2003)

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facts of a case, leave cases that allow for a longer period are more relevant to the determination of ''in the near future'' under the PWFA for three reasons. First, what constitutes ''in the near future'' may differ depending on factors, including but not limited to, the known limitation and the employee's position. For example, an employee whose essential job functions require lifting only during the summer months would remain qualified even if unable to lift during a 7-month period over the fall, winter, and spring months because the employee could perform the essential function ''in the near future'' (in this case, as soon as the employee was required to perform that function). Second, the determination of whether the employee could resume the essential functions of their position in the near future is only one step in the definition of qualified; standing alone, it does not require the employer to provide an accommodation. If the temporary suspension cannot be reasonably accommodated, or if the temporary suspension causes an undue hardship, the employer is not required to provide it.[51] Third, as detailed in the notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM), especially in the first year after giving birth, employees may experience serious health issues related to their pregnancy that may prevent them from performing the essential functions of their positions.[52] Accommodating these situations and allowing employees to stay employed are among the key purposes of the PWFA.

47. Further, the Commission recognizes that employees may need an essential function(s) temporarily suspended because of a current pregnancy; take leave to recover from childbirth; and, upon returning to work, need the same essential function(s) or a different one temporarily suspended due to the same or a different physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. In keeping with the requirement that the determination of whether an individual is qualified under the PWFA should be made at the time of the employment decision,[53] the determination of ''in the near future'' should be made when the employee asks for each accommodation that requires the suspension of one or more essential functions. Thus, an employee who is 3 months pregnant and who is seeking an accommodation of the temporary suspension of an essential function(s) due to a limitation related to pregnancy will meet the definition of ''in the near future'' because the inability to perform the essential function(s) will end in less than 40 weeks. When the employee returns to work from leave after childbirth, if the employee needs an essential function temporarily suspended for a reason related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical

(declining ''to adopt a bright-line rule defining a maximum duration of leave that can constitute a reasonable accommodation'' and determining that a 6-month medical leave for a pregnant employee with systemic lupus could be a reasonable accommodation); *Garcia-Ayala* v. *Lederle Parenterals, Inc.*, 212 F.3d 638, 641–42, 646–49 (1st Cir. 2000) (reversing the district court's finding that a secretary was not a ''qualified individual'' under the ADA because additional months of unpaid leave could be a reasonable accommodation, even though she had already taken over year of medical leave for breast cancer treatment, and rejecting per se rules as to when additional medical leave is unreasonable); *Nunes* v. *Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.*, 164 F.3d 1243, 1245–1247 (9th Cir. 1999) (opining that, because extending leave to 9 months to treat a fainting disorder could be a reasonable accommodation, an employee's inability to work during that period of leave did not automatically render her unqualified); *Cayetano* v. *Fed. Express Corp.*, No. 1:19–CV–10619, 2022 WL 2467735, at *1–*2, *4–*7 (S.D.N.Y. July 6, 2022) (determining that an employee who underwent shoulder surgery could be ''qualified'' because 6 months of leave is not per se unreasonable as a matter of law); *Durrant* v. *Chemical/Chase Bank/Manhattan Bank, N.A.*, 81 F. Supp. 2d 518, 519, 521–22 (S.D.N.Y. 2000) (concluding that an employee who was on leave for nearly 1 year due to a leg injury and extended her leave to treat a psychiatric condition could be ''qualified'' under the ADA with the accommodation of additional leave of reasonable duration).

[51] The Commission is aware of and disagrees with ADA cases that held, for example, that 2 to 3 months of leave following a 12-week FMLA period was presumptively unreasonable as an accommodation. *See, e.g.*, *Severson* v. *Heartland Woodcraft, Inc.*, 872 F.3d 476, 481 (7th Cir. 2017). In any event, such cases have no bearing on the determination of ''in the near future'' under the definition of ''qualified'' for the PWFA because this definition expressly contemplates temporarily suspending one or more essential functions.

[52] 88 FR 54724–25; *see, e.g.*, Susanna Trost et al., U.S. Dep't of Health & Hum. Servs., Ctrs. for Disease Control & Prevention, *Pregnancy-Related Deaths: Data from Maternal Mortality Review Committees in 36 U.S. States, 2017–2019* (2022), *https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/erase-mm/data-mmrc.html* (stating that 53% of pregnancy-related deaths occurred from one week to one year after delivery, and 30% occurred one- and one-half months to one year postpartum).

[53] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(m).

conditions, there should be a new determination made as to whether the employee is qualified under §1636.3(f)(2). In other words, there is a new calculation of ''in the near future'' with the new employment decision that involves the temporary suspension of an essential function(s).[54]

48. Determining ''in the near future'' in the definition of ''qualified'' when the employment decision is made is necessary because it would often be difficult, if not impossible, for a pregnant employee to predict what their limitations (if any) will be when returning to work after pregnancy. While pregnant, they may not know whether and, if so, for how long, they will have a known limitation or need an accommodation. They also may not know whether an accommodation after returning to work will require the temporary suspension of an essential function(s), and, if so, for how long. All of these questions may be relevant under the PWFA's second definition of ''qualified.''

49. Leave as a reasonable accommodation (e.g., for recovery from pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions or any other purpose) does not count as time when an essential function(s) is suspended and, thus, is not relevant for the second part of the definition of ''qualified'' (§1636.3(f)(2)). If an individual needs leave as a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA or, indeed, any reasonable accommodation other than the temporary suspension of an essential function(s), only the first part of the definition of ''qualified'' is relevant (§1636.3(f)(1)). In the case of leave, the question would be whether the employee, after returning from the requested period of leave, would be able to perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation (or, if not, if the inability to perform the essential function(s) is for a temporary period, the essential function(s) could be performed in the near future, and the inability to perform the essential function(s) can be reasonably accommodated). Furthermore, for some employees, leave to recover from childbirth will not require a reasonable accommodation because they have a right to leave under Federal, State, or local law or under an employer's policy.[55]

1636.3(f)(2)(iii) Can Be Reasonably Accommodated

50. The second part of the PWFA's definition of ''qualified'' further requires that the suspension ''can be reasonably accommodated.''[56] For some positions, this may mean that one or more essential functions are temporarily suspended, with or without assigning the essential function(s) to someone else, and the employee continues to perform the remaining functions of the job. For other positions, some of the essential function(s) may be temporarily suspended, with or without assigning the essential function(s) to someone else, and the employee may be given other tasks to replace them. In other situations, one or more essential functions may be temporarily suspended, with or without giving the essential function(s) to someone else, and the employee may perform the functions of a different job to which the employer temporarily transfers or moves them, or the employee may participate in the employer's light or modified duty program.[57]

51. Examples Regarding §1636.3(f)(2):

Example #1/Definition of ''Qualified'': One month into pregnancy, Akira, an employee in a paint manufacturing plant, is told by her health care provider that she should avoid certain chemicals for the remainder of the pregnancy. One of several essential functions of the job involves regular exposure to these chemicals. Akira talks to her supervisor, explains her limitation, and asks that she be allowed to continue to perform her other tasks that do not require exposure to the chemicals.

1. Known limitation and request for accommodation: Akira's need to avoid exposure to chemicals is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Akira needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; and Akira has communicated this information to her employer.

2. Qualified: If modifications that would allow Akira to continue to perform the essential functions of her position (such as enclosing the chemicals, providing a local exhaust vent, or providing additional personal protective gear) are not effective or cause an undue hardship, Akira can still be qualified

[54] There is a new calculation regardless of whether the employee seeks to temporarily suspend the same essential function that was suspended during pregnancy or a different one.

[55] For additional information on how leave should be addressed under the PWFA, *see infra* in the Interpretive Guidance in section *1636.3(h)* under *Particular Matters Regarding Leave as a Reasonable Accommodation*.

[56] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6)(C).

[57] *See* H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 27 (''[T]he temporary inability to perform essential functions due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions does not render a worker 'unqualified.' . . . [T]here may be a need for a pregnant worker to temporarily perform other tasks or otherwise be excused from performing essential functions before fully returning to her position once she is able.'').

under the definition that allows for a temporary suspension of an essential function(s).

a. Akira's inability to perform the essential function(s) is temporary.

b. Akira can perform the essential function(s) of her job in the near future because she is pregnant and needs an essential function(s) suspended for less than 40 weeks.

c. Akira's inability to perform the essential function(s) may be reasonably accommodated. The employer can suspend the essential function(s) that requires her to work with the chemicals, while allowing her to do the remainder of her job.

Example #2/Definition of ''Qualified'': Two months into a pregnancy, Lydia, a delivery driver, is told by her health care provider that she should adhere to clinical guidelines for lifting during pregnancy, which means she should not continue to lift 30–40 pounds, which she routinely did at work when moving packages as part of the job. She discusses the limitation with her employer. The employer is unable to provide Lydia with assistance in lifting packages, and Lydia requests placement in the employer's light duty program, which is used for drivers who have on-the-job injuries.

1. Known limitation and request for accommodation: Lydia's lifting restriction is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; she needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; and she has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Lydia needs the temporary suspension of an essential function(s).

a. Lydia's inability to perform the essential function(s) is temporary.

b. Lydia can perform the essential function(s) of her job in the near future because Lydia is pregnant and needs an essential function(s) suspended for less than 40 weeks.

c. Lydia's need to temporarily suspend an essential function(s) of her job may be reasonably accommodated through the existing light duty program.

Example #3/Definition of ''Qualified'': Olga's position as a carpenter involves lifting heavy wood that weighs more than 20 pounds. Upon returning to work after giving birth, Olga tells her supervisor that she has a lifting restriction of 10 pounds due to her cesarean delivery. The restriction is for 8 weeks. The employer does not have an established light duty program but does have other design or administrative duties that Olga can perform.

1. Known limitation and request for accommodation: Olga's lifting restriction is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; she needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; and she has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Olga needs the temporary suspension of an essential function(s).

a. Olga's inability to perform the essential function(s) is temporary.

b. Olga can perform the essential function(s) of her job in the near future because she needs the essential function(s) suspended for 8 weeks.[58]

c. Olga's need to temporarily suspend an essential function(s) of her job may be reasonably accommodated by temporarily suspending the essential function(s) and temporarily assigning Olga to design or administrative duties.

Example #4/Definition of ''Qualified'': One of the essential functions of Elena's position as a park ranger involves patrolling the park. Park rangers also answer questions for guests, sell merchandise, and explain artifacts and maps. Due to her postpartum depression, Elena is experiencing an inability to sleep, severe anxiety, and fatigue. Her anti-depressant medication also is causing dizziness and blurred vision, which make it difficult to drive. Elena seeks the temporary suspension of the essential function of patrolling the park for 12 weeks.

1. Known limitation and request for accommodation: Elena's inability to sleep, anxiety, fatigue, dizziness, and blurred vision are physical or mental conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; she needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; and she has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Elena needs the temporary suspension of an essential function(s).

a. Elena's inability to perform the essential function(s) is temporary.

b. Elena can perform the essential function(s) of her job in the near future because she needs an essential function(s) suspended for 12 weeks.[59]

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[58] *See Cehrs* v. *Ne. Ohio Alzheimer's Rsch. Ctr.*, 155 F.3d 775, 781–783 (6th Cir. 1998) (determining that an employee suffering from severe psoriasis who was on an 8-week leave of absence and requested an additional 1-month leave could be ''otherwise qualified'' under the ADA).

[59] *See Criado* v. *IBM Corp.*, 145 F.3d 437, 443–43 (1st Cir. 1998) (concluding that an employee with severe anxiety and depression who was on leave for approximately 6 weeks and requested an extension of temporary leave was ''qualified'' under the ADA); *Durrant*, 81 F. Supp. 2d at 519, 521–22 (concluding that an employee who was on leave for nearly 11 months due to a leg injury and extended her leave to treat a psychiatric condition could be ''qualified'' under the ADA); *Powers* v. *Polygram Holding*, 40 F. Supp. 2d 195, 199 (S.D.N.Y. 1999) (determining that an employee experiencing bipolar disorder

c. Elena's need to temporarily suspend an essential function(s) of her job may be reasonably accommodated by temporarily suspending the essential function(s) and temporarily assigning Elena to duties such as answering questions and selling merchandise at the visitor's center.

Example #5/Definition of ''Qualified'': Tamara's position at a retail establishment involves working as a cashier and folding and putting away clothing. In her final trimester of pregnancy, Tamara develops carpal tunnel syndrome that makes gripping objects and buttoning clothing difficult. Tamara seeks the temporary suspension of the essential functions of folding and putting away clothing. The employer provides the accommodation and temporarily assigns Tamara to greeting and assisting customers, tasks that cashiers are normally assigned to on a rotating basis. When she returns to work after she gives birth, Tamara continues to experience carpal tunnel symptoms, which her doctor believes will cease in approximately 16 weeks.

1. Known limitation and request for accommodation: Tamara's inability to grip objects and button clothing are physical or mental conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; she needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; and she has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Tamara needs the temporary suspension of an essential function(s).

a. Tamara's inability to perform the essential function(s) is temporary.

b. Tamara can perform the essential functions of her job in the near future because she needs an essential function(s) suspended for 16 weeks.[60]

c. Tamara's need to temporarily suspend an essential function(s) of her job may be reasonably accommodated by temporarily suspending the essential function(s) and temporarily assigning Tamara to duties such as greeting and assisting customers.

1636.3(g) Essential Functions

52. Section 1636.3(g) adopts the Commission's definition of ''essential functions'' contained in the regulation implementing the ADA.[61] Thus, in determining whether something is an essential function, the first consideration is whether employees in the position actually are required to perform the function. This consideration will generally include one or more of the factors listed in §1636.3(g)(1), although this list is non-exhaustive. Relevant evidence as to whether a particular function is essential includes, but is not limited to, information from the employer (such as the position description) and information from incumbents (including the employee requesting the accommodation) about what they actually do on the job.[62] This includes whether employees in the position actually will be required to perform the function during the time for which an accommodation is expected to be needed. The list of factors in §1636.3(g)(2) is not exhaustive, and other relevant evidence also may be presented. No single factor is dispositive, and greater weight will not be granted to the types of evidence included on the list than to the types of evidence not listed.[63]

1636.3(h) Reasonable Accommodation—Generally

1636.3(h)(1) Definition of Reasonable Accommodation

53. The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(7) states that the term ''reasonable accommodation'' has the meaning given to it in section 101 of the ADA[64] and shall be construed as it is construed under the ADA and the Commission's regulation implementing the PWFA. Thus, under the PWFA, as under the ADA, the obligation to make reasonable accommodation is a form of non-discrimination and is therefore best understood as a means by which barriers to the equal employment opportunity are removed or alleviated.[65] A modification or adjustment is reasonable if it ''seems reasonable on its face, *i.e.*, ordinarily or in the run of cases''; this means it is ''reasonable'' if it appears to be ''feasible'' or ''plausible.''[66] An accommodation also must be effective in meeting the qualified employee's needs, meaning it removes a work-related barrier and provides the employee with equal employment opportunity.[67]

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who requested a total of 17 weeks of leave could be ''qualified'' under the ADA).

[60] *See Rascon* v. *U.S. W. Commc'ns, Inc.*, 143 F.3d 1324, 1333 (10th Cir. 1998) (agreeing that an employee diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder who requested a 4-month leave for a treatment program was a ''qualified'' individual under the ADA), *abrogated on other grounds by New Hampshire* v. *Maine*, 532 U.S. 742 (2001).

[61] *See* 29 CFR 1630.2(n).

[62] *See* 29 CFR 1630.2(n); 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(n).

[63] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(n).

[64] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12111(9).

[65] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix 1630.9.

[66] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation*, *supra* note 12, at General Principles (quoting *Barnett*, 535 U.S. at 403–06).

[67] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation*, *supra* note 12, at General Principles & Question 9; 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.9.

54. Under the PWFA, ''reasonable accommodation'' has the same definition as under the ADA, with the exceptions noted in items (1) through (3) of this paragraph.[68] Therefore, like the ADA, reasonable accommodation under the PWFA includes: (1) modifications or adjustments to the job application process that enable a qualified applicant with a known limitation to be considered for the position; (2) modifications or adjustments to the work environment, or to the manner or circumstances under which the position is preformed to allow a qualified employee with a known limitation to perform the essential functions of the job; and (3) modifications or adjustments that enable an employee with a known limitation to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by its other similarly situated employees without known limitations.[69]

[68] *See* 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(7).

[69] *See* 29 CFR 1630.2(o)(1)(i) through (iii). The requirement for employers to provide reasonable accommodations when requested that provide for equal benefits and privileges encompasses the requirement that an accommodation should provide the individual with an equal employment opportunity. 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.9. This requirement stems from the ADA's prohibition on discrimination in ''terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.'' 42 U.S.C. 12112(a). The PWFA prohibits adverse action in the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment against a qualified employee for using or requesting an accommodation and Title VII—which applies to employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions—prohibits discrimination in the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. *See* 42 U.S.C. 2000e–2(a)(1). Based on the text of the PWFA, Title VII, and the requirement under the PWFA that reasonable accommodation has the same definition as in the ADA, the same requirement applies. Thus, a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA includes a change to allow employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions nondiscrimination in the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment or, in shorthand, to enjoy equal benefits and privileges. *See also* EEOC, *Compliance Manual Section 613 Terms, Conditions, and Privileges of Employment*, 613.1(a) (1982) [hereinafter *Compliance Manual on Terms, Conditions, and Privileges of Employment*], *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/cm-613-terms-conditions-and-privileges-employment* (providing that ''terms, conditions, and privileges of employment'' are ''to be read in the broadest possible terms'' and ''a distinction is rarely made between terms of employment, conditions of employment, or privileges of employment'').

55. Because the PWFA also provides for reasonable accommodations when a qualified employee temporarily cannot perform one or more essential functions of a position but can meet the requirements of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6)(A)–(C), reasonable accommodations under the PWFA also include modifications or adjustments that allow a qualified employee with a known limitation to temporarily suspend one or more essential functions of the position. This can be either through the essential function(s) being suspended or through the essential function(s) being suspended and the employee doing other work as set out in §1636.3(f)(2)(iii).

1636.3(h)(2) How To Request a Reasonable Accommodation

56. To request a reasonable accommodation, the employee (or the employee's representative) must communicate to the employer that they need an adjustment or change at work due to their known limitation (a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions). Section 1636.3(d) applies to communications to request a reasonable accommodation. An employee may use plain language and need not mention the PWFA. An employee does not have to use the phrases ''reasonable accommodation,'' ''limitation,'' ''known limitation,'' ''qualified,'' or ''essential function''; use any medical terminology; provide a specific medical condition; use any other specific words or phrases; or put the explanation of the need for accommodation in the form of a request.

57. In these examples, the employee is communicating both their limitation and that they need an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation. The Commission expects that in the vast majority of cases these two communications will happen at the same time. All of these are examples of requests for reasonable accommodations under the PWFA.

Example #6: A pregnant employee tells her supervisor, ''I'm having trouble getting to work at my scheduled starting time because of morning sickness.''

Example #7: An employee who gave birth 3 months ago tells the person who assigns her work at the employment agency, ''I need an hour off once a week for treatments to help with my back problem that started during my pregnancy.''

Example #8: An employee tells a human resources specialist that they are worried about continuing to lift heavy boxes because they are concerned that it will harm their pregnancy.

Example #9: At the employee's request, an employee's spouse requests light duty for the employee because the employee has a lifting restriction related to pregnancy; the employee's spouse uses the employer's established

process for requesting a reasonable accommodation.

Example #10: An employee tells a manager of her need for more frequent bathroom breaks, explains that the breaks are needed because the employee is pregnant, but does not complete the employer's online form for requesting an accommodation.

Example #11: An employee tells a supervisor that she needs time off to recover from childbirth.

Alleviating Increased Pain or Risk to Health Due to the Known Limitation

58. One reason an employee may seek a reasonable accommodation is to alleviate increased pain or risk to health that is attributable to the physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions that has been communicated to the employer (the known limitation).[70] When dealing with requests for accommodation concerning the alleviation of increased pain or risk to health associated with a known limitation, the goal is to provide an accommodation that allows the qualified employee to alleviate the identified pain or risk to health.

59. Examples Regarding Alleviating Pain or Risk to Health Due to the Known Limitation:

Example #12/Alleviating Pain or Risk to Health: Celia is a factory worker whose job requires her to regularly move boxes that weigh 50 pounds. Prior to her pregnancy, Celia occasionally felt pain in her knee when she walked for extended periods of time. When Celia returns to work after giving birth, which was by cesarean section, Celia requests that she limit tasks to those that do not require moving boxes of more than 30 pounds for 3 months because heavier lifting could increase the risk to her health and her continued recovery from childbirth. Under the PWFA, the employer is required to provide the requested accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship. However, under the PWFA, the employer would not be required to provide an accommodation for Celia's knee pain unless it was related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. The employer also may have accommodation responsibilities regarding Celia's knee pain and lifting restrictions under the ADA.

Example #13/Alleviating Pain or Risk to Health: Emily is a candidate for a police officer position. The application process takes place over several months and has multiple steps, one of which is a physical agility test. By the time it is Emily's turn to take the test, she is 7 months pregnant. To avoid risk to her health and the health of her pregnancy, Emily asks that the test be postponed and that her application be kept active so that once she has recovered from childbirth, she can resume the application process and not have to re-apply. Under the PWFA, the employer is required to provide the requested accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #14/Alleviating Pain or Risk to Health: Jackie's position at a fabrication plant involves working with certain chemicals, which Jackie thinks is the reason she has a nagging cough and chapped skin on her hands. For the one year when she is nursing, Jackie seeks the accommodation of a temporary suspension of an essential function—working with the chemicals—because of the risk that the chemicals will contaminate the milk she produces. The employer provides the accommodation. After Jackie stops nursing, she no longer has any known limitations. Thus, under the PWFA, she can be assigned to work with the chemicals again even if she would prefer not to do that work, because the PWFA requires an employer to provide an accommodation only if it is needed due to a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Jackie's employer may have accommodation responsibilities under the ADA.

Example #15/Alleviating Pain or Risk to Health: Margaret is a retail worker who is pregnant. Because of her pregnancy, Margaret feels pain in her back and legs when she has to move stacks of clothing from one area to the other, one of the essential functions of her position. She can still manage to move the clothes, but, because of the pain, she requests a cart to use when she is moving the garments. Under the PWFA, the employer is required to provide the requested accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #16/Alleviating Pain or Risk to Health: Lourdes is pregnant and works outdoors as a farmworker. The conditions where she works expose her to certain chemicals and the conditions can be slippery. Because of her pregnancy, Lourdes has a problem with her balance and is more likely to slip and fall, and she needs to avoid exposure to the chemicals that she is normally exposed to at work. She seeks the accommodation of working indoors, which will allow her to avoid the conditions that could lead her to slip and fall and will allow her to avoid exposure to the chemicals. There is indoor work, which Lourdes is occasionally assigned to

[70] Depending on the facts of the case, the accommodation sought will allow an applicant to apply for the position, or an employee to perform the essential functions of the job, to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment, or to temporarily suspend an essential function(s) of the job.

perform, available at the farm, as well as work that does not involve chemicals. Under the PWFA, the employer is required to provide the requested accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #17/Alleviating Pain or Risk to Health: Avery works as an administrative assistant and is pregnant. Avery normally works in the office and commutes by driving and public transportation. Due to pregnancy, Avery is experiencing sciatica; commuting is painful because it requires Avery to sit and stand in one position for an extended period of time. Avery seeks the accommodation of teleworking or changing the start and end time of the workday in order to commute during less crowded times and reduce the commute time and thereby reduce the pain. Under the PWFA, the employer is required to provide the requested accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #18/Alleviating Pain or Risk to Health: Arya is pregnant and works in a warehouse. When it is hot outside, the temperature in the warehouse increases to a level that creates a risk to Arya and her pregnancy.[71] Arya seeks an accommodation of a portable cooling device to reduce the risk to her health and the health of her pregnancy because of the heat in her workplace. Under the PWFA, the employer is required to provide the requested accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #19/Alleviating Pain or Risk to Health: Talia is a nurse and is pregnant. The community where she lives is experiencing a surge in cases of a contagious respiratory viral disease that has been shown to increase the risk of negative outcomes for pregnancy. To reduce her risk and the risk to her pregnancy, Talia requests additional protective gear and to not be assigned to patients exhibiting symptoms of this virus. Under the PWFA, the employer is required to provide the requested accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Particular Matters Regarding Leave as a Reasonable Accommodation

60. Under the PWFA, leave may be a reasonable accommodation.[72] If an employee requests leave as an accommodation or if there is no other reasonable accommodation that does not cause an undue hardship, the covered entity should evaluate whether to offer leave as a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA. This is the case even if the covered entity does not offer leave as an employee benefit,[73] the employee is not eligible for leave under the employer's leave policy, or the employee has exhausted the leave the covered entity provides as a benefit (including leave exhausted under a workers' compensation program, the FMLA, or similar State or local laws).[74]

61. The Commission recognizes that there may be situations where an employer provides a reasonable accommodation to a qualified pregnant employee (e.g., a stool, additional breaks, or temporary suspension of one or more essential functions) under the PWFA, and then the employee requests leave as a reasonable accommodation (e.g., to recover from childbirth). In these situations, the covered entity should consider the request for the reasonable accommodation of leave to recover from childbirth in the same manner that it would any other request for leave as a reasonable accommodation. This requires first considering whether the employee will be able to perform the essential functions of the position with or without a reasonable accommodation after the period of leave, or, if not, whether, after the period

[71] U.S. Dep't of Health & Hum. Servs., Ctrs. for Disease Control & Prevention, *Heat and Pregnant Women* (Aug. 25, 2022), *https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat_and_pregnant_women.html*.

[72] H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 29 (noting that ''leave is one possible accommodation under the PWFA, including time off to recover from delivery'').

[73] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation*, *supra* note 12, at text preceding Question 17 (explaining that if an employee with a disability needs 15 days of leave and an employer only provides 10 days of paid leave, the employer should allow the employee to use 10 days of paid leave and 5 days of unpaid leave). The Commission has stated in a technical assistance document regarding leave and the ADA that an employer should consider providing unpaid leave to an employee with a disability as a reasonable accommodation even when the employer does not offer leave as an employee benefit. *See* EEOC, *Employer-Provided Leave and the Americans with Disabilities Act*, at text above Example 4 (2016) [hereinafter *Technical Assistance on Employer-Provided Leave*], *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/employer-provided-leave-and-americans-disabilities-act*.

[74] *See supra* note 73. If an employee has a right to leave under the FMLA, an employer policy, or a State or local law, the employee is entitled to leave regardless of whether they request leave as a reasonable accommodation. An employee who needs leave beyond what they are entitled to under those laws or policies may request a reasonable accommodation.

of leave, the employee will meet the definition of ''qualified'' under §1636.3(f)(2).[75]

62. A qualified employee with a known limitation who is granted leave as a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA is entitled to return to their same position unless the employer demonstrates that holding open the position would impose an undue hardship.[76] When the employee is ready to return to work, the employer must allow the individual to return to the same position (assuming that there was no undue hardship in holding it open) if the employee is still qualified (*i.e.*, the employee can perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation under §1636.3(f)(1) or if the employee meets the definition of ''qualified'' under §1636.3(f)(2)).[77]

63. Under the PWFA, an employer does not have to provide a reasonable accommodation if it causes an undue hardship—a significant difficulty or expense. Thus, if an employer can demonstrate that the impact of the leave requested as a reasonable accommodation poses an undue hardship under the factors set out in §1636.3(j)(2)—for example, because of the impact of its length, frequency, or unpredictable nature, or because of another factor that causes significant difficulty or expense—it does not have to provide the requested leave under the PWFA.

64. Employees must be permitted to choose whether to use paid leave (whether accrued, as part of a short-term disability program, or as part of any other employee benefit) or unpaid leave to the same extent that the covered entity allows employees to choose between these types of leave when they are using leave for reasons unrelated to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.[78] Similarly, an employer must continue an employee's health insurance benefits during their leave period to the extent that it does so for other employees in a similar leave status, such as paid or unpaid leave. An employer is not required to provide additional paid leave under the PWFA beyond the amount provided to similarly situated employees.[79]

Ensuring That Employees Are Not Penalized for Using Reasonable Accommodations

65. Generally, covered entities are not required to lower production standards for qualified employees receiving accommodations under the PWFA.[80] However, for example, when the reasonable accommodation is leave, the employee may not be able to meet a production standard during the period of leave or, depending on the length of the leave, meet that standard for a defined period of time (e.g., the production standard measures production in 1 year and the employee was on leave for 4 months). Thus, if the reasonable accommodation is leave, the production standard may need to be prorated to account for the reduced amount of time the qualified employee worked.[81]

66. In addition, covered entities making reasonable accommodations must ensure that their ordinary workplace policies or practices—including, but not limited to, attendance policies, productivity quotas, and requirements for mandatory overtime—do not operate to penalize qualified employees for utilizing PWFA accommodations.[82] When a reasonable accommodation involves a pause in work—such as a break, a part-time or other reduced work schedule, or leave—a qualified employee cannot be penalized, or threatened with a penalty, for failing to perform work during that non-work period, including through actions like the assessment of penalty points for time off or discipline for failing to meet a production quota. For example, if a call center employee with a known limitation requests and is granted 2

[75] These considerations are relevant only if the leave is needed as a reasonable accommodation. The covered entity should first consider if there is a leave program that covers the need for leave to recover from childbirth and for which the employee is eligible. If there is a leave program that covers the request, the covered entity may not need to assess the employee's ability to perform essential functions upon return from leave under the PWFA.

[76] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at Question 18. As under the ADA, if an employer cannot hold a position open during the entire leave period without incurring undue hardship, the employer should consider whether it has a vacant, equivalent position for which the employee is qualified and to which the employee can be reassigned to continue their leave for a specific period of time and then, at the conclusion of the leave, can be returned to this new position.

[77] *See id.*

[78] A failure to allow an employee affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions to use paid or unpaid leave to the same extent that the covered entity allows employees using leave for reasons unrelated to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions to do so or a failure to continue health care insurance for an employee affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions to the same extent that a covered entity does for other employees may be a violation of Title VII as well.

[79] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at text after n.48.

[80] *See id.* at text accompanying n.14.

[81] *See id.* at Question 19.

[82] *See id.*

hours of unpaid leave in the afternoon for rest, the employee's required number of calls may need to be reduced proportionately. Alternatively, the accommodation could allow for the qualified employee to make up the time at a different time during the day so that the employee's production standards and pay would not be reduced, as long as this would not make the accommodation ineffective.

67. Similarly, policies that monitor employees for time on task (whether through automated means or otherwise) and penalize them for being off task may need to be modified to avoid imposing penalties for nonwork periods that the qualified employee was granted as a reasonable accommodation. This includes situations in which hours worked or time on task are used to measure traits like ''productivity,'' ''focus,'' ''availability,'' or ''contributions.'' For example, if, as a reasonable accommodation, a qualified employee is excused from working overtime, and ''availability'' or ''contribution'' is measured by an employee's overtime hours, a qualified employee should not be penalized in those categories.

68. If an accommodation under the PWFA involves the temporary suspension of an essential function(s) of the position, a covered entity may not penalize a qualified employee for not performing the essential function(s) that has been temporarily suspended. So, for example, a covered entity must not penalize a qualified employee for not meeting a production standard related to the performance of the essential function(s) that has been temporarily suspended.

69. Penalizing an employee in these situations could render the accommodation ineffective, thus making the covered entity liable for failing to make reasonable accommodation.[83] It also may be an adverse action in the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment or retaliation.[84]

70. The following examples illustrate situations where penalizing an employee may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) (failing to make reasonable accommodation absent undue hardship), (5) (prohibiting employers from taking adverse action against an employee on account of the employee using a reasonable accommodation), and/or section 2000gg–2(f) (prohibiting retaliation).

Example #20/Not Penalizing Employees: Arisa works in a fulfillment center that tracks employee productivity using personal tracking devices that monitor an employee's time on task and how long it takes an employee to complete a task. If the technology determines that an employee is spending insufficient time on task or taking too long to complete a task, the employee receives a warning, which can escalate to a reprimand and further discipline. Arisa is pregnant and, as a reasonable accommodation, is permitted to take bathroom breaks as necessary. Because the wearable technology determines that due to the approved additional bathroom breaks Arisa is spending insufficient time on task, Arisa receives a warning.

Example #21/Not Penalizing Employees: Hanh works in a call center that has a ''no-fault'' attendance policy where employees accrue penalty points for all absences and late arrivals, regardless of the reason for the lateness or absence. The policy allows for discipline or termination when an employee accrues enough points within a certain time period. Hanh gave birth and has had some complications that involve heavy vaginal bleeding for which she occasionally needs time off, and she also needs to attend related medical appointments. She sought, and her employer provided, the reasonable accommodations of being able to arrive up to 1 hour late on certain days with time to attend medical appointments. Despite the reasonable accommodations, because of the no-fault policy, Hanh accrues penalty points under the policy, subjecting her to possible discipline or termination.

Example #22/Not Penalizing Employees: Afefa, a customer service agent who is pregnant, requests two additional 10-minute rest breaks and additional bathroom breaks, as needed, during the workday. The employer determines that these breaks would not pose an undue hardship and grants the request. Because of the additional breaks, Afefa responds to three fewer calls during a shift. Afefa's supervisor gives her a lower performance rating because of her decrease in productivity.

Personal Use

71. The obligation to provide reasonable accommodation under the PWFA, like that under the ADA, does not extend to the provision of adjustments or modifications that are primarily for the personal benefit of the qualified employee with a known limitation. However, adjustments or modifications that might otherwise be considered personal may be required as reasonable accommodations ''where such items are specifically designed or required to meet job-related rather than personal needs.''[85]

72. For example, if a warehouse employee is pregnant and is having difficulty sleeping, the PWFA would not require as a reasonable accommodation for the employer to provide

[83] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at Question 19; *see also* 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) and the regulations in this part.

[84] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5); 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f).

[85] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.9.

a pregnancy pillow to help with sleeping because that is strictly for an employee's personal use. However, allowing the employee some flexibility in start times for the workday may be a reasonable accommodation because it modifies an employment-related policy. In a different context, if the employee who is having trouble sleeping works at a job that involves sleeping between shifts on-site, such as a job as a firefighter, sailor, emergency responder, health care worker, or truck driver, a pregnancy pillow may be a reasonable accommodation because the employee is having difficulty sleeping because of the pregnancy, the employer is providing pillows for all employees required to sleep on-site, and the employee needs a modification of the pillows provided.

All Services and Programs

73. Under the PWFA, as under the ADA, the obligation to make reasonable accommodations applies to all services and programs provided in connection with employment and to all non-work facilities provided or maintained by an employer for use by its employees, so that employees with known limitations can enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.[86] Accordingly, the obligation to provide reasonable accommodations, barring undue hardship, includes providing access to employer-sponsored placement or counseling services, such as employee assistance programs, to employer-provided cafeterias, lounges, gymnasiums, auditoriums, transportation, and to similar facilities, services, or programs.[87] This includes situations where an employee is traveling for work and may need, for example, accommodations at a different work site or during travel.

Interim Reasonable Accommodations

74. An interim reasonable accommodation can be used when there is a delay in providing the reasonable accommodation. For example, an interim reasonable accommodation may be sought when: there is a sudden onset of a known limitation under the PWFA, sometimes as an emergency, including one that makes it unsafe, risky, or dangerous to continue performing the normal tasks of the job; while the interactive process is ongoing, such as when an employer is waiting for the arrival of ordered equipment; or when the employee is waiting for the employer's decision on the accommodation request.

75. Providing an interim reasonable accommodation is a best practice under the PWFA and may help limit a covered entity's exposure to liability under 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) (§1636.4(a)(1)), or 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)).

76. For example, consider a situation where an employee lets their supervisor know that they are pregnant and need to avoid working with certain chemicals in the workplace. Given the chemicals and the fact that the employee is pregnant, the employee needs the change immediately. In this situation, the best practice is to provide the employee with an interim reasonable accommodation that meets the employee's needs or limitations and allows the employee to perform tasks for the benefit of the employer while the employer determines its response. This is the best possible situation for both the employer and the employee, and the one that the Commission strongly encourages. In addition, this type of interim reasonable accommodation could help mitigate a claim of delay by the employee.[88] The shortcomings and risks of two other approaches an employer might take are addressed in the following scenarios.

- Require the employee to continue to work with the chemicals while the employer determines its response. In this situation, the employee would be forced to work outside of their restrictions. In addition to placing the employee in a situation that the PWFA was enacted to prevent—choosing between their health and the health of their pregnancy on one hand and a paycheck on the other—the covered entity may be risking liability under 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) (if there is an unnecessary delay in providing the accommodation), and/or State and Federal workplace health and safety laws.
- Require the employee to take leave while the employer determines its response. In this situation, the employee is not exposed to the chemicals, so the risk is mitigated. However, depending on the facts, this option can have a severely detrimental effect on the employee—either because the leave is unpaid or because the employee is forced to use their paid leave. Meanwhile, the employee is unable to perform tasks for the employer.

77. Moreover, depending on the facts, requiring an employee to take unpaid leave or use their leave after they ask for an accommodation and are awaiting a response could lead to a violation of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f). For example, if the employee is put on unpaid leave, even though there is paid work that the employer reasonably could have given the employee, the employer's decision could be retaliatory because it might well dissuade a reasonable person from engaging in protected activity, such as asking for an accommodation under the PWFA. If the employer's actions were challenged, the employer would have to produce a legitimate, non-discriminatory reason for its actions.

[86] *See id.*

[87] *See id.*

[88] Section 1636.4(a)(1)(vii).

The employee could then show that the real reason for the action was retaliation.[89] Because the claim would arise under 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f), the employee would not have to show that they are qualified under 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(6), and the employer would not have recourse to an undue hardship defense.

78. The possible connection between requiring leave as an interim reasonable accommodation and a potential violation of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) is in keeping with the purposes of the PWFA. The PWFA recognizes that historically employees with limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions have been required to take leave to their detriment. Thus, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(4) limits the use of leave as a reasonable accommodation, prohibiting employers from requiring qualified employees with known limitations to take leave as a reasonable accommodation where there is another reasonable accommodation that will allow them to remain at work that does not result in an undue hardship.

79. Examples Regarding Interim Reasonable Accommodations:

Example #23/Interim Reasonable Accommodation: Alicia is pregnant and works in a fulfillment center. Her job involves regularly moving boxes that weigh 15 to 20 pounds. On her Saturday shift, she informs her supervisor, Michelle, that she is pregnant and that she is worried about lifting these packages while she is pregnant. Michelle recognizes that Alicia is requesting a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA. While Michelle tells Alicia that she needs to wait until Monday to consult with human resources on the next steps, Michelle also immediately offers Alicia a cart to help move the boxes and assigns her to a line that has lighter packages. On Monday, Michelle tells Alicia that she will be provided with a hoist to help Alicia lift packages, but it will take a few days before it is installed. In the meantime, Alicia can continue to use the cart and work the lighter line. Once the hoist arrives, Alicia is able to use it while working on her usual line. If there were an unnecessary delay in providing the reasonable accommodation, and if Alicia were to challenge the delay as constituting a failure to make an accommodation, the employer could argue that the interim reasonable accommodation mitigates its liability.

Example #24/Interim Reasonable Accommodation: Nour is pregnant, and she drives a delivery van. Her employer uses vans that do not have air conditioning. It is summer and the temperature is over 100 degrees. Nour tells her supervisor she is pregnant and needs a change at work because of the risk to her health and the health of her pregnancy because of the excessive heat. Her supervisor orders equipment that will help Nour, such as a personal cooling vest or neck fan. While waiting for the equipment to be delivered, the employer does not have other possible work that Nour can do. In this situation, the employer could tell Nour that she may take leave while waiting for the equipment to arrive.

Example #25/Interim Reasonable Accommodation: The scenario is the same as described in Example #24, but there is office work that Nour could perform while waiting for the equipment. Further, there is evidence that the supervisor and others at the covered entity discussed the idea of giving Nour office work but decided against it because then ''every woman is going to come in here and demand it.'' In this situation, failing to provide Nour the opportunity to work in the office could be a violation of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f).

80. Covered entities that do not provide interim reasonable accommodations are reminded that an unnecessary delay in making a reasonable accommodation, including in responding to the initial request, in the interactive process, or in providing the accommodation may result in a violation of the PWFA if the delay constitutes an unlawful failure to make reasonable accommodation, as set forth in 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) (§1636.4(a)(1)).

1636.3(i) Reasonable Accommodation—Examples

81. The definition of ''reasonable accommodation'' in §1636.3(h)(1) tracks the meaning of the term from the ADA statute, regulation, and EEOC guidance documents.[90] The PWFA, at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–3, directs the Commission to issue regulations providing examples of reasonable accommodations addressing known limitations related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. The Commission notes that a qualified employee may need more than one of these accommodations at the same time, as a pregnancy progresses, or before, during, or after pregnancy. This list of possible reasonable accommodations is non-exhaustive.[91]

[89] *See* EEOC, *Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation and Related Issues,* (II)(C)(1)–(3) (discussing causation standard and evidence of causation), (4) (discussing facts that would defeat a claim of retaliation), and (III) (discussing ADA interference claims) (2016) [hereinafter *Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation*], *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-retaliation-and-related-issues*.

[90] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12111(9); 29 CFR 1630.2(o); *Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation*, *supra* note 12.

[91] *See, e.g.*, H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 29 (stating that ''[t]he Job Accommodation Network (JAN), an ADA technical assistance

• Frequent breaks. The Commission has long construed the ADA to require additional breaks as a reasonable accommodation, absent undue hardship.[92] Under the PWFA, for example, a pregnant employee might need more frequent breaks due to shortness of breath; an employee recovering from childbirth might need more frequent restroom breaks or breaks due to fatigue; an employee who is nursing during work hours, where the regular location of the employee's workplace makes nursing during work hours a possibility because the child is in close proximity (for example, if the employee normally works from home and the child is there or the child is at a nearby or onsite day care center), may need additional breaks to nurse during the workday;[93] or an employee who is lactating might need more frequent breaks for water, for food, or to pump.[94]

• Sitting/Standing. The Commission has recognized the provision of seating for jobs that require standing and standing for those that require sitting as potential reasonable accommodations under the ADA.[95] Under the PWFA, reasonable accommodation of these needs might include, but is not limited to, policy modifications and the provision of equipment, such as seating, a sit/stand desk, or anti-fatigue floor matting, among other possibilities.

• Schedule changes, part-time work, and paid and unpaid leave. Permitting the use of paid leave (whether accrued, as part of a short-term disability program, or as part of any other employee benefit) or providing unpaid leave is a potential reasonable accommodation under the ADA.[96] Additionally, leave for medical treatment can be a reasonable accommodation.[97] By way of example, under the PWFA an employee could need a schedule change to attend a round of IVF appointments to get pregnant; a part-time schedule to address fatigue during pregnancy; or unpaid leave for recovery from childbirth, medical treatment, postpartum treatment or recuperation related to a cesarean section, episiotomy, infection, depression, thyroiditis, or preeclampsia.

• Telework. Telework (or ''remote work'' or ''work from home'') has been recognized by the Commission as a potential reasonable accommodation under the ADA.[98] Under the PWFA, telework could be used to accommodate, for example, a period of bed rest, a mobility impairment, or a need to avoid heightened health risk, such as from a communicable disease.

• Parking. Providing a reserved parking space if the employee is otherwise entitled to use employer-provided parking may be a reasonable accommodation to assist an employee who is experiencing fatigue or limited mobility related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

• Light duty. Assignment to light duty or placement in a light duty program has been recognized by the Commission as a potential reasonable accommodation, even if the employer's light duty positions are normally reserved for those injured on-the-job and the person seeking a light duty position as an accommodation does not have an on-the-job injury.[99]

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center . . . lists numerous potential accommodations . . . including more than 20 suggested accommodations just for lifting restrictions related to pregnancy'').

[92] *Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at Question 22; *see also* H.R. Rep. 117–27, pt. 1, at 22; 168 Cong. Rec. S7,048 (daily ed. Dec. 8, 2022) (statement of Sen. Robert P. Casey, Jr.); 168 Cong. Rec. S10,081 (daily ed. Dec. 22, 2022) (statement of Sen. Robert P. Casey, Jr.).

[93] The Commission cautions that this provision is intended to address situations where the employee and child are in close proximity in the normal course of business. It is not intended to state that there is a right to create proximity to nurse because of an employee's preference. Of course, there may be limitations that would allow an employee to request as a reasonable accommodation the creation of proximity (e.g., a limitation that made pumping difficult or unworkable).

[94] Breaks may be paid or unpaid depending on the employer's normal policies and other applicable laws. Breaks may exceed the number that an employer normally provides because reasonable accommodations may require an employer to alter its policies, barring undue hardship.

[95] *Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at General Principles, Example B; *see also* H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 11, 22, 29.

[96] 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(o); *see also Technical Assistance on Employer-Provided Leave, supra* note 73. Additionally, an employer prohibiting an employee from using accrued leave for pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions while allowing other employees to use leave for similar reasons also may violate Title VII.

[97] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(o).

[98] *See, e.g., Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at Question 34.

[99] *See Enforcement Guidance: Workers' Compensation, supra* note 8, at Question 28; *see also* 168 Cong. Rec. S7,048 (daily ed. Dec. 8, 2022) (statement of Sen. Robert P. Casey, Jr.)

Continued

• Making existing facilities accessible or modifying the work environment.[100] Examples of reasonable accommodations might include allowing access to an elevator not normally used by employees; moving the employee's workspace closer to a bathroom; providing a fan to regulate temperature; moving a pregnant or lactating employee to a different workspace to avoid exposure to chemical fumes; changing the assigned worksite of the employee; or modifying the work space by providing local exhaust ventilation or providing enhanced personal protective equipment and training to reduce exposure to chemical hazards.[101] As noted in the regulation, this also may include modifications of the work environment to allow an employee to pump breast milk at work.[102]

• Job restructuring.[103] Job restructuring might involve, for example, removing a marginal function (any nonessential job function) that requires a pregnant employee to climb a ladder or occasionally retrieve boxes from a supply closet, or providing assistance with manual labor.[104]

• Temporarily suspending one or more essential function(s). For some positions, this may mean that one or more essential function(s) are temporarily suspended, and the employee continues to perform the remaining functions of the job. For others, the essential function(s) will be temporarily suspended, and the employee may be assigned other tasks. For still others, the essential function(s) will be temporarily suspended, and the employee may perform the functions of a different job to which the employer temporarily transfers or assigns them. For yet others, the essential function(s) will be temporarily suspended, and the employee will participate in the employer's light or modified duty program.

• Acquiring or modifying equipment, uniforms, or devices.[105] Examples of reasonable accommodations might include providing uniforms and equipment, including safety equipment, that account for changes in body size during and after pregnancy, including during lactation; providing devices to assist with mobility, lifting, carrying, reaching, and bending; or providing an ergonomic keyboard to accommodate pregnancy-related hand swelling or tendonitis.

• Adjusting or modifying examinations or policies.[106] Examples of reasonable accommodations include allowing employees with a known limitations to postpone examinations that require physical exertion. Adjustments to policies also could include increasing the time or frequency of breaks to eat or drink or to use the restroom.

(''What are other types of reasonable accommodations that pregnant workers might request? Light duty is a common example.''); *id.* at S7,049 (statement of Sen. Patty Murray) (noting that workers need accommodations because ''their doctors say they need to avoid heavy lifting''); H.R. Rep. 117–27, pt. 1, at 14–17 (discussing *Young* v. *United Parcel Serv., Inc.*, 575 U.S. 206 (2015), a case involving light duty for pregnant employees).

[100] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12111(9); 29 CFR 1630.2(o)(1)(ii) and (o)(2)(i).

[101] *See, e.g.*, U.S. Dep't of Lab., Occupational Health & Safety Admin., *Recommended Practices for Safety and Health Programs, https://www.osha.gov/safety-management/hazard-prevention* (last visited Mar. 18, 2024).

[102] On December 29, 2022, President Biden signed the Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act) (Pub. L. 117–328, Div. KK, 136 Stat. 4459, 6093). The law extended coverage of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended (FLSA), 29 U.S.C. 201 *et seq.*, protections for nursing employees to apply to most employees. The FLSA provides most employees with the right to break time and a place to pump breast milk at work for a year following the child's birth. 29 U.S.C. 218d; U.S. Dep't of Lab., *Field Assistance Bulletin No. 2023–02: Enforcement of Protections for Employees to Pump Breast Milk at Work* (May 17, 2023), *https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/fab/2023-2.pdf;* U.S. Dep't of Lab., *Fact Sheet #73: FLSA Protections for Employees to Pump Breast Milk at Work* (Jan. 2023), *https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/73-flsa-break-time-nursing-mothers.* Employees who are not covered by the PUMP Act or employees who seek to pump longer than 1 year may seek reasonable accommodations regarding pumping under the PWFA. Further, whether or not employees are covered by the PUMP Act, employees may seek under the PWFA any reasonable accommodations needed for lactation, including things not necessarily required by the PUMP Act such as access to a sink, a refrigerator, and electricity. *See, e.g.*, U.S. Dep't of Lab., *Notice on Reasonable Break Time for Nursing Mothers*, 75 FR 80073, 80075–76 (Dec. 21, 2010) (discussing space requirements and noting factors such as the location of the area for pumping compared to the employee's workspace, the availability of a sink and running water, the location of a refrigerator to store milk, and electricity may affect the amount of break time needed). The PUMP Act is enforced by the Department of Labor, not the EEOC.

[103] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12111(9)(B); 29 CFR 1630.2(o)(2)(ii).

[104] *See* H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 29.

[105] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12111(9)(B); 29 CFR 1630.2(o)(2)(ii); *see also* H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 28.

[106] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12111(9)(B); 29 CFR 1630.2(o)(2)(ii); *see also* H.R. Rep. No. 117–27, pt. 1, at 28.

82. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–3, the following are further examples of types of reasonable accommodations and how they can be analyzed.[107]

Example #26/Telework: Gabriela, a billing specialist in a doctor's office, experiences nausea and vomiting beginning in her first trimester of pregnancy. Because the nausea makes commuting extremely difficult, Gabriela makes a verbal request to her manager stating she has nausea and vomiting due to her pregnancy and requests that she be permitted to work from home for the next 2 months so that she can avoid the difficulty of commuting. The billing work can be done from her home or in the office.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Gabriela's nausea and vomiting is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Gabriela needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Gabriela has communicated the information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Gabriela can perform the essential functions of the job with the reasonable accommodation of telework.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #27/Temporary Suspension of an Essential Function: Nisha, a nurse assistant working in a large elder care facility, is advised in the fourth month of her pregnancy to stop lifting more than 25 pounds for the remainder of the pregnancy. One of the essential functions of the job is to assist patients in dressing, bathing, and moving from and to their beds, tasks that typically require lifting more than 25 pounds. Nisha sends an email to human resources asking that she not be required to lift more than 25 pounds for the remainder of her pregnancy and requesting a place in the established light duty program under which employees who are hurt on the job take on different duties while coworkers take on their temporarily suspended duties.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Nisha's lifting restriction is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Nisha needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Nisha has communicated that information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Nisha is asking for the temporary suspension of an essential function. The suspension is temporary, and Nisha can perform the essential functions of the job ''in the near future'' (generally within 40 weeks). It appears that the inability to perform the function can be reasonably accommodated through its temporary suspension and Nisha's placement in the light duty program.

3. The employer must grant the reasonable accommodation of temporarily suspending the essential function (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship. As part of the temporary suspension, the employer may assign Nisha to the light duty program.

Example #28: The scenario is the same as described in Example #27 of this appendix, except that the employer establishes that the light duty program is limited to 10 slots and all 10 slots are filled for the next 6 months. In these circumstances, the employer should consider other possible reasonable accommodations, such as the temporary suspension of an essential function without assigning Nisha to the light duty program, or job restructuring outside of the established light duty program. If such accommodations cannot be provided without undue hardship, then the employer should consider providing a temporary reassignment to a vacant position for which Nisha is qualified, with or without reasonable accommodation. For example, if the employer has a vacant position that does not require lifting patients which Nisha could perform with or without a reasonable accommodation, the employer must offer her the temporary reassignment as a reasonable accommodation, absent undue hardship.

Example #29/Temporary Suspension of Essential Function(s): Fatima's position as a farmworker usually involves working outdoors in the field although there also is indoor work such as sorting produce. After she returns from giving birth, Fatima develops postpartum thyroiditis, which has made her extremely sensitive to heat, and has contributed to muscle weakness and fatigue. She

[107] As with all the examples in this Interpretive Guidance, these examples are illustrative only and are not intended to suggest that these are the only conditions under which an employee may receive a reasonable accommodation, or that the reasonable accommodations sought or given in the examples are the only ones that should be selected in similar situations.

For further examples, see the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), which provides free assistance regarding workplace accommodation issues. *See generally* Job Accommodation Network [hereinafter JAN], *https://askjan.org/* (last visited Mar. 25, 2024). Covered entities and employees also may seek additional information from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). *See* U.S. Dep't of Health & Hum. Servs., Ctrs. for Disease Control & Prevention, Nat'l Inst. for Occupational Safety & Health, *Reproductive Health and The Workplace, https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/repro/default.html* (last reviewed May 1, 2023).

seeks the accommodation of a 7-month temporary suspension of the essential function of working outdoors in hot weather.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Fatima's sensitivity to heat, muscle weakness, and fatigue are physical or mental conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Fatima needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Fatima has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Fatima is asking for the temporary suspension of an essential function. The suspension is temporary, and Fatima could perform the essential functions of the job in the near future (7 months). It appears that the inability to perform the essential function can be reasonably accommodated by temporarily assigning Fatima indoor work, such as sorting produce.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation of temporarily suspending the essential function (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #30/Assistance with Performing an Essential Function: Mei, a warehouse worker, uses her employer's online accommodation portal to ask for a dolly to assist her for 3 months in moving items that are bulky, in order to accommodate lifting and carrying restrictions due to her cesarean section.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Mei's lifting and carrying restrictions are physical or mental conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Mei needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Mei has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Mei can perform the essential functions of the job with the reasonable accommodation of a dolly.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #31/Appropriate Uniform and Safety Gear: Ava is a police officer and is pregnant. They ask their union representative for help getting a larger size uniform and larger size bullet proof vest in order to cover their growing pregnancy. The union representative asks management for an appropriately-sized uniform and vest for Ava.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Ava's inability to wear the standard uniform and safety gear is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Ava needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Ava's representative has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Ava can perform the essential functions of the job with the reasonable accommodation of appropriate gear.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #32/Temporary Suspension of Essential Function(s): Darina is a police officer and is 3 months pregnant. She talks to human resources about being taken off of patrol and put on light duty for the remainder of her pregnancy to avoid physical altercations and the need to physically subdue suspects, which may harm her pregnancy. The department has an established light duty program that it uses for officers with injuries that occurred on the job.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Darina's inability to perform certain patrol duties is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Darina needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Darina has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: The suspension of the essential functions of patrol duties is temporary, and Darina can perform the essential functions of the job in the near future (within generally 40 weeks). It appears that the temporary suspension of the essential functions can be accommodated through the light duty program.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #33/Temporary Suspension of Essential Function(s): Rory works in a fulfillment center where she is usually assigned to a line that requires moving 20-pound packages. After returning from work after giving birth, Rory lets her supervisor know that she has a lifting restriction of 10 pounds due to sciatica during her pregnancy that continues postpartum. The restriction is for 6 months. The employer does not have an established light duty program. There are other lines in the warehouse that do not require lifting more than 10 pounds.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Rory's lifting restriction is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Rory needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Rory has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: The suspension of the essential function of lifting packages that weigh up to 10 pounds is temporary, and Rory can perform the essential function in the near future (6 months). It appears that the temporary suspension of the essential function could be accommodated by temporarily assigning her to a different line.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #34/Unpaid Leave: Tallah, a newly hired cashier at a small bookstore, has a miscarriage in the third month of pregnancy and asks a supervisor for 10 days of leave to recover. As a new employee, Tallah has only earned 2 days of paid leave, she is not covered by the FMLA, and the employer does not have a company policy regarding the provision of unpaid leave. Nevertheless, Tallah is covered by the PWFA.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Tallah's need for time for recovery is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Tallah needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Tallah has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: After the reasonable accommodation of leave, Tallah will be able to perform the essential functions of the job with or without accommodation.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation of unpaid leave (or another reasonable accommodation) absent an undue hardship.

Example #35/Unpaid Leave for Prenatal Appointments: Margot started working at a retail store shortly after she became pregnant. She has an uncomplicated pregnancy. Because she has not worked at the store very long, she has earned very little leave and is not covered by the FMLA. In her fifth month of pregnancy, she asks her supervisor for the reasonable accommodation of unpaid time off beyond the leave she has earned to attend her regularly scheduled prenatal appointments.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Margot's need to attend health care appointments is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Margot needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Margot has communicated the information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Margot can perform the essential functions of the job with the reasonable accommodation of leave to attend health care appointments.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation of unpaid time off (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #36/Unpaid Leave for Recovery from Childbirth: Sofia, a custodian, is pregnant and will need 6 to 8 weeks of leave to recover from childbirth. Sofia is nervous about asking for leave, so Sofia asks her mother, who knows the owner, to do it for her. The employer has a sick leave policy, but no policy for longer periods of leave. Sofia is not eligible for FMLA leave because her employer is not covered by the FMLA.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Sofia's need to recover from childbirth is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Sofia needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Sofia's representative has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: After the reasonable accommodation of leave, Sofia will be able to perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation of unpaid leave (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #37/Unpaid Leave for Medical Appointments: Taylor, a newly hired member of the waitstaff, requests time off to attend therapy appointments for postpartum depression. As a new employee, Taylor has not yet accrued sick or personal leave and is not covered by the FMLA. Taylor asks her manager if there is some way that she can take time off.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Taylor's need to attend health care appointments is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Taylor needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Taylor has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Taylor can perform the essential functions of the job with a reasonable accommodation of time off to attend the health care appointments.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent an undue hardship.

Example #38/Unpaid Leave: Claudine is 6 months pregnant and asks for leave so that she can attend her regular check-ups. The clinic where Claudine gets her health care is an hour drive away, the clinic frequently gets delayed, and Claudine has to wait for her appointment. Depending on the time of day, between commuting to the appointment, waiting for the appointment, and seeing her provider, Claudine may miss all or most of an assigned day at work. Claudine's employer is not covered by the FMLA, and Claudine does not have any sick leave left. Claudine asks human resources for time off as a reasonable accommodation so she can attend her medical appointments.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Claudine's need to attend health care appointments is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Claudine needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Claudine has communicated that information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Claudine can perform the essential functions of the job with a reasonable accommodation of time off to attend health care appointments.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #39/Telework: Raim, a social worker, is pregnant. As her third trimester starts, she is feeling more fatigue and needs more rest. She asks her supervisor if she can telework and see clients virtually so she can lie down and take rest breaks between client appointments.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Raim's fatigue is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Raim needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Raim has communicated that information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Assuming the appointments can be conducted virtually, Raim can perform the essential functions of the job with the reasonable accommodation of working virtually. If there are certain appointments that must be done in person, the reasonable accommodation could be a few days of telework a week and then other accommodations that would give Raim time to rest, such as assigning Raim in-person appointments at times when traffic will be light so that they are easy to get to, or setting up Raim's assignments so that on the days when she has in-person appointments she has breaks between them. Or the reasonable accommodation can be the temporary suspension of the essential function of in-person appointments.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #40/Temporary Workspace/Possible Temporary Suspension of Essential Function(s): Brooke, a research assistant who is in her first trimester of pregnancy, asks the lead researcher in the laboratory for a temporary workspace that would allow her to work in a well-ventilated area because her work involves hazardous chemicals that her health care provider has told her to avoid. There are several research projects she can work on that do not involve exposure to hazardous chemicals.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Brooke's need to avoid the chemicals related to maintaining her health or the health of her pregnancy is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Brooke needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Brooke has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: If working with hazardous chemicals is an essential function of the job, Brooke may be able to perform that function with the accommodation of a well-ventilated work area, a chemical fume hood, local exhaust ventilation, and/or personal protective equipment such as chemical-resistant gloves, a lab coat, and a powered air-purifying respirator. If providing these modifications would be an undue hardship or would not be effective, Brooke can still be qualified with the temporary suspension of the essential function of working with the hazardous chemicals because Brooke's inability to work with hazardous chemicals is temporary, and Brooke can perform the essential functions of the job in the near future (within generally 40 weeks). Her need to avoid exposure to hazardous chemicals also can be accommodated by allowing her to focus on the other research projects.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation), absent undue hardship. If the employer cannot accommodate Brooke in a way that allows Brooke to continue to perform the essential function(s) of the position, the employer should consider providing alternative reasonable accommodations, including temporarily suspending one or more essential functions, absent undue hardship.

Example #41/Temporary Transfer to Different Location: Katherine, a budget analyst who has cancer also is pregnant, which creates complications for her cancer treatment. She asks her manager for a temporary transfer so that she can work out of an office in a larger city that has a medical center that can address her medical needs due to the combination of cancer and pregnancy. Katherine is able to do all her essential functions for the original office from the employer's other location and can continue to work full-time while obtaining treatment.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Katherine's need for treatment at a particular medical facility related to maintaining her health or the health of the pregnancy is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Katherine needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Katherine has communicated that information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Katherine is able to perform the essential functions of the job and work full-time with the reasonable accommodation of a temporary transfer to a different location.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship. A reasonable accommodation can include a workplace change to facilitate medical treatment, including accommodations such as leave, a schedule change, or a temporary transfer to a different work location needed in order to obtain treatment.

Example #42/Pumping Breast Milk: Salma gave birth 13 months ago and wants to be able to pump breast milk at work. Salma works for an employment agency that sends her to different jobs for a day or week at a time. Salma asks the person at the agency who makes her assignments to ensure she will be able to take breaks and have a space to pump breast milk at work at her various assignments.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Salma's need to express breast milk is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Salma needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Salma has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Salma is able to perform the essential functions of the jobs to which she is assigned with the reasonable accommodation of being assigned to workplaces where she can pump at work.

3. The agency must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #43/Commuting: Jayde is a retail clerk who gave birth 2 months ago. Because of childbirth, Jayde is experiencing urinary incontinence, constipation, and hemorrhoids. Jayde normally commutes by driving 45 minutes; because of the limitations due to childbirth, it is painful for Jayde to sit in one position for an extended period, and Jayde may need a bathroom during the commute. Jayde requests the reasonable accommodation of working at a different, closer store for 2 months. The commute to this other store is only 10 minutes.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Jayde's urinary incontinence, constipation, and hemorrhoids are physical or mental conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Jayde needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Jayde has communicated this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Jayde can perform the essential functions of the job with the reasonable accommodation of a temporary assignment to a different location.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

Example #44/Medications Affected by Pregnancy: Riya is a data analyst who is pregnant, and her health care provider recommended that she stop taking her current ADHD medication and switch to another medication. As Riya is adjusting to her new medication, she finds it more difficult to concentrate and asks for more frequent breaks, a quiet place to work, and for her tasks to be divided up into smaller duties.

1. Known limitation and request for reasonable accommodation: Riya's difficulty concentrating due to her change in medication is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; Riya needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation; Riya has provided this information to the employer.

2. Qualified: Riya can perform the essential functions of the job with the reasonable accommodation of more frequent breaks, a quiet place to work, and division of her tasks into smaller duties.

3. The employer must grant the accommodation (or another reasonable accommodation) absent undue hardship.

1636.3(j) Undue Hardship

1636.3(j)(1) Undue Hardship—In General

83. The PWFA provides that ''undue hardship'' shall be construed under the PWFA as it is under the ADA and as set forth in this part.[108] This part, at §1636.3(j)(1), reiterates the definition of undue hardship provided in the ADA statute and regulation, which explains that undue hardship means significant difficulty or expense incurred by a covered entity.[109] Because the definition of undue hardship under the PWFA follows the ADA, under the PWFA the term ''undue hardship'' means significant difficulty or expense in, or resulting from, the provision of the accommodation. The ''undue hardship'' provision takes into account the financial realities of the particular employer or other covered entity. However, the concept of undue hardship is not limited to financial difficulty. ''Undue hardship'' refers to any accommodation that would be unduly costly, extensive, substantial, or disruptive, or that would fundamentally alter the nature or operation of the business.[110]

84. As under the ADA, if an employer asserts undue hardship based on cost, then there will be a determination made regarding whose financial resources should be considered.[111] Further, in determining whether an accommodation causes an undue hardship an employer cannot simply assert that a needed accommodation will cause it undue hardship and thereupon be relieved of the duty to provide accommodation. Rather, an employer will have to present evidence and demonstrate that the accommodation will,

[108] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(7).

[109] 42 U.S.C. 12111(10)(A); 29 CFR 1630.2(p); *see Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at text after n.112.

[110] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(p). The ADA defines ''undue hardship'' at 42 U.S.C. 12111(10).

[111] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(p).

in fact, cause it undue hardship. Whether a particular accommodation will impose an undue hardship for a particular employer is determined on a case-by-case basis. Consequently, an accommodation that poses an undue hardship for one employer at a particular time may not pose an undue hardship for another employer, or even for the same employer at another time.[112]

85. As the Commission has stated under the ADA, ''[u]ndue hardship must be based on an individualized assessment of current circumstances that show that a specific reasonable accommodation would cause significant difficulty or expense.'' [113]

86. Additionally, an employer cannot demonstrate undue hardship based on employees', clients', or customers' fears or prejudices toward the employee's pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, nor can an employer demonstrate undue hardship based on the possibility that the provision of an accommodation would negatively impact the morale of other employees.[114] Employers, however, may be able to show undue hardship where the provision of an accommodation would be unduly disruptive to other employees' ability to work.

87. Consistent with the ADA, a covered entity asserting that a reasonable accommodation will cause an undue hardship must offer other reasonable accommodations that it can provide, absent undue hardship.[115] Additionally, if the employer can provide only part of the reasonable accommodation absent undue hardship—for example, the employer can provide 6 weeks of leave absent undue hardship but the 8 weeks that the employee is seeking would cause undue hardship—the employer must provide the reasonable accommodation up to the point of undue hardship. Thus, in the example, the employer would have to provide 6 weeks of leave and then consider whether there are other reasonable accommodations it could provide for the remaining 2 weeks that would not cause an undue hardship.

1636.3(j)(2) Undue Hardship Factors

88. Section 1636.3(j)(2) sets out factors to be considered when determining whether a particular accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the covered entity using the factors from the ADA regulation.[116]

89. Examples Regarding Undue Hardship:

Example #45/Undue Hardship: Patricia, a convenience store clerk, requests that she be allowed to switch from full-time to part-time work for the last 3 months of her pregnancy due to extreme fatigue. The store assigns two clerks per shift. If Patricia's hours are reduced, the other clerk's workload will increase significantly beyond his ability to handle his responsibilities. The store determines that such an arrangement will result in inadequate coverage to serve customers in a timely manner, keep the shelves stocked, and maintain store security. It also would be infeasible for the store to hire a temporary worker on short notice at this time. Based on these facts, the employer likely can show undue hardship based on the significant disruption to its operations and, therefore, can refuse to reduce Patricia's hours. The employer, however, must offer other reasonable accommodations, such as providing a stool and allowing rest breaks throughout the shift, assuming they do not cause undue hardship.

Example #46/Undue Hardship: Shirin, a dental hygienist who is undergoing IVF treatments, needs to attend medical appointments for the IVF treatment near her house every other day and is fatigued. She asks her supervisor if the essential function of seeing patients can be temporarily suspended, so that she does not see patients 3 days a week and instead can work from home on those days assisting with billing and insurance claims, work for which she is qualified. Temporarily suspending the essential function of seeing patients and allowing Shirin to work at home may be an undue hardship for the employer because there is only one other hygienist and there is not enough work for Shirin to do remotely. However, the employer must offer other reasonable accommodations, such as a schedule that would allow Shirin breaks between patients, part-time work, permitting her to work from home for 1 or 2 days, or a reduced schedule, assuming they do not cause undue hardship.

Example #47/Undue Hardship: Cynthia, an office manager working in a large building, has asthma that she controls with medication. Because of her pregnancy, her asthma

[112] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.15(d).

[113] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at text accompanying n.113.

[114] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.15(d) (explaining that under the ADA an employer cannot show undue hardship based on employees' fears or prejudices toward the individual's disability or by showing that the provision of the accommodation has a negative impact on the morale of its other employees but not on the ability of these employees to perform their jobs); *Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at text surrounding n.117; *cf. Groff* v. *DeJoy,* 600 U.S. 447, 472 (2023) (providing that, under the Title VII undue hardship standard, an employer may not justify refusal to accommodate based on other employees' bias or hostility).

[115] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at text after n.116.

[116] *See* 29 CFR 1630.2(p).

becomes worse, and she requests a ban on airborne irritants and chemicals (e.g., fragrances, sprays, cleaning products) in the building. The employer could potentially show that ensuring a workplace completely free of any scents or irritants would impose a significant financial and administrative burden on it, as a ban would be difficult to enforce and encompass a wide variety of hygiene and cleaning products. Nevertheless, the employer must offer alternative accommodations, such as providing an air purifier, minimizing the use of irritants in her vicinity, or allowing her to telework, assuming they do not cause undue hardship.

1636.3(j)(3) Undue Hardship—Temporary Suspension of an Essential Function(s)

90. In certain circumstances, the PWFA requires an employer to accommodate an employee's temporary inability to perform one or more essential functions. Therefore, §1636.3(j)(3) provides additional factors that may be considered when determining whether the temporary suspension of one or more essential functions causes an undue hardship. These additional factors include: the length of time that the employee will be unable to perform the essential function(s); whether, through the methods listed in §1636.3(f)(2)(iii) (describing potential reasonable accommodations related to the temporary suspension of essential function(s)) or otherwise, there is work for the employee to accomplish;[117] the nature of the essential function(s), including its frequency; whether the covered entity has provided other employees in similar positions who are unable to perform essential function(s) of their positions with temporary suspensions of those function(s) and other duties; if necessary, whether or not there are other employees, temporary employees, or third parties who can perform or be temporarily hired to perform the essential function(s) in question; and whether the essential function(s) can be postponed or remain unperformed for any length of time and, if so, for how long.

91. As with other reasonable accommodations, if the covered entity can establish that accommodating an employee's temporary suspension of an essential function(s) would impose an undue hardship if extended beyond a certain period of time, the covered entity would only be required to provide that accommodation for the period of time that it does not impose an undue hardship. For example, consider the situation where an employee seeks to have an essential function suspended for 6 months. The employer can go without the function being accomplished for 4 months, but after that, it will create an undue hardship. The employer must accommodate the employee's inability to perform the essential function for 4 months and then consider whether there are other reasonable accommodations that it can provide, absent undue hardship, for the remaining time.

92. Section 1636.3(j)(3)(iv) is intended to account for situations where the covered entity has provided a similar accommodation to other employees. If the covered entity has temporarily suspended essential functions for other employees in similar positions before, it would tend to demonstrate that the accommodation is not an undue hardship. The reverse, however, is not true. A covered entity's failure to temporarily suspend an essential function(s) in the past does not tend to demonstrate that the accommodation creates an undue hardship because reasonable accommodation can include changing workplace procedures or rules.

1636.3(j)(4) Undue Hardship—Predictable Assessments[118]

93. The Commission has identified a limited number of simple modifications that will, in virtually all cases, be found to be reasonable accommodations that do not impose an undue hardship when requested by a qualified employee due to pregnancy.

94. These modifications are: (1) allowing an employee to carry or keep water near and drink, as needed; (2) allowing an employee to take additional restroom breaks, as needed; (3) allowing an employee whose work requires standing to sit and whose work requires sitting to stand, as needed; and (4) allowing an employee to take breaks to eat and drink, as needed.[119] These accommodations are low cost and unlikely to affect the

[117] The employer is not required to make up work for an employee.

[118] The term ''predictable assessments'' also is seen in the ADA regulations, where it applies to establishing coverage. In the ADA, ''predictable assessments'' are impairments that will ''in virtually all cases'' be considered a disability covered by the ADA. 29 CFR 1630.2(j)(3). As used in this PWFA rule, however, the term relates to accommodations, not limitations or disabilities.

[119] The first and fourth categories of predictable assessments are related but separate. The first category of accommodations addresses an employee's ability to carry water on the employee's person while they perform their job duties, or their ability to have water nearby while working, without requiring the employee to take a break to access and drink it. The fourth category of accommodations addresses an employee's ability to take additional, short breaks in performing work (either at the employee's work location or a break location) to eat and drink (including beverages that are not water). Additionally, depending on the worksite, any employee may be able to eat or

Continued

overall financial resources of the covered entity, the operations of the facility, or the ability of the facility to conduct business.[120] By identifying these predictable assessments, the Commission seeks to improve how quickly employees will be able to receive certain simple, common accommodations for pregnancy under the PWFA and thereby reduce litigation.

95. The Commission emphasizes that the predictable assessments provision does not alter the meaning of the term ''reasonable accommodation'' or ''undue hardship.'' Employers should still conduct an individualized assessment when one of these accommodations is requested by a pregnant employee to determine if the requested accommodation causes an undue hardship, and employers may still bring forward facts to demonstrate that the proposed accommodation imposes an undue hardship for its business under its own particular circumstances. Instead, the provision informs covered entities that the individualized assessment of whether one of the straightforward and simple modifications listed in paragraphs (j)(4)(i) through (iv) is a reasonable accommodation that would cause undue hardship will, in virtually all cases, result in a determination that the four modifications are reasonable accommodations that will not impose an undue hardship under the PWFA when they are requested as workplace accommodations by an employee who is pregnant.

96. Examples Regarding Predictable Assessments:

Example #48/Predictable Assessments: Amara, a quality inspector for a manufacturing company, experiences painful swelling in her legs, ankles, and feet during the final 3 months of her pregnancy. Her job requires standing for long periods of time, although it can be performed sitting as well. Amara asks the person who assigns her daily work for a stool to sit on while she performs her job. Amara's swelling in her legs and ankles is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy. Amara's request is for a modification that will virtually always be a reasonable accommodation that does not impose an undue hardship. The employer argues that it has never provided a stool to any other worker who complained of difficulty standing, but points to nothing that suggests that this modification is not reasonable or that it would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business. The employer has not established that providing Amara a stool imposes an undue hardship.

Example #49/Predictable Assessments: Jazmin, a pregnant teacher who typically is only able to use the bathroom when her class is at lunch, requests additional bathroom breaks during her sixth month of pregnancy. Jazmin's need for additional bathroom breaks is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy. The employer argues that finding an adult to watch over the Jazmin's class when she needs to take a bathroom break imposes an undue hardship. However, there are several teachers in nearby classrooms, aides in some classes, and an administrative assistant in the front office, any of whom, with a few minutes' notice, would be able to provide supervision either by standing in the hallway between classes or sitting in Jazmin's classroom to allow Jazmin a break to use bathroom. The employer has not established that providing Jazmin with additional bathroom breaks imposes an undue hardship.

Example #50/Predictable Assessments: Addison, a clerk responsible for receiving and filing construction plans for development proposals, needs to maintain a regular intake of water throughout the day to maintain a healthy pregnancy. They ask their manager if an exception can be made to the office policy prohibiting liquids at workstations. Addison's need to maintain a regular intake of water is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy. Here, although the manager decides against allowing Addison to bring water into their workstation, he proposes that a table be placed just outside the workstation and gives permission for Addison to access water placed on the table as needed. The employer has satisfied its obligation to provide a reasonable accommodation.

Undue Hardship—Consideration of Prior or Future Accommodations

97. An employer may consider the current impact of past and current cumulative costs or burdens of accommodations that have already been granted to other employees or the same employee, when considering whether a new request for the same or a similar accommodation imposes an undue hardship. For example, where an employer is already allowing two of the three employees who are able to open the store to arrive after opening time on certain days, it could pose an undue hardship to grant the accommodation of a delayed arrival time to the third employee on those same days.

98. The fact that an employer has provided the same or similar accommodations in the past may indicate that the accommodation can be provided without causing an undue hardship. Additionally, even if an employer previously failed to provide an employee a

drink at the work location without taking a break.

[120] As explained in the NPRM, the Commission identified these modifications based on the legislative history of the PWFA and analogous State laws. 88 FR 54734.

similar type of accommodation, if the employer intends to assert that providing the accommodation to another employee would pose an undue hardship, the employer should engage in the interactive process with the employee regarding the currently requested accommodation and determine whether the same conditions that previously imposed an undue hardship still exist. Ultimately, whether a particular accommodation will impose an undue hardship for an employer is determined on a case-by-case basis.

99. While an employer may consider the impact of prior accommodations granted to the employee currently seeking an accommodation, the mere fact that an employee previously received an accommodation or, indeed, several accommodations, does not establish that it would impose an undue hardship on the employer to grant a new accommodation.

100. Thus, for example, the fact that an employer already has provided an employee with an accommodation, such as the temporary suspension of an essential function due to their pregnancy, does not establish that providing this accommodation due to a post-pregnancy limitation would be an undue hardship. Instead, the employer would have to provide evidence showing that continuing the temporary suspension would impose an undue hardship. This showing could include, for example, evidence demonstrating why and how the cumulative impact of having already provided the accommodation during pregnancy makes the current impact of providing it post-pregnancy rise to the level of significant difficulty or expense.

101. A covered entity cannot demonstrate that a reasonable accommodation imposes an undue hardship based on the possibility—whether speculative or near certain—that it will have to provide the accommodation to other employees in the future.[121] Relatedly, a covered entity that receives numerous requests for the same or similar accommodations at the same time (for example, parking spaces closer to the factory) cannot fail to provide all of them simply because processing the volume of current or anticipated requests is, or would be, burdensome or because it cannot grant all of them. Rather, the covered entity must evaluate and provide reasonable accommodations on a case-by-case basis unless, or until, doing so imposes an undue hardship.

102. Finally, for the purposes of an employer asserting undue hardship based on the impact of prior or future accommodations, as with any assertion of an undue hardship, ''[g]eneralized conclusions will not suffice to support a claim of undue hardship. Instead, undue hardship must be based on an individualized assessment of current circumstances that show that a specific reasonable accommodation would cause significant difficulty or expense.'' [122]

Undue Hardship and Safety

103. An employer's contention that the accommodation an employee requests would cause a safety risk to co-workers or clients will be assessed under the PWFA's undue hardship standard. For example, consider a qualified pregnant employee in a busy fulfillment center that has narrow aisles between the shelves of products. The employee asks for the reasonable accommodation of a cart to use while they are walking through the aisles filling orders. The employer's assertion that the aisles are too narrow and its concern for the safety of other workers being bumped by the cart could be raised as a defense based on undue hardship, specifically §1636.3(j)(2)(v), but the employer will have to demonstrate that the accommodation would actually pose an undue hardship.

104. If a particular reasonable accommodation causes an undue hardship because of safety, just as with any other situation where an employer cannot provide the requested accommodation, the employer must provide an alternative reasonable accommodation, if there is one available that does not impose an undue hardship. Importantly, assertions by employers that employees create a safety risk merely by being pregnant (as opposed to a safety risk that stems from an accommodation for a pregnancy-related limitation) should be addressed under Title VII's bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ) standard and not under the PWFA.[123]

1636.3(k) Interactive Process

105. The PWFA states that the interactive process will typically be used to determine

[121] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at n.113.

[122] *See id.*, text at n.113.

[123] *See, e.g., UAW* v. *Johnson Controls,* 499 U.S. 187, 211 (1991) (striking down the employer's fetal protection policy that limited the opportunities of women); *Everts* v. *Sushi Brokers LLC,* 247 F. Supp. 3d 1075, 1082–83 (D. Ariz. 2017) (relying on *Johnson Controls* and denying BFOQ defense in a case regarding a pregnant employee as a restaurant server, noting that, ''[u]nlike cases involving prisoners and dangers to customers where a BFOQ defense might be colorable, the present situation is exactly the type of case that Title VII guards against''); *EEOC* v. *New Prime, Inc.,* 42 F. Supp. 3d 1201, 1213–14 (W.D. Mo. 2014) (relying on *Johnson Controls* and denying a policy allegedly in place for the ''privacy'' and ''safety'' of women employees was a BFOQ); *Enforcement Guidance on Pregnancy Discrimination, supra* note 24, at (I)(B)(1)(c).

an appropriate reasonable accommodation.[124] Section 1636.3(k) largely adopts the explanation of the interactive process in the regulation implementing the ADA.[125] Section 1636.3(k) defines the interactive process as an informal, interactive process and states that the process should identify the known limitation and the adjustment or change at work that is needed due to the limitation, if either of these are not clear from the request, as well as potential reasonable accommodations.

106. There are no rigid steps that must be followed when engaging in the interactive process under the PWFA, and information provided by the employee does not need to be in any specific format, include specific words, or be on a specific form.

107. In many instances, the appropriate reasonable accommodation may be obvious to either or both the employer and the employee with the known limitation so that the interactive process can be a brief discussion. The request and granting of the accommodation can occur in a single informal conversation or short email exchange.[126]

108. Examples Regarding the Interactive Process:

Example #51/Interactive Process: Marge works at an assembly plant. She is 5 weeks pregnant. She knows that staying hydrated is important during pregnancy. She texts her supervisor that she is pregnant and that she needs to carry water with her and use the bathroom more frequently. Her supervisor explains how Marge can call for a substitute when she needs a break, and Marge uses that system when she needs to drink water or go to the bathroom.

Example #52/Interactive Process: Launa is a customer service representative. She is 6 weeks pregnant. Some mornings she has morning sickness. She has found that eating small amounts during the morning helps to control it. Launa uses the company's internal message system to tell her supervisor that she is pregnant and either needs to take breaks to eat or needs to eat in her cubicle, and that she may need a break if she is feeling nauseous. Her supervisor agrees.

109. In some instances, for example to determine an appropriate reasonable accommodation, the employer and employee may engage further in the interactive process. The process is not composed of rigid steps but is an opportunity for the covered entity and employee to participate in a dialogue to quickly identify a reasonable accommodation that enables the employee to address their limitation through a reasonable accommodation that does not pose an undue hardship. The interactive process also may provide an opportunity for the covered entity and the employee to discuss how different accommodations will provide the employee with equal employment opportunity and what accommodation the employee prefers.[127]

110. While the interactive process is an informal exchange of information, there are still certain rules that apply. The ADA restrictions on when employers are permitted to ask disability-related questions and require medical examinations apply to all such inquiries or examinations, whether employers make them of people with or without disabilities, including questions that an employer asks during the interactive process under the PWFA.[128] For example, an employer who requires an employee who requests an accommodation due to a pregnancy-related limitation to fill out a form identifying their physical and mental impairments would have difficulty demonstrating that this disability-related inquiry is job-related and consistent with business necessity, as required by the ADA.[129] Further, if a covered entity has sufficient information from the employee to determine whether they have a PWFA limitation and need an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation, requiring the employee to provide additional information could be a violation of the PWFA's anti-retaliation provision (42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f)) (§1636.5(f)) or the PWFA's prohibition on taking adverse action

[124] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(7).

[125] *See* 29 CFR 1630.2(o)(3).

[126] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(2) (§1636.4(b)) prohibits a covered entity from requiring a qualified employee with a PWFA limitation to accept an accommodation other than any reasonable accommodation arrived at through the interactive process.

[127] During the interactive process, especially if it is lengthened due to, for example, equipment being ordered or the employee waiting for information from or an appointment with a health care provider, the employer should determine how to address the employee's needs while the interactive process is ongoing. *See, e.g., Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at n.89 (discussing a situation when the employee is waiting for reassignment). The Commission has discussed a similar situation with regard to postponing an employee's evaluation pending the employee receiving a requested reasonable accommodation. EEOC, *Technical Assistance on Applying Performance and Conduct Standards to Employees with Disabilities,* Examples 8 & 11 (2008) *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/applying-performance-and-conduct-standards-employees-disabilities. See also supra* in the Interpretive Guidance in section *1636.3(h)* under *Interim Reasonable Accommodations.*

[128] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12112(d); 29 CFR 1630.13, 1630.14.

[129] 42 U.S.C. 12112(d)(4)(A); 29 CFR 1630.14(c).

in response to a request for reasonable accommodation (42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5)) (§1636.4(e)). If an employer decides to seek supporting documentation in response to a request for a PWFA reasonable accommodation, the restrictions limiting supporting documentation set forth in §1636.3(l) apply. Finally, any medical information obtained during the interactive process under the PWFA must be maintained on separate forms and in separate medical files and be treated as a confidential medical record, in accordance with the ADA's rules on the confidentiality of medical information, as explained in section *1636.7(a)(1)* of this appendix under *Prohibition on Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations and Protection of Medical Information*. Of particular relevance to the PWFA, the fact that an employee is pregnant, has recently been pregnant, or has a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth is medical information. Similarly, disclosing that an employee is receiving or has requested an accommodation under the PWFA or has limitations for which they requested or are receiving a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA, usually amounts to a disclosure that the employee is pregnant, has recently been pregnant, or has a related medical condition.

Recommendations for an Interactive Process

111. Appropriate reasonable accommodations are best determined through a flexible interactive process that includes both the employer and the employee with the known limitation. Employers and employees may use some of the steps noted in paragraph 112 of this section, if warranted, to address requests for reasonable accommodations under the PWFA, but the Commission emphasizes that, as under the ADA, a covered entity and an employee do not have to complete all or even some of these steps. The Commission expects that typically a simple conversation will be sufficient for employers to obtain all the information needed to determine the appropriate reasonable accommodation. As with the ADA, a covered entity should respond expeditiously to a request for reasonable accommodation and act promptly to provide the reasonable accommodation.[130]

112. If an employer has not obtained enough information to determine the appropriate reasonable accommodation through the initial request or a simple conversation or email exchange, the flexible interactive process may continue. For example, when an employee with a known limitation has requested a reasonable accommodation regarding the performance of the essential functions of the job, the covered entity, using a problem-solving approach, may, as needed:

a. Analyze the particular job involved and determine its purpose and essential functions;

b. Consult with the employee with a known limitation to ascertain what kind of accommodation is necessary given the known limitation;

c. In consultation with the employee with the known limitation, identify potential accommodations and assess the effectiveness each would have in enabling the employee to perform the essential functions of the position. If the employee's limitation means that they are temporarily unable to perform one or more essential functions of the position, the parties also must consider whether suspending the performance of one or more essential functions may be a part of the reasonable accommodation if the known limitation is temporary and the employee could perform the essential function(s) in the near future; and

d. Consider the preference of the employee to be accommodated and select and implement the accommodation that is most appropriate for both the employee and the covered entity.[131]

113. Steps (b) to (d) outlined in paragraph 112 of this section can be adapted and applied to requests for reasonable accommodations related to the application process and to benefits and privileges of employment. In those situations, in step (c), the consideration should be how to enable the applicant with a known limitation to be considered for the position in question or how to provide an employee with a known limitation with the ability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.

114. In some instances, neither the employee requesting the accommodation nor the covered entity may be able to readily identify an appropriate accommodation. For example, an applicant needing an accommodation may not know enough about the equipment used by the covered entity or the exact nature of the work site to suggest an appropriate accommodation. Likewise, the covered entity may not know enough about an employee's known limitation and its effect on the performance of the job to suggest an appropriate accommodation. In these situations, the steps in paragraph 112 of this section may be helpful as part of the employer's reasonable effort to identify the appropriate reasonable accommodation. In addition, parties may consult outside resources

[130] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at Question 10. Following the steps laid out for the interactive process is not a defense to liability if the employer fails to provide a reasonable accommodation that it could have provided absent undue hardship.

[131] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.9.

such as State or local entities, non-profit organizations, or the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) for ideas regarding potential reasonable accommodations.[132]

Engaging in the Interactive Process

115. A covered entity's failure to engage in the interactive process, in and of itself, is not a violation of the PWFA, just as it is not a violation of the ADA. However, a covered entity's failure to initiate or participate in the interactive process with the employee after receiving a request for reasonable accommodation could result in liability if the employee does not receive a reasonable accommodation even though one is available that would not have posed an undue hardship.[133] Relatedly, an employee's unilateral withdrawal from or refusal to participate in the interactive process can constitute sufficient grounds for failing to provide the reasonable accommodation.[134]

116. In situations where employers are permitted to seek supporting documentation, because employees may experience difficulty obtaining appointments with health care providers, especially early in pregnancy, the covered entity should be aware that it may take time for the employee to find a health care provider and provide documentation. Delay caused by the difficulty an employee faces in obtaining information from a health care provider in these circumstances should not be considered a withdrawal from or refusal to participate in the interactive process. If there is such a delay, an employer should consider providing an interim reasonable accommodation.

117. As set out in Example #53 of this appendix, if an employee requests an accommodation but then is unable to engage in the interactive process because of an emergency, an employer should not penalize the employee but rather should wait and restart the interactive process once the employee returns.

Example #53/Interruption of Interactive Process: Beryl is a quality control inspector at a labware manufacturing plant. She is in the early stage of pregnancy, and Beryl's employer does not know that she is pregnant. In the middle of her shift, Beryl suddenly experiences cramping and bleeding. She tells her supervisor that she thinks she is having a miscarriage and needs to leave. The next afternoon, Beryl's partner calls the supervisor and explains that Beryl will be resting at home for the next 24 hours. Following time at home, Beryl returns to the workplace and follows up with her supervisor regarding her emergency departure.

The bleeding and cramping Beryl experienced is a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, and Beryl identified an adjustment or change needed at work (leave). Thus, Beryl made a request for a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA, and it serves to start the PWFA interactive process.

The employer received Beryl's request, but the interactive process was interrupted by the emergency situation that required immediate action. The interactive process resumed when Beryl's partner spoke with the supervisor and provided further information regarding Beryl's condition. When Beryl spoke with her supervisor upon her return, she reengaged in the interactive process. Through this continued conversation, the employer was able to gather sufficient information to determine that Beryl had a limitation under the PWFA and was entitled to a reasonable accommodation. The employer must grant Beryl leave for the time she took off because of her miscarriage unless it can establish that doing so would be an undue hardship. Moreover, if the employer is one that automatically assigns points or penalizes employees for unexcused absences, Beryl should not be penalized for using the leave because she was entitled to the accommodation of leave.[135]

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[132] *See* JAN, *supra* note 107. *See also* U.S. Dep't of Lab., Occupational Safety & Health Admin., *Ergonomics–Solutions to Control Hazards, https://www.osha.gov/ergonomics/control-hazards* (last visited Apr. 3, 2024); U.S. Dep't of Health & Hum. Servs., Ctrs. for Disease Control & Prevention, Nat'l Inst. for Occupational Safety & Health, *Reproductive Health and The Workplace, https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/repro/* (last reviewed May 1, 2023).

[133] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation*, *supra* note 12, at Question 6.

[134] *See id.*

[135] There also may be other types of situations where the employer is on notice of the need for accommodation but then the interactive process is interrupted. *See, e.g., King* v. *Steward Trumbull Mem'l Hosp., Inc.*, 30 F.4th 551, 568 (6th Cir. 2022) (''Anti-discrimination laws sometimes require employers to accommodate unexpected circumstances. Sudden illnesses and episodic flare-ups are, by nature, difficult to plan for and can be quite disruptive to those who fall ill and those around them. But that does not mean that accommodating a sudden flare-up will cause undue hardship merely because handling these situations requires more flexibility.'')

Some workplace attendance policies explicitly provide for unexpected absences by, for example, not penalizing workers who experience an emergency health situation. *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation*, *supra* note 12, at text accompanying n.74. Providing this type of leave to some

1636.3(l) Limits on Supporting Documentation

118. A covered entity is not required to seek supporting documentation from an employee who requests an accommodation under the PWFA. If a covered entity decides to seek supporting documentation, the covered entity is permitted to do so only when reasonable under the circumstances to determine whether the employee has a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (a limitation) and needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation. When seeking documentation is reasonable, the employer is limited to seeking documentation that itself is reasonable.

119. The restrictions on a covered entity seeking supporting documentation are enforceable through different parts of the PWFA. As set out in §1636.4(a)(3), as part of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1), a covered entity may not fail to provide a reasonable accommodation based on the employee's failure to provide supporting documentation if the covered entity's request for supporting documentation violates the standards set out in §1636.3(l). Moreover, as discussed in section *1636.5(f)* of this appendix under *Possible Violations of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)) Based on Seeking Supporting Documentation During the Reasonable Accommodation Process and Disclosure of Medical Information*, a covered entity may violate the PWFA's retaliation provisions by seeking documentation or information in circumstances beyond those that are permitted under §1636.3(l). This is the case whether or not the employee provides the documentation or information sought by the employer and whether or not the employer grants the accommodation.

120. In addition to the PWFA regulation, covered entities are reminded that the ADA's limitations on disability-related inquiries and medical exams apply to all ADA-covered employers.[136] These ADA limitations protect all of the covered entity's employees whether they have disabilities or not and whether they are seeking an ADA reasonable accommodation or not. Thus, employers responding to reasonable accommodation requests under the PWFA should be mindful of the ADA's limitations on the employer's ability to make disability-related inquiries or require medical exams in response to these requests.[137] For example, separate from requirements imposed by the PWFA and §1636.3(l), a covered entity may not ask an employee who requests an accommodation under the PWFA if the employee has asked for other reasonable accommodations in the past or whether the employee has pre-existing conditions, because these questions are disability-related inquiries, *i.e.*, questions that are likely to elicit disability-related information, and they are not job-related and consistent with business necessity in these circumstances. Further, an employer may not require that an employee seeking an accommodation under the PWFA complete specific forms that ask for information regarding ''impairments'' or ''major life activities.'' These are disability-related inquiries and, because they are not job-related and consistent with business necessity in these circumstances, they would violate the ADA.

121. The Commission notes that pregnant employees may experience limitations and, therefore, require accommodations, before they have had any pregnancy-related medical appointments. Pregnant employees also may experience difficulty obtaining an immediate appointment with a health care provider early in a pregnancy or finding a health care provider at all. The Commission encourages employers who choose to seek supporting documentation, when that is permitted under §1636.3(l), to consider the best practice of granting interim reasonable accommodations if an employee indicates that they have tried to obtain documentation and it will be provided at a later date.

1636.3(l)(1) Seeking Supporting Documentation Only When Reasonable Under the Circumstances

122. The Commission expects that most PWFA interactive processes will consist of simple exchanges of information between employees and employers, such as brief conversations or emails, and that many of these will be concluded very shortly after the employee with a known limitation requests a reasonable accommodation, without any requests for further information. Once an employer has determined an appropriate reasonable accommodation, such as through these types of simple communications, no further interactive process is necessary.

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workers but not to workers affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions could be a violation of Title VII. Finally, if the worker does not qualify for coverage under the PWFA, there may be other laws, like the ADA or the FMLA, that would apply.

[136] The PWFA and title I of the ADA apply to the same entities. Therefore, all entities covered by title I of the ADA also are covered by the PWFA.

[137] For further discussion of this topic, *see infra* section *1636.7(a)(1)* of this appendix under *Prohibition on Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations and Protection of Medical Information*.

123. The PWFA does not require employers to seek supporting documentation from employees requesting accommodations. Under the PWFA, a covered entity may seek supporting documentation only if it is reasonable under the circumstances for the covered entity to determine whether the employee has a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (a limitation) and needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation.

124. Under §1636.3(l), situations when it would be reasonable under the circumstances for a covered entity to seek supporting documentation include, for example, if a pregnant employee asks for the temporary suspension of an essential function(s) that involves climbing ladders due to dizziness and the danger of falling, then the employer may, but is not required to, seek reasonable documentation, which is the minimum that is sufficient to confirm the physical or mental condition—*i.e.*, dizziness and increased risk related to falling; confirm that the physical or mental condition is related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (together ''a limitation''); and describe the adjustment or change at work needed due to the limitation—*i.e.*, how high the employee may climb, the types of actions the employee should avoid, and how long the modification will be needed. As another example, if an employee requests an accommodation for a known limitation but has only a vague idea of what type of accommodation would be effective and the employer also does not know of a potential accommodation, it would be reasonable under the circumstances for the employer to seek supporting documentation describing the adjustment or change at work needed due to the limitation to help identify the needed accommodation. The employer also may consult resources such as JAN.[138]

125. Section 1636.3(l) provides five examples of when it would not be reasonable under the circumstances for the employer to seek supporting documentation.

1636.3(l)(1)(i)—Obvious

126. Under the PWFA, it is not reasonable under the circumstances for an employer to seek supporting documentation when the physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (the limitation) and the adjustment or change at work that is needed due to the limitation are obvious.

127. In practice, the Commission expects this example will usually apply when the employee is obviously pregnant.[139] Whether someone is ''obviously'' pregnant can depend on a number of factors, and not everyone who is pregnant looks the same, but there is a large subset of pregnant workers who most individuals would agree are ''obviously'' pregnant, *i.e.*, the pregnancy is showing and onlookers easily notice by looking. To limit problems that can arise in some instances when employers attempt to determine if someone is pregnant by looking at them, the regulation requires the employee to confirm the limitation and the adjustment or change at work needed due to the limitation through self-confirmation as defined in §1636.3(l)(4). This may happen in the same conversation where the employee requests an accommodation.

128. Thus, for example, when an obviously pregnant employee confirms they are pregnant and asks for a different size uniform or related safety gear, the limitation and the adjustment or change at work needed due to the limitation are obvious, and the employer may not seek supporting documentation. In situations where some information is obvious and other information is not, the employer may seek supporting documentation relevant only to the non-obvious issue. Thus, if an obviously pregnant employee requests the reasonable accommodation of leave related to childbirth and recovery and confirms that they are pregnant, it may be reasonable under the circumstances for the employer to seek supporting documentation about the length of leave for recovery, but it would not be reasonable to seek supporting documentation regarding the limitation. Of course, the employer does not have to seek supporting documentation and can simply engage the employee in a discussion about how much leave the employee will need and when they will need it.

1636.3(l)(1)(ii)—Known

129. The second example of when it would not be reasonable to seek supporting documentation is when the employer already has sufficient information to determine that the employee has a PWFA limitation and the adjustment or change at work needed due to the limitation. For example, if an employee already provided documentation stating that because of their recent cesarean section they

[138] *See* JAN, *supra* note 107.

[139] ''Obvious'' means that the condition is apparent without being mentioned. In terms of pregnancy itself, this may depend on physical appearance, *i.e.*, whether the pregnancy is ''showing.'' This is a concept that the Commission has used previously regarding pregnancy discrimination. *Enforcement Guidance on Pregnancy Discrimination*, *supra* note 24, at (I)(A)(1)(a) (discussing the ''obviousness'' of pregnancy and a discrimination claim).

should not lift over 20 pounds for 2 months, the employer may not seek further supporting documentation during those 2 months because the employer already has sufficient information.[140]

130. This principle also applies to episodic conditions. If an employer already has sufficient information to determine that the employee has a PWFA limitation that is episodic (e.g., migraines that are related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), and the adjustment or change at work needed periodically due to the limitation (breaks or time off), the employer cannot seek additional or new supporting documentation every time the condition arises.

1636.3(l)(1)(iii)—Predictable Assessments

131. The third example of when it is not reasonable under the circumstances for an employer to seek supporting documentation is based on the common types of pregnancy modifications sought under the PWFA. Specifically, it is not reasonable under the circumstances for an employer to seek supporting documentation when an employee, at any time during their pregnancy, seeks one of the following modifications, due to their pregnancy: (1) carrying or keeping water near for drinking, as needed; (2) taking additional restroom breaks, as needed; (3) sitting, for those whose work requires standing, and standing, for those whose work requires sitting, as needed; and (4) taking breaks to eat and drink, as needed. In these situations, an employee must provide self-confirmation as defined in §1636.3(l)(4). Example #10 of this appendix shows how this can be part of the request for an accommodation. It is not reasonable to seek supporting documentation when an employee is pregnant, seeks one of the four listed modifications, and provides self-confirmation as defined in paragraph (l)(4) because these are a small set of commonly sought modifications that are widely known to be needed during an uncomplicated pregnancy.

1636.3(l)(1)(iv)—Lactation

132. The fourth example of when it is not reasonable under the circumstances to seek supporting documentation concerns lactation and pumping at work or nursing during work hours. Specifically, it is not reasonable under the circumstances to seek supporting documentation when the reasonable accommodation is related to a time and/or place to pump or any other modification related to pumping at work,[141] and the employee has provided a self-confirmation as set out in §1636.3(l)(4). Likewise, it is not reasonable under the circumstances to seek supporting documentation when the reasonable accommodation is related to time to nurse during work hours when the regular location of the employee's workplace makes nursing during work hours a possibility because the child is in close proximity and the employee has provided self-confirmation as set out in paragraph (l)(4).[142]

133. It is not reasonable to seek supporting documentation regarding pumping or nursing at work because lactation beginning around or shortly after birth is an obvious fact. Additionally, and pragmatically, health care providers may not be able to provide supporting documentation about the details of how a specific employee is managing nursing or pumping, as this is not something necessarily discussed with a health care provider. This example does not, however, apply to all reasonable accommodations related to lactation; thus, this example would not apply if a lactating employee requested full-time remote work due to a condition that makes pumping difficult.

1636.3(l)(1)(v)—Employer's Own Policies or Practices

134. The fifth example of when it would not be reasonable under the circumstances for a covered entity to seek supporting documentation relates to an employer's own policies or practices. If the requested accommodation is one that is available to employees without known limitations pursuant to the covered entity's policies or practices without submitting supporting documentation, then it is not reasonable for the employer to seek supporting documentation from an employee seeking a similar accommodation under the PWFA. For example, if an employer has a policy or practice of requiring supporting documentation only for the use of leave for 3 or more consecutive days, it would not be reasonable to ask someone who is using the same type of leave due to a known limitation

[140] This example does not mean that when it is otherwise reasonable in the circumstances to seek supporting documentation, an employer is prohibited from doing so because the employee has simply stated that they have a limitation and need an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation. However, the employer also is not required to seek documentation and can accept the employee's statement.

[141] *See supra* note 102 for discussion of the PUMP Act and the types of accommodations that may be requested with regard to pumping.

[142] ''Nursing during work hours'' could include, for example, when an employee who always teleworks from home and has their child at home takes a break to nurse the child, or when an employee takes a break to travel to a nearby daycare center to nurse.

under the PWFA to submit supporting documentation when they request leave for 2 or fewer days.[143]

1636.3(l)(2) Reasonable Documentation

135. Under the PWFA, reasonable accommodations are available for physical or mental conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. When it is reasonable under the circumstances for the covered entity to seek supporting documentation, the covered entity is limited to seeking documentation that is itself reasonable. When it is reasonable under the circumstances for the covered entity to seek supporting documentation, the covered entity may require that the supporting documentation come from a health care provider.

136. Confirming the physical or mental condition requires only a simple statement that the physical or mental condition meets the first part of the definition of ''limitation'' at §1636.3(a)(2), (*i.e.*, the physical or mental condition is: an impediment or problem, including ones that are modest, minor, or episodic; a need or a problem related to maintaining the health of the employee or the pregnancy, or that the employee is seeking health care related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition itself).[144] The physical or mental condition can be a PWFA limitation whether or not such condition is an impairment or a disability under the ADA.[145] Some examples of physical or mental conditions that could be limitations are that the employee: has a back injury; has swollen ankles; is experiencing vomiting; has a lifting restriction; is experiencing fatigue; should not be exposed to a certain chemical; should avoid working in the heat; needs to avoid certain physical tasks such as walking, running, or physical confrontation because of increased risk; needs to attend a health care appointment; or needs to recover from a health care procedure. Because the physical or mental condition can be something like fatigue or vomiting, there is no need for the statement to contain a medical diagnosis. Thus, documentation is sufficient under §1636.3(l)(2) even if it does not contain a medical diagnosis, as long as it has a simple statement of the physical or mental condition.

137. The supporting documentation should confirm that the physical or mental condition is related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. The supporting documentation need not state that the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions are the sole, the original, or a substantial cause of the physical or mental condition at issue because the statute only requires that the physical or mental condition be ''related to, affected by, or arising out of'' pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.[146] If relevant, the documentation should include confirmation that the ''related medical condition'' is related to pregnancy or childbirth.

138. The employer also may seek reasonable documentation to describe the adjustment or change at work that is needed due to the limitation and an estimate of the expected duration of the need for the adjustment or change. This may be, for example: no heavy lifting for approximately 4 months; cannot stand for more than 30 minutes at a time until the end of the pregnancy; the maximum amount of weight involved in the lifting restriction and the approximate length of the restriction; the approximate number of and length of breaks; the kind of support or equipment needed and for approximately how long; a change in the type of protective equipment or ventilation needed and for approximately how long it will be needed; the need to limit movement and be allowed to lie down when necessary and for approximately how long the employee will need to limit movement; a change in work location and the approximate length of time of the change; a period of leave expected to be needed for recovery or to attend health care appointments; or the essential function(s) that should be temporarily suspended and for how long.

139. Where the supporting documentation meets the standards described in this section, it is sufficient to determine whether the employee has a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (a limitation) and needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation. Accordingly, a covered entity that has received sufficient documentation but fails to provide an accommodation based on the failure to provide sufficient documentation, or continues to seek additional documentation or information, risks liability under 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) (§1636.4(a)(3)) and/or 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)).

[143] Conversely, if regular employer policies or practices would require documentation when the PWFA would not, or would require more documentation than the PWFA would allow in a situation where the employee is requesting an accommodation under the PWFA, the PWFA's restrictions on supporting documentation would apply.

[144] Section 1636.3(a)(2).

[145] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4); *see* 29 CFR 1630.3(h).

[146] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4); *see supra* in section *1636.3(a)(2)* of this appendix under *Related to, Affected by, or Arising Out of*.

140. Examples Regarding Documentation:[147]

Example #54/Reasonable Documentation: Amelia recently returns to work after giving birth and recovery from childbirth. Amelia requests that she not be required to lift more than 30 pounds due to a back injury arising out of her pregnancy. Amelia's employer can use the interactive process to identify Amelia's limitation and what accommodation will address her limitation. Amelia's employer may, but is not required to, seek supporting documentation; in this situation, the employer decides to seek supporting documentation from Amelia. At Amelia's request, her obstetrician emails the human resources department, explaining that Amelia's recent pregnancy has caused a back injury and that she should avoid lifting more than 30 pounds for approximately the next 3 months. This is sufficient documentation to confirm that Amelia has a limitation—a physical or mental condition (a back injury, which is an impediment or problem) related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions—and to describe an adjustment or change at work that is needed due to the limitation (avoid lifting more than 30 pounds for approximately the next three months). Because this is sufficient documentation, the covered entity failing to provide Amelia an accommodation based on a lack of documentation may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) (§1636.4(a)(3)), and the covered entity trying to obtain additional documentation or information related to Amelia's request for a reasonable accommodation may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)).

Example #55 Reasonable Documentation: Rachna is 6 months pregnant and has just learned that she has preeclampsia. She requires limited activity and bed rest for the remainder of her pregnancy to limit the risks to her health and the health of her pregnancy. Rachna's employer can use the interactive process to identify Rachna's limitation and what accommodation will address her limitation. Rachna's employer may, but is not required to, seek supporting documentation; in this situation, the employer decides to seek supporting documentation from Rachna. Rachna provides her employer with a note from her midwife saying that, because of risks related to her health and the health of her pregnancy, Rachna needs to limit activities that involve sitting or standing, needs bed rest as much as possible, and should not commute to work for the remaining 3 months of her pregnancy. This is sufficient documentation to confirm that Rachna has a limitation—a physical or mental condition (maintaining the health of the employee or the employee's pregnancy) related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions—and to describe the change at work that is needed (limiting activities involving sitting and standing, lying down as much as possible, and not commuting for the remainder of her pregnancy). Because this is sufficient documentation, the covered entity failing to provide Rachna an accommodation based on a lack of documentation may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) (§1636.4(a)(3)), and the covered entity trying to obtain additional documentation or information related to her request for a reasonable accommodation may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)).

141. Because a covered entity is limited to the minimum supporting documentation necessary, a covered entity may not require that a pregnancy be confirmed through a specific test or method. Moreover, such a requirement could implicate the ADA's provisions that medical examinations only are permitted when they are job-related and consistent with business necessity.[148]

142. Additionally, covered entities may not require that supporting documentation be submitted on a specific form, but only that documentation meets the requirements of §1636.3(l)(2). If covered entities offer an optional form for employees to use in submitting supporting documentation, the covered entities may wish to review preexisting forms they have for reasonable accommodations or leave to ensure their compliance with the PWFA. For example, the PWFA does not require that an employee have a ''serious health condition'' and the statute does not use the term ''major life activity,'' so employer forms or other employer communications seeking supporting documentation for PWFA-related reasonable accommodations should not use this terminology.

1636.3(l)(3) Limitations on a Covered Entity Seeking Supporting Documentation From a Health Care Provider

143. When it is reasonable under the circumstances for the covered entity to seek supporting documentation, a covered entity may require that the supporting documentation comes from a health care provider. The regulation contains a non-exhaustive list of possible health care providers that is based on the non-exhaustive list provided in the Commission's ADA policy guidance.[149]

[147] The conditions described in these examples also may be disabilities under the ADA and therefore may entitle the employee to an accommodation under the ADA, regardless of whether they are entitled to one under the PWFA.

[148] 42 U.S.C. 12112(d)(4)(A).

[149] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at Question 6.

144. The covered entity may not require that the health care provider who is submitting documentation be the provider treating the employee for the condition at issue, as long as the health care provider is able to confirm the physical or mental condition; confirm that the physical or mental condition is related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (together ''a limitation''); and describe the adjustment or change at work that is needed due to the limitation. The covered entity may not require that an employee be examined by a health care provider of the covered entity's choosing.

1636.3(l)(4) Self-Confirmation of Pregnancy or Lactation

145. For the purposes of supporting documentation under the PWFA, self-confirmation is a simple statement in which the employee confirms, as set forth in §1636.3(l)(1)(i), (iii) and (iv), the limitation and adjustment or change that is needed at work due to the limitation. The self-confirmation statement can be made in any manner and can be made as part of the request for reasonable accommodation under §1636.3(h)(2). For example, self-confirmation may be spoken, it may be recorded or live, or it may be written on paper or electronically, such as in an email or text. Self-confirmation does not need to use any particular words or format, does not need to be written on a form, does not need to be a particular length, does not need to be notarized or otherwise verified, and does not need to be accompanied by documentary or physical evidence. In many instances, the self-confirmation will be part of what the employee communicates when they start the reasonable accommodation process. Example #10 of this appendix, where an employee tells a manager of her need for more frequent bathroom breaks and explains that the breaks are needed because the employee is pregnant, is an example of self-confirmation of pregnancy.

Interaction Between the PWFA and the ADA

146. Employers covered by the PWFA also are covered by the ADA.[150] The ADA's statutory text includes express restrictions on when a covered entity may require medical exams and make disability-related inquiries.[151] These restrictions apply to all the interactions between covered entities and their employees, regardless of whether an individual has a disability. Thus, for example, if an employee is requesting a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA, the ADA's restrictions apply and prevent an employer from seeking the employee's entire medical record or asking the employee if they have received accommodations in the past because these inquiries are likely to elicit information about a disability and are not job-related and consistent with business necessity in these circumstances. Independent of these ADA restrictions, §1636.3(l)(2) also prohibits seeking this type of documentation under the PWFA because it goes beyond the definition of reasonable documentation. Finally, depending on the facts, seeking such information could violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f).

147. The ADA provides for the confidentiality of medical information, subject to limited disclosure rules.[152] These rules apply to medical information in the employer's possession, including information obtained by an employer from disability-related inquiries or medical exams, or information obtained as part of the reasonable accommodation process.[153] That an employee is pregnant, has recently been pregnant, or has a

[150] 42 U.S.C 12111(5) (ADA); 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(2) (PWFA).

[151] 42 U.S.C. 12112(d), 12112(d)(4)(A).

[152] 42 U.S.C. 12112(d)(3)(B); 29 CFR 1630.14(b)(1), (c)(1), (d)(4); EEOC, *Enforcement Guidance on Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations of Employees Under the ADA*, at text accompanying nn.9–10 (2000) [hereinafter *Enforcement Guidance on Disability-Related Inquiries*], *http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-disability-related-inquiries-and-medical-examinations-employees* (''The ADA requires employers to treat any medical information obtained from a disability-related inquiry or medical examination . . . as well as any medical information voluntarily disclosed by an employee, as a confidential medical record. Employers may share such information only in limited circumstances with supervisors, managers, first aid and safety personnel, and government officials investigating compliance with the ADA.''); EEOC, *Enforcement Guidance: Preemployment Disability-Related Questions and Medical Examinations*, at text accompanying n.6 (1995) [hereinafter *Enforcement Guidance: Preemployment Disability-Related Questions*], *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-preemployment-disability-related-questions-and-medical. https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-preemployment-disability-related-questions-and-medical* (''Medical information must be kept confidential.''). In addition, Federal agencies are covered by the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, 5 U.S.C. 552a, and many Federal agencies maintain equal employment opportunity records subject to a Privacy Act System of Records Notice.

[153] *See Enforcement Guidance on Disability-Related Inquiries, supra* note 152, at General Principles (''The ADA requires employers to treat any medical information obtained from

medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth is medical information. The ADA requires that employers keep such information confidential and only disclose it within the confines of the ADA's limited disclosure rules. Similarly, disclosing that an employee is receiving or has requested a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA usually amounts to a disclosure that the employee is pregnant, has recently been pregnant, or has a related medical condition and thus must be treated as confidential medical information as well. This is explained further in section *1636.7(a)(1)* of this appendix under *Prohibition on Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations and Protection of Medical Information.*

148. If there is a situation where an employee requests an accommodation and both the PWFA and the ADA could apply, the employer should apply the provision that it would be less demanding for the employee to satisfy. For example, assume a pregnant employee has diabetes that is exacerbated by the pregnancy and needs breaks to eat or drink. Under the PWFA, the covered entity cannot seek supporting documentation (as set forth in §1636.3(l)(1)(iii)) and this is the provision that the employer should apply.

IV. 1636.4 Nondiscrimination With Regard to Reasonable Accommodations Related to Pregnancy

1636.4(a) Failing To Provide Reasonable Accommodation

1. The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) prohibits a covered entity from not making a reasonable accommodation for a qualified employee with a known limitation related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions unless the covered entity can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its business. This provision of the PWFA uses the same language as the ADA, and the rule likewise uses the language from the corresponding ADA regulation.[154] Because 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) uses the same operative language as the ADA, it should be interpreted in a similar manner.

2. This section is violated when a covered entity fails to make reasonable accommodation to a qualified employee with a known limitation, absent undue hardship.[155] However, a covered entity does not violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) merely by refusing to engage in the interactive process; for a violation, there also must have been a reasonable accommodation that the employer could have provided absent undue hardship.

1636.4(a)(1) Unnecessary Delay in Providing a Reasonable Accommodation

3. An unnecessary delay in providing a reasonable accommodation to the known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of a qualified employee may result in a violation of the PWFA if the delay constitutes a failure to provide a reasonable accommodation. This can be true even if the reasonable accommodation is eventually provided, when the delay was unnecessary. Unnecessary delay that can be actionable under this section can occur at any time during the accommodation process including, but not limited to, responding to the initial request, during the interactive process, or in implementing the accommodation once the request is approved. Delay by a third-party administrator acting on behalf of the covered entity is attributable to the covered entity.

4. Section 1636.4(a)(1) sets out the factors that are used when determining whether a delay in the provision of a reasonable accommodation violates the PWFA. Section 1636.4(a)(1) sets out the factors already identified in the ADA guidance[156] and adds three additional factors, described in paragraphs 5, 6, and 7 of this section.

5. First, whether providing the accommodation was simple or complex is a factor to be considered. Under the PWFA, there are certain modifications, set forth in §1636.3(j)(4), that will virtually always be found to be reasonable accommodations that

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a disability-related inquiry or medical examination (including medical information from voluntary health or wellness programs), as well as any medical information voluntarily disclosed by an employee, as a confidential medical record.'') and text after n.12 (''[T]he ADA's restrictions on inquiries and examinations apply to all employees, not just those with disabilities.'').

[154] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12112(b)(5)(A); 29 CFR 1630.9(a).

[155] The regulation in §1636.4, following the language in the statute, uses the phrase ''known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.'' 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1), (3)–(5). Given the definition in the statute of ''known limitation'' (42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4)), the phrase ''known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions'' in §1636.4 and 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1 should be understood to mean that the known limitations are related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions or that ''known limitations'' mean physical or mental conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

[156] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at Question 10 & n.38. The *Enforcement Guidance* notes that these are ''relevant factors'' but not that these are the only factors.

do not impose an undue hardship: (1) allowing a pregnant employee to carry or keep water near and drink, as needed; (2) allowing a pregnant employee to take additional restroom breaks, as needed; (3) allowing a pregnant employee whose work requires standing to sit and whose work requires sitting to stand, as needed; and (4) allowing a pregnant employee to take breaks to eat and drink, as needed. If there is delay in providing these accommodations to a qualified employee with a known limitation, it will virtually always be found to be unnecessary because of the presumption that these modifications will be reasonable accommodations that do not impose an undue hardship.

6. Second, whether the covered entity offered the employee an interim reasonable accommodation during the interactive process is a factor to be considered. The offer of an interim reasonable accommodation can be made at any time following the request for accommodation. The provision of an interim accommodation will decrease the likelihood that an unnecessary delay will be found. Under this factor, the interim reasonable accommodation should be one that enables the employee to keep working as much as possible; the provision of leave will not be considered as a factor that can excuse delay, unless the employee selects, or requests, leave as an interim reasonable accommodation.[157]

7. Third, the length of time for which the employee will need the reasonable accommodation is another factor to be considered. Given that limitations related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions are frequently temporary, an unnecessary delay in providing an accommodation may mean that the period necessitating the accommodation could pass without action simply because of the delay.

1636.4(a)(2) Refusing an Accommodation

8. An employee with a known limitation is not required to accept a reasonable accommodation. However, if the rejection of the reasonable accommodation results in the employee being unable to perform the essential functions of the job, the employee is not qualified. This provision mirrors the language from a similar provision in the ADA regulation,[158] with the inclusion of employees who are qualified under §1636.3(f)(2).

1636.4(a)(3) Covered Entity Failing To Provide a Reasonable Accommodation Due to Lack of Supporting Documentation

9. A covered entity cannot defend the failure to provide an accommodation based on the lack of supporting documentation if: the covered entity did not seek supporting documentation; seeking supporting documentation was not reasonable under the circumstances as defined in §1636.3(l)(1); the covered entity sought documentation beyond that which is reasonable as defined in §1636.3(l)(2); or the covered entity did not provide the employee sufficient time to obtain and provide the supporting documentation sought.

1636.4(a)(4) Choosing Among Possible Accommodations

10. The covered entity must provide an effective accommodation, *i.e.,* one that meets the employee's needs or limitations. If there is more than one effective accommodation, the employee's preference should be given primary consideration.[159] However, the employer providing the accommodation has the ultimate discretion to choose among effective reasonable accommodations.[160] The employer may choose, for example, the less expensive accommodation, the accommodation that is easier for it to provide, or, generally, the accommodation that imposes the least hardship.[161] In the situation where the employer is choosing among effective reasonable accommodations and does not provide the accommodation that is the employee's preferred accommodation, the employer does not have to show that it is an undue hardship to provide the employee's preferred accommodation.

11. A covered entity's ''ultimate discretion'' in choosing a reasonable accommodation is limited by certain other considerations. First, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1 (§1636.4(a)(4)) requires that the accommodation must provide the qualified employee with a known limitation with equal employment opportunity.[162] By this, the Commission means an opportunity to attain the same level of performance, experience the same level of benefits, or otherwise enjoy the same terms, conditions, and privileges of employment as are available to the average similarly situated employee without a known limitation, which includes the individual who needs the accommodation when they are without the known limitation.[163] This may be shown by evidence

[157] The restriction on using leave as an interim accommodation is based on 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(4) and 2000gg–2(f).

[158] *See* 29 CFR 1630.9(d).

[159] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.9.

[160] *Id.*

[161] *Id.*

[162] *See also Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at Question 9, Example B.

[163] *See* 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.9; 29 CFR part 1630, appendix, 1630.2(o) (explaining that reassignment should be to a position with equivalent pay, status, etc., if the individual is qualified, and if the position is vacant within a reasonable amount of time); *see also Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable*

of the opportunities that would have been available to the employee seeking the accommodation had they not identified a known limitation or sought an accommodation, or other evidence that tends to demonstrate that the accommodation provided to the employee did not provide equal employment opportunity. Depending on the facts, selecting the accommodation that does not provide equal opportunity could violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1), 2000gg–1(5), or 2000gg–2(f).[164]

12. Second, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(2) prohibits a covered entity from requiring a qualified employee affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions to accept an accommodation other than any reasonable accommodation arrived at through the interactive process.

13. Third, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(4) prohibits a covered entity from requiring a qualified employee with a known limitation to take leave, whether paid or unpaid, if there is a reasonable accommodation that will allow the employee to continue to work, absent undue hardship.

14. Fourth, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5) prohibits a covered entity from taking adverse action in terms, conditions, or privileges of employment against a qualified employee on account of the employee requesting or using a reasonable accommodation to the known limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of the employee.

15. Fifth, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) prohibits retaliation and coercion by covered entities.

16. These limitations to the ''ultimate discretion'' of a covered entity to choose among effective accommodations are described in the discussions of §§1636.4(b), (d), and (e) and 1636.5(f).

17. Example Regarding Failing To Provide Equal Employment Opportunity:

Example #56/Failing To Provide Equal Employment Opportunity: Yasmin's job requires her to travel to meet with clients. Because of her pregnancy, she is not able to travel for 3 months. She asks that she be allowed to conduct her client meetings via video conferencing. Although this accommodation would allow her to perform her essential job functions and would not impose an undue hardship, her employer reassigns her to smaller, local accounts. Being assigned only to these accounts is not an effective accommodation because it limits Yasmin's opportunity to compete for promotions and bonuses as she had in the past. This could be a violation of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1), because Yasmin is denied an equal opportunity to compete for promotions; thus, her employer has failed to provide her a reasonable accommodation. The employer's actions also could violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5) and 2000gg–2(f), or Title VII's prohibition against pregnancy discrimination.

1636.4(b) Requiring a Qualified Employee To Accept an Accommodation

18. The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(2) prohibits a covered entity from requiring a qualified employee to accept an accommodation other than any reasonable accommodation arrived at through the interactive process. Pursuant to this provision in the PWFA and §1636.4(b), a covered entity cannot require a qualified employee to accept an accommodation such as light duty or a temporary transfer, or delay of an examination that is part of the application process, without engaging in the interactive process, even if the covered entity's motivation is concern for the employee's health or pregnancy.

19. The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(2) does not require that the employee have a limitation, known or not; thus, a violation of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(2) could occur if a covered entity believes that a qualified employee is pregnant and decides, without engaging in the interactive process with the employee, that the employee needs a particular accommodation, and unilaterally requires the employee to accept the accommodation, even though the employee has not requested it and can perform the essential functions of the job without it. For example, this provision could be violated if an employment agency, without discussing the situation with the candidate, decides that a candidate recovering from a miscarriage needs an accommodation in the form of not being sent

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Accommodation, supra note 12, at text following n.80 (''However, if both the employer and the employee voluntarily agree that transfer is preferable to remaining in the current position with some form of reasonable accommodation, then the employer may transfer the employee.''); *cf.* EEOC, *Compliance Manual on Religious Discrimination,* (12–IV)(A)(3) (2021) [hereinafter *Compliance Manual on Religious Discrimination*], *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/section-12-religious-discrimination* (stating that in the context of a religious accommodation, an accommodation would not be reasonable ''if it requires the employee to accept a reduction in pay rate or some other loss of a benefit or privilege of employment and there is an alternative accommodation that does not do so''); EEOC, *Enforcement Guidance: Unlawful Disparate Treatment of Workers With Caregiving Responsibilities,* Example 5 (2007), *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-unlawful-disparate-treatment-workers-caregiving-responsibilities* (explaining how a worker can be a comparator for themselves).

[164] Depending on the facts, this could be a violation of Title VII's prohibition on sex discrimination as well.

to certain jobs that the agency views as too physical. Similarly, a violation could result if an employer decides to excuse a qualified pregnant employee from overtime as an accommodation without the employee seeking an accommodation and the employer and the employee engaging in the interactive process.[165]

20. Additionally, a violation could occur if a covered entity receives a request for a reasonable accommodation and unilaterally imposes an accommodation that was not requested by the qualified employee without engaging in the interactive process.

21. Example Regarding Requiring an Employee To Accept an Accommodation:

Example #57/Requiring an Employee To Accept an Accommodation: Kia, a restaurant server, is pregnant. She asks for additional breaks during her shifts as her pregnancy progresses because she feels tired, and her feet are swelling. Her employer, without engaging in the interactive process with Kia, directs Kia to take host shifts for the remainder of her pregnancy, because it allows her to sit for long periods. The employer has violated 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(2) (§1636.4(b)), because it required Kia to accept an accommodation other than one arrived at through the interactive process, even if Kia's earnings did not decrease and her terms, conditions, and privileges of employment were not harmed.

Moreover, if the host shift does not provide Kia with equal terms, conditions, and privileges of employment (e.g., Kia's wages decrease or Kia no longer can earn tips), the covered entity also may have violated 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) (requiring reasonable accommodation absent undue hardship); 2000gg–1(5) (prohibiting adverse action in terms, conditions, or privileges of employment); and/or 2000gg–2(f) (prohibiting retaliation) (§§1636.4(a) and (e) and 1636.5(f)).

22. Finally, this provision also could be violated if a covered entity has a rule that requires all qualified pregnant employees to stop a certain function—such as traveling—automatically, without any evidence that the particular employee is unable to perform that function.

1636.4(c) Denying Opportunities to Qualified Employees

23. The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(3) prohibits a covered entity from denying employment opportunities to a qualified employee with a known limitation if the denial is based on the need of the covered entity to make reasonable accommodations to the known limitations related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of the qualified employee. Thus, an employee's known limitation and need for a reasonable accommodation cannot be part of the covered entity's decision regarding hiring, discharge, promotion, or other employment decisions, unless the reasonable accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the covered entity.

24. This provision in the PWFA uses language similar to that of the ADA, and §1636.4(c) likewise uses language similar to the corresponding ADA regulation.[166] Section 1636.4(c) encompasses situations where the covered entity's decision is based on the future possibility that a reasonable accommodation will be needed, *i.e.*, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(3) prohibits a covered entity from making a decision based on its belief that an employee may need a reasonable accommodation in the future regardless of whether the employee has asked for one or not. Thus, under §1636.4(c), this prohibition would include situations where a covered entity refuses to hire a pregnant applicant because the covered entity believes that the applicant will need leave to recover from childbirth, regardless of whether the covered entity knows the exact amount of leave the applicant will require, or whether the applicant has mentioned the need for leave as a reasonable accommodation to the covered entity.

1636.4(d) Requiring a Qualified Employee To Take Leave

25. A covered entity may not require a qualified employee to take leave, whether paid or unpaid, if another reasonable accommodation can be provided to the employee's known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions absent undue hardship.

26. This provision does not prohibit a covered entity from offering leave as a reasonable accommodation if leave is the reasonable accommodation requested or selected by the qualified employee, or if it is the only reasonable accommodation that does not cause an undue hardship. As provided in §1636.3(i)(3), both paid leave (accrued, short-term disability, or another employer benefit) and unpaid leave are potential reasonable accommodations under the PWFA.

1636.4(e) Adverse Action on Account of Requesting or Using a Reasonable Accommodation

27. The PWFA contains overlapping provisions that protect employees, applicants, and former employees seeking or using reasonable accommodations. Importantly, nothing

[165] These actions also could violate Title VII's prohibition of disparate treatment based on sex. *See Enforcement Guidance on Pregnancy Discrimination, supra* note 24, at (I)(B)(1).

[166] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12112(b)(5)(B); 29 CFR 1630.9(b).

in the PWFA limits which provision an employee may use to protect their rights.

28. One of these provisions is 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5), which prohibits adverse action in the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment against a qualified employee on account of the employee requesting or using a reasonable accommodation to the known limitations related to the pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions of the employee.

29. The protections provided by 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5) are likely to have significant overlap with 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f), which prohibits retaliation. However, the PWFA's anti-retaliation provisions apply to a broader group of individuals and actions than 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5) does.

30. ''Terms, conditions, or privileges of employment'' is a term from Title VII, and the Commission has interpreted it to encompass a wide range of activities or practices that occur in the workplace including, but not limited to: discriminatory work environment or atmosphere; duration of work (such as the length of an employment contract, hours of work, or attendance); work rules; job assignments and duties; and job advancement (such as training, support, and performance evaluations).[167] In addition, for the purposes of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5), ''terms, conditions, or privileges of employment'' can include hiring, discharge, or compensation.

31. This provision prohibits a covered entity from taking a harmful action against a qualified employee. For example, this provision prohibits a covered entity from penalizing an employee for having requested or used an accommodation that the covered entity had granted previously.

32. Examples Regarding Adverse Action in Terms, Conditions, or Privileges of Employment:

Example #58/Adverse Action in Terms, Conditions, or Privileges of Employment: Nava took leave to recover from childbirth as a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA, and, as a result, failed to meet the sales quota for that quarter, which led to a negative performance appraisal. The negative appraisal could be a violation of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5) because Nava received it due to the use of a reasonable accommodation. If an employee receives the reasonable accommodation of leave, a production standard, such as a sales quota, may need to be prorated to account for the reduced amount of time the employee works.[168]

33. Also, an employer may violate this provision if there is more than one reasonable accommodation that does not impose an undue hardship, and the employer, after the interactive process, chooses the accommodation that causes an adverse action with respect to the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, despite the existence of an alternative accommodation that would not do so.

Example #59/Adverse Action in Terms, Conditions, or Privileges of Employment: Ivy asks for additional bathroom breaks during the workday because of pregnancy, including during overtime shifts. After talking to Ivy, Ivy's supervisor decides Ivy should simply not work overtime, because during the overtime shift there are fewer employees and the supervisor does not want to bother figuring out coverage for Ivy's bathroom breaks, although it would not be an undue hardship to do so. As a result, Ivy is not assigned overtime and loses earnings. The employer's actions could violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5) because Ivy suffered the adverse action of not being assigned to overtime and losing wages because she used a reasonable accommodation.

Example #60/Adverse Action in Terms, Conditions, or Privileges of Employment: Leah asks for telework due to morning sickness. Through the interactive process, it is determined that either telework or a later schedule combined with an hour rest break in the afternoon would allow Leah to perform the essential functions of her job without imposing an undue hardship. Although Leah prefers telework, the employer would rather Leah be in the office. It would not be a violation of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(5) to offer Leah the schedule change/rest break, instead of telework, as a reasonable accommodation.

34. The facts set out in Examples #58 and #59 of this appendix also could violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) and 2000gg–2(f).

V. 1636.5 Remedies and Enforcement

1. In crafting the PWFA remedies and enforcement section, Congress recognized the advisability of using the existing mechanisms for redress of other forms of employment discrimination. The regulation at §1636.5(a), (c), (d), and (e) follows the language of the statute.

1636.5(a) Remedies and Enforcement Under Title VII

2. The enforcement mechanisms, procedures, and remedies available to employees and others covered by Title VII apply to the

[167] 42 U.S.C. 2000e–2(a)(1); *Compliance Manual on Terms, Conditions, and Privileges of Employment, supra* note 69, at 613.1(a) (stating that the language is to be read in the broadest possible terms and providing a list of examples).

[168] *See Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation, supra* note 12, at Question 19.

PWFA.[169] Thus, employees covered by section 706 of Title VII may file charges alleging violations of the PWFA with the Commission, and the Commission will investigate them using the same process as set out in Title VII.[170] Similarly, the Commission will use the same rules to determine the time limits for filing a charge; if the State or locality in which the charge has been filed has a law prohibiting sex discrimination, pregnancy discrimination, or specifically providing accommodations for pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, the deadline to file a charge will be 300 days.[171]

1636.5(e) Remedies and Enforcement Under Section 717 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

3. The applicable procedures and available remedies for employees covered by section 717 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16, apply under the PWFA. Employees covered by section 717 of Title VII may file complaints with the relevant Federal agency which will investigate them, and the Commission will process appeals using the same process as set out in Title VII for Federal employees. Thus, the Commission's implementing regulations found at 29 CFR part 1614 (Federal sector equal employment opportunity) apply to the PWFA as well.

Damages

4. As with other Federal employment discrimination laws, the PWFA provides for recovery of pecuniary and non-pecuniary damages, including compensatory and punitive damages. The statute's adoption by reference of section 1977A of the Revised Statutes of the United States, 42 U.S.C. 1981a, also imports the limitations on the recovery of compensatory damages and punitive damages generally applicable in employment discrimination cases, depending on the size of the employer. Punitive damages are not available in actions against a government, government agency, or political subdivision. This part lays out these requirements involving damages in separate paragraphs under §1636.5(a) through (e).

1636.5(f) Prohibition Against Retaliation

5. The anti-retaliation provisions of the PWFA should be interpreted broadly, like those of Title VII and the ADA, to effectuate Congress' broad remedial purpose in enacting these laws.[172] The protections of these provisions extend beyond qualified employees with known limitations and cover activity that may not yet have occurred, such as a circumstance in which a covered entity threatens an employee with termination if they file a charge or requires an employee to sign an agreement that prohibits such individual from filing a charge with the Commission.[173]

1636.5(f)(1) Prohibition Against Retaliation

6. The types of conduct prohibited, the standard for determining what constitutes retaliatory conduct, and the individuals protected under the PWFA are the same as they are under Title VII.[174] Accordingly, this provision prohibits discrimination against employees who engage in protected activity, which includes ''participating' in an EEO process or 'opposing' discrimination.''[175] Title VII's anti-retaliation provision is broad and protects an employee from conduct, whether related to employment or not, that a reasonable person would have found ''materially adverse,'' meaning that the action ''well might have dissuaded a reasonable worker from making or supporting a charge of discrimination.''[176] Additionally, Title

[169] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(a), (d), (e).

[170] *See* 29 CFR part 1601.

[171] *See EEOC* v. *Dolgencorp, LLC*, 899 F.3d 428, 433–34 (6th Cir. 2018) (applying the 300-day time limit to a charge alleging failure to provide a reasonable accommodation under the ADA filed in Tennessee where the state statute prohibited discrimination against individuals with disabilities but did not provide for reasonable accommodations, noting, ''[t]he relevant question is whether the state agency has the power to entertain the claimant's disability discrimination claim, not whether state law recognizes the same theories of discrimination as federal law'').

[172] *See Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation and Related Issues*, *supra* note 89, at (II)(A)(1) (describing the broad protection of the participation clause); *id.* at (II)(A)(2), (2)(a) (describing the broad protection of the opposition clause).

[173] *See* EEOC, *Enforcement Guidance on Non-Waivable Employee Rights under EEOC Enforced Statutes*, (II) (1997), *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-non-waivable-employee-rights-under-eeoc-enforced-statutes* (''[P]romises not to file a charge or participate in an EEOC proceeding are null and void as a matter of public policy. Agreements extracting such promises from employees may also amount to separate and discrete violations of the anti-retaliation provisions of the civil rights statutes.'').

[174] *See* 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f)(1) (using the same language as 42 U.S.C. 2000e–3(a)).

[175] *See Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation*, *supra* note 89, at (II)(A); *see also id.* at (II)(A)(1), (2) (describing protected activity under Title VII's anti-retaliation clause).

[176] *Burlington N. & Santa Fe Ry. Co.* v. *White*, 548 U.S. 53, 68 (2006) (internal citations and quotation marks omitted).

VII's anti-retaliation provision protects employees, applicants, and former employees.[177] The same interpretations apply to the PWFA's anti-retaliation provision.[178]

7. Section 1636.5(f) contains three other provisions based on the statutory language and established anti-retaliation concepts under Title VII and the ADA.

8. First, 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f)(1) protects ''any employee,'' not only ''a qualified employee with a known limitation''; therefore, an employee, applicant, or former employee need not establish that they have a known limitation or are qualified (as those terms are defined in the PWFA) to bring a claim under 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f)(1).[179]

9. Second, a request for a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA constitutes protected activity, and therefore retaliation for such a request is prohibited.[180]

10. Third, an employee, applicant, or former employee does not have to be actually deterred from exercising or enjoying rights under this section for the retaliation to be actionable.[181]

1636.5(f)(2) Prohibition Against Coercion

11. The PWFA's anti-coercion provision uses the same language as the ADA's interference provision, with one minor variation in the title of the section.[182] The scope of the PWFA anti-coercion provision is broader than the anti-retaliation provision; it reaches those instances ''when conduct does not meet the 'materially adverse' standard required for retaliation.''[183] Following the language of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f)(2) and consistent with the ADA's analogous interference provision, §1636.5(f)(2) protects individuals, not qualified employees with a known limitation under the PWFA. Thus, the individual need not be an employee, applicant, or former employee and need not establish that they have a known limitation or that they are qualified (as those terms are defined in the PWFA) to bring a claim for coercion under the PWFA.[184]

12. The purpose of this provision is to ensure that employees are free to avail themselves of the protections of the statute. Thus, consistent with the ADA regulation for the analogous provision, §1636.5(f)(2) includes ''harass'' in the list of prohibitions; the inclusion is intended to characterize the type of adverse treatment that may in some circumstances violate the coercion provision.[185] Section 1636.5(f)(2) also states that an individual does not actually have to be deterred from exercising or enjoying rights under this section for the coercion to be actionable.[186]

13. Importantly the coercion provision does not apply to any and all conduct or statements that an individual finds intimidating; it only prohibits conduct that is reasonably likely to interfere with the exercise or enjoyment of PWFA rights.[187]

Some examples of coercion include:

• coercing an individual to relinquish or forgo an accommodation to which they are otherwise entitled;

• intimidating an applicant from requesting an accommodation for the application process by indicating that such a request will result in the applicant not being hired;

[177] *See* 42 U.S.C. 2000e–3(a). The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f)(1) applies to an ''employee'' which 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(3) defines to include applicants. The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(3) relies on the Title VII definition of employee, which includes former employees, where relevant. *See also Robinson* v. *Shell Oil Co.*, 519 U.S. 337, 346 (1997) (finding former employees are protected under Title VII's anti-retaliation provision).

[178] All retaliatory conduct under Title VII (and the ADA), including retaliation that takes the form of harassment, is evaluated under the legal standard for retaliation. *See Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation*, *supra* note 89, at (II)(B)(3).

[179] *See Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation*, *supra* note 89, at (II)(A)(3).

[180] *See id.* at (II)(A)(2)(e) and Example 10.

[181] *See id.* at (II)(B)(1), (2) (stating that the retaliation ''standard can be satisfied even if the individual was not in fact deterred'' and that ''[i]f the employer's action would be reasonably likely to deter protected activity, it can be challenged as retaliation even if it falls short of its goal'').

[182] The ADA uses the phrase ''Interference, coercion, or intimidation'' to preface the prohibition against interference (42 U.S.C. 12203(b)), whereas the PWFA uses ''Prohibition against coercion'' (42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f)(2)). The language of the prohibitions is otherwise identical.

[183] *See Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation*, *supra* note 89, at (III).

[184] *See id.*

[185] *See* 29 CFR 1630.12(b); *see also Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation*, *supra* note 89, at text accompanying n.177 (stating, with regard to the ADA, that ''[t]he statute, regulations, and court decisions have not separately defined the terms 'coerce,' 'intimidate,' 'threaten,' and 'interfere.' Rather, as a group, these terms have been interpreted to include at least certain types of actions which, whether or not they rise to the level of unlawful retaliation, are nevertheless actionable as interference.'').

[186] *See Enforcement Guidance on Retaliation*, *supra* note 89, at (II)(B)(1), (2) (noting that actions can be challenged as retaliatory even if the person was not deterred from engaging in protected activity).

[187] *See id* at (III) (discussing the ADA's interference provision).

• issuing a policy or requirement that purports to limit an employee's rights to invoke PWFA protections (e.g., a fixed leave policy that states ''no exceptions will be made for any reason'');

• interfering with a former employee's right to file a PWFA lawsuit against a former employer by stating that a negative job reference will be given to prospective employers if the suit is filed; and

• subjecting an employee to unwarranted discipline, demotion, or other adverse treatment because they assisted a coworker in requesting a reasonable accommodation.[188]

Possible Violations of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)) Based on Seeking Supporting Documentation During the Reasonable Accommodation Process and Disclosure of Medical Information

14. Seeking documentation or information that goes beyond the parameters laid out in §1636.3(l) when an employee requests a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)) because seeking such information or documentation might well dissuade a reasonable person from engaging in protected activity, such as requesting a reasonable accommodation, or might constitute coercion. Circumstances under which going beyond the parameters of §1636.3(l) may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)) include:

• Seeking supporting documentation or information in response to an employee's request for reasonable accommodation when it is not reasonable under the circumstances for the covered entity to determine whether the employee has a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (a limitation) and needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation, whether or not the employee provides the documentation or information and whether or not the employer grants the accommodation.

• Continued efforts to obtain more information or supporting documentation when sufficient information or supporting documentation has already been provided to allow the employer to determine whether the employee has a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (a limitation) and the adjustment or change at work that is needed due to the limitation, whether or not the employee provides the documentation or information and whether or not the employer grants the accommodation.[189]

15. Disclosing medical information, threatening to disclose medical information, or requiring an employee to share their medical information other than in the limited situations set out in section *1636.7(a)(1)* of this appendix under *Prohibition on Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations and Protection of Medical Information* also may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)) because such actions might well dissuade a reasonable person from engaging in protected activity, such as requesting a reasonable accommodation, or might constitute coercion.[190]

16. Actions that the courts or the Commission have previously determined may be retaliation or interference under Title VII or the ADA may violate the retaliation and coercion provisions of the PWFA as well. Depending on the facts, a covered entity's retaliation for activity protected under the PWFA also may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) (because these actions may make the accommodation ineffective) or 2000gg–1(5) (prohibiting adverse actions) (§1636.4(a) and (e)).

17. The following examples could violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) and also may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1), (5) or other laws.

Example #61/Retaliatory Performance Appraisal: Perrin requests a stool to sit on due to her pregnancy which makes standing difficult. Lucy, Perrin's supervisor, denies Perrin's request. The corporate human resources department instructs Lucy to grant the request because there is no undue hardship. Angry about being told to provide the

[188] *See id.*

[189] This is based on a similar policy adopted under the ADA. *See Enforcement Guidance on Disability-Related Inquiries, supra* note 152, at Question 11 (''[W]hen an employee provides sufficient evidence of the existence of a disability and the need for reasonable accommodation, continued efforts by the employer to require that the individual provide more documentation and/or submit to a medical examination could be considered retaliation.''). The Commission notes that if the covered entity can show that it had a good faith belief that the submitted documentation was insufficient and thus sought additional documentation, its actions would not be retaliatory because they would lack the requisite intent.

[190] As described in detail *infra* in section *1636.7(a)(1)* of this appendix under *Prohibition on Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations and Protection of Medical Information*, the ADA's rules on medical confidentiality apply to medical information obtained under the PWFA and allow for disclosure of such information only in specific, limited circumstances. *See* 42 U.S.C. 12112(d)(3); 29 CFR 1630.14; *Enforcement Guidance on Disability-Related Inquiries, supra* note 152, at text accompanying nn.9–10; *Enforcement Guidance: Preemployment Disability-Related Questions, supra* note 152, at text accompanying n.6.

reasonable accommodation, Lucy thereafter gives Perrin an unjustified poor performance rating and denies Perrin's request to attend training that Lucy approves for Perrin's coworkers.

Example #62/Retaliatory Surveillance: Marisol files an EEOC charge after Cyrus, her supervisor, refuses to provide her with the reasonable accommodation of help with lifting following her cesarean section. Marisol also alleges that after she requested the accommodation, Cyrus asked two coworkers to: conduct surveillance on Marisol, including watching her at work; note with whom she associated in the workplace; suggest to other employees that they should avoid her; and report her breaks to Cyrus, who said he kept a record of this information ''just in case.''

Example #63/Seeking Supporting Documentation Beyond §1636.3(l): Mara provides her employer with a note from her health care provider explaining that she is pregnant and will need the functions of her position that require her to be around certain chemicals to be temporarily suspended. Mara's supervisor requires that Mara confirm the pregnancy through an ultrasound, even though the employer already has sufficient information to determine whether Mara has a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions (a limitation) and needs an adjustment or change at work due to the limitation.

Example #64/Dissuaded from Requesting an Accommodation: During an interview at an employment agency, Arden tells the human resources staffer, Stanley, that Arden is dealing with complications from their recent childbirth and may need time off for doctor's appointments during their first few weeks at work. Stanley counsels Arden that needing leave so soon after starting will be a ''black mark'' on their application and that it would be a waste of time for the employment agency to try to find work for Arden.

Example #65/Threatening Future Employment: Merritt, who gets jobs through an employment agency, is fired after requesting an accommodation under the PWFA. The employment agency refuses to refer Merritt to other employers, telling Merritt that the agency only refers workers who will not cause any trouble.

Example #66/Disciplined for Assisting Other Employees: Jessie, a factory union steward, ensures that workers know about their rights under the PWFA and encourages employees with known limitations to ask for reasonable accommodations. Jessie helps employees navigate the reasonable accommodation process and provides suggestions of possible reasonable accommodations. Factory supervisors, annoyed by the number of PWFA reasonable accommodation requests, write up Jessie for trivial timekeeping violations and other actions that had not been deemed worthy of discipline prior to Jessie assisting other employees with their PWFA accommodation requests.

Example #67/Negative Reference: While she was pregnant, Laila requested and received the reasonable accommodation of a temporary suspension of the essential function of moving heavy boxes and placement in the light duty program. After giving birth, Laila tells her employer that she has decided to resign and stay home for a year. Her employer responds that if Laila follows through and resigns now, the employer will have no choice but to give her a negative reference because Laila demanded an accommodation but did not have the loyalty to come back after having her baby.

Example #68/Seeking Supporting Documentation Beyond §1636.3(l): Robbie, a retail worker, is pregnant. Her job requires her to stand at a cash register. Because of her pregnancy, Robbie has difficulty standing for long periods of time. Robbie explains the situation to the manager, who requires Robbie to produce a signed doctor's note saying that Robbie is pregnant and needs to sit. Because Robbie is pregnant and has requested one of the simple modifications that will virtually always be found to be a reasonable accommodation that does not impose an undue hardship, and she has confirmed the limitation and her need for the modification due to the limitation, the manager is not permitted to seek supporting documentation, as set forth in §1636.3(l)(1)(iii).

Example #69/Disciplined Through Workplace Policy: Tina gave birth and started a new job. She is experiencing urinary incontinence related to, affected by, or arising out of childbirth and needs time to attend a medical appointment. Her new employer has a policy that employees cannot be absent during the first 90 days of work. Tina requests and is given the reasonable accommodation of time to attend her medical appointment, but then is issued a disciplinary write-up for missing work during her first 90 days.

Example #70/Retaliatory Failure to Provide Interim Reasonable Accommodation: Dominique is lactating and, based on the recommendation of her health care provider, requests additional safety gear and protection to reduce the risk that chemicals she works with will contaminate her breast milk. The equipment has to be ordered, and the employer puts Dominique on unpaid leave while waiting for the equipment, although there is available work that Dominique could perform that would not require her to be around the chemicals while she waits for the additional safety gear. Additionally, her supervisor tells human resources staff that he is tired of accommodating Dominique because she asked for accommodations during her pregnancy as well and there has to be an end to her requests.

Example #71/Retaliation for Requesting Safety Information: Wynne is pregnant and is in a probationary period as a janitor. She asks her supervisor for safety information about the cleaning products that she handles as part of her job and explains it is to help her determine if she needs to ask for a reasonable accommodation regarding exposure to the chemicals. Her supervisor tells her not to worry and warns her that trying to get this kind of information will mark her as a troublemaker. During her first review near the end of the probationary period, the supervisor notes that, for an entry-level janitor, Wynne asks many questions and behaves like a troublemaker. The supervisor terminates Wynne even though she was performing satisfactorily.

Example #72/Seeking Supporting Documentation Beyond §1636.3(l): An employer adopts a policy requiring everyone who requests a reasonable accommodation to provide medical documentation in support of the request. Cora, a production worker who is 8 months pregnant, requests additional bathroom breaks. The employer applies the policy to her, refusing to provide the accommodation until she submits supporting documentation, even though under §1636.3(l)(1)(iii) the employer is not permitted to seek documentation in this situation.

Example #73/Seeking Supporting Documentation Beyond §1636.3(l) and Failure to Provide Accommodation: An employer adopts a policy requiring everyone who requests a reasonable accommodation to provide supporting documentation. Fourteen months after giving birth, Alex wants to continue to pump at work, which is beyond the length of time the PUMP Act requires. She explains her request to her supervisor and asks that she have breaks to pump and that the room provided have a chair, a table, access to electricity and running water. Alex's employer refuses to grant the accommodations unless Alex provides supporting documentation from her health care provider. Alex cannot provide the information, so she stops pumping. In addition to potentially violating 42 U.S.C 2000gg–2(f), the employer cannot use the lack of supporting documentation as a defense to the failure to provide the accommodations because seeking documentation was not reasonable under the circumstances as set forth in §1636.3(l)(1)(iv) and thus these actions may violate 42 U.S.C 2000gg–1(1) (§1636.4(a)(3)).

Example #74/Retaliatory Waiver of Rights: An employer adopts a policy under which an employee who files a claim with the EEOC or another outside agency automatically waives their right to have a complaint processed through the employer's internal complaint procedure. Rebecca submitted an internal complaint to her supervisor after her request for a reasonable accommodation was denied and, a month later, filed a charge with the EEOC. The employer notified her that it would stop investigating her internal complaint until the EEOC matter was resolved, but that she would be free to pursue the internal resolution of her complaint if she withdrew her EEOC charge. The employer's policy is retaliatory because it adversely affects the employee by stripping her of an employment privilege for filing a charge with the EEOC.

Example #75/Disclosure of Medical Information: Caroline requested and received an accommodation under the PWFA in the form of a lifting restriction due to a back injury related to her pregnancy. Caroline's accommodation was granted early in her third trimester. Two weeks after her accommodation went into effect, during a team meeting, Caroline's supervisor went around the table describing each team members' duties, sighing as she explained that Caroline had a back injury due to pregnancy that prevented her from lifting and that Caroline's injury was the reason that other team members had extra duties. At each biweekly team meeting for the next two months, Caroline's supervisor noted that team members continued to be assigned extra duties because of Caroline's back injury. In addition to potential violation 42 U.S.C 2000gg–2(f), this disclosure of medical information violates the ADA's confidentiality rules, as it does not fit within any of the five disclosure exceptions.

Example #76/Retaliatory Harassment: Benita requested and received an accommodation under the PWFA in the form of a one-hour delayed start time due to morning sickness related to her pregnancy. Benita's coworkers are aware that she is receiving the accommodation due to a condition related to her pregnancy. A few days after Benita's accommodation is granted, her coworkers start to make unwelcome, critical comments about her ''late'' arrivals on a frequent basis, including that other pregnant individuals were able to start work on time during their pregnancies, that being able to ''work during pregnancy is mind over matter,'' and calling her ''lazy'' and a ''slacker.'' The coworkers schedule meetings that begin a half hour before Benita arrives in the office and complain to Benita's supervisor that she arrives late to those meetings. Because she cannot attend the meetings, Benita falls behind on her work.

1636.5(g) Limitation on Monetary Damages

18. The PWFA at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(g), using the language of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, 42 U.S.C. 1981a(a)(3), provides a limitation on damages based on a ''good faith effort'' to provide a reasonable accommodation. The covered entity bears the burden of proof for this affirmative defense. This limitation on damages applies to violations of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1) (§1636.4(a)) only. It does

not apply to any other provisions of the PWFA.

VI. 1636.7 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

1636.7(a)(1) Relationship to Other Laws in General

1. The PWFA does not limit the rights of individuals affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions under a Federal, State, or local law that provides greater or equal protection. It is equally true that a Federal, State, or local law that provides less protection for individuals affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions than the PWFA does not limit the rights provided by the PWFA.

2. Federal laws, including, but not limited to, Title VII, the ADA, the FMLA, the Rehabilitation Act, the PUMP Act, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*, provide protections for employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Numerous States and localities also have laws that provide accommodations for pregnant employees.[191] All of the protections for employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions in these laws are unaffected by the PWFA. If these laws provide greater protections than the PWFA, the greater protections will apply. For example, the State of Washington's Healthy Starts Act provides that certain accommodations, including lifting restrictions of 17 pounds or more, cannot be the subject of an undue hardship defense.[192] If an employee in Washington is seeking a lifting restriction as a reasonable accommodation for a pregnancy-related reason under the Healthy Starts Act, an employer in Washington cannot argue that a lifting restriction of 20 pounds is an undue hardship, even though that defense could be raised if the claim were brought under the PWFA.

3. Section 1636.7(a) also applies to Federal or State occupational health and safety laws and collective bargaining agreements (CBAs). Thus, nothing in the PWFA limits an employee's rights under laws such as the OSH Act or under a CBA if either of those provide protection greater than or equal to that of the PWFA.

The PWFA and Title VII

4. The PWFA uses many terms and definitions from Title VII, and conduct that is the subject of PWFA claims also may give rise to claims under Title VII. For example, a qualified pregnant employee who sought leave for recovery from childbirth and was terminated may have a claim under both Title VII for sex discrimination and the PWFA for failure to accommodate, adverse employment action, or retaliation.[193]

5. Under Title VII, employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions may be able to receive accommodations if they can identify a comparator similar in their ability or inability to work.[194] Under the PWFA, qualified employees with physical or mental conditions related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions are entitled to reasonable accommodations (absent undue hardship) whether or not other employees have those accommodations and whether or not the affected employees are similar in their ability or inability to work as employees not so affected. Additionally, if the covered entity offers a neutral reason or policy to explain why qualified employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions cannot access a specific benefit, the qualified employee with a known limitation under the PWFA still may ask for a waiver of that policy as a reasonable accommodation. Under the PWFA, the employer must grant the waiver, or another reasonable accommodation, absent undue hardship. If, for example, an employer denies a qualified pregnant employee's request to join its light duty program as a reasonable accommodation because the program is for employees with on-the-job injuries, it may be a reasonable accommodation for the employer's light duty program policy to be waived. Finally, employers in this situation should remember that if there are others to whom the benefit is extended, the Supreme Court stated in *Young* v. *UPS* that ''[the employer's] reason [for refusing to accommodate a pregnant employee] normally cannot consist simply of a claim that it is more expensive or less convenient to add pregnant women to the category of those . . . whom the employer accommodates.'' [195] Thus, if the undue hardship defense of the employer under the PWFA is based solely on cost or convenience, that defense could, under certain fact patterns, nonetheless lead to liability under Title VII.

6. Finally, nothing in the PWFA, this part, or this Interpretive Guidance should be interpreted to reduce or limit any protections provided by Title VII.

The PWFA and the ADA

7. The PWFA uses many terms and definitions from the ADA. Conduct that is the subject of PWFA claims also may give rise to

[191] U.S. Dep't of Lab., Women's Bureau, *Employment Protections for Workers Who Are Pregnant or Nursing, www.dol.gov/agencies/wb/pregnant-nursing-employment-protections* (last visited Mar. 25, 2024).

[192] Wash. Rev. Code 43.10.005(1)(d).

[193] *See* 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–1(1), (5); 2000gg–2(f).

[194] 42 U.S.C. 2000e(k).

[195] 575 U.S. at 229.

claims under the ADA. For example, an employee with postpartum depression seeking a reasonable accommodation to attend treatment whose employer fails to provide the accommodation may have a claim under both the PWFA and the ADA (and possibly also Title VII). Similarly, an employee who has a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions may have both a known limitation under the PWFA and a disability under the ADA (where the physical or mental condition substantially limits a major life activity, including a major bodily function—in other words, the individual would have an ''actual'' ADA disability).[196] In such case, the employee may be entitled to accommodation, absent undue hardship, under both the PWFA and the ADA.

8. While it will depend on the specific facts, if an employee could be covered under either the PWFA or the ADA, a covered entity's analysis, in most cases, should begin with the PWFA because the definition of ''known limitation'' under the PWFA covers situations when the ADA does not apply.[197]

9. Requests for accommodation under the PWFA may be indistinguishable from requests for accommodation under the ADA and there will be situations in which both statutes apply. In one instance, the PWFA known limitation also may be an ADA disability. In another, employees with existing disabilities may seek ADA coverage for those, while also invoking the PWFA to address limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions interacting with an existing disability. In these situations, employees with disabilities may require additional or different accommodations and are entitled to them, absent undue hardship, under the PWFA and/or the ADA.

10. There also will be situations where an employee with a disability who has an accommodation under the ADA seeks and is granted an accommodation under the PWFA. For example, an employee who uses an adaptive keyboard as an ADA reasonable accommodation temporarily may be assigned to a new position as part of an accommodation under the PWFA because an essential function of their original position has been temporarily suspended. In this situation, the employer must continue to provide the adaptive keyboard as an ADA reasonable accommodation if it is necessary for the employee to perform the essential functions of the new position.

11. Because an individual may be covered by both the ADA and the PWFA, and the PWFA provides at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–5(a)(1) that nothing in the statute shall be construed to invalidate or limit the powers, remedies, and procedures under any Federal law that provides greater or equal protection for individuals affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, a covered entity must apply the law that provides the worker the most protection.

12. Examples Regarding Disability and Pregnancy:

Example #77/Disability and Pregnancy: Roxy is an accountant who has developed gestational hypertension and preeclampsia late in her pregnancy, causing damage to her kidneys. As a result, Roxy needs leave for periodic medical appointments to protect her own health and the health of her pregnancy. Because Roxy's condition is both a physical or mental condition related to, affected by, or arising out of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions and a condition that substantially limits one of her major bodily functions (kidney function), it qualifies as both a limitation under the PWFA and a disability under the ADA. Absent undue hardship, the employer must provide Roxy with the accommodation she requires due to her pregnancy (under the PWFA) and her disability (under the ADA). Of course, one effective accommodation may be sufficient to satisfy requirements under both statutes in this instance.

Example #78/Disability and Pregnancy: Farah is a nurse who has diabetes, and her employer has provided her with the accommodation of breaks to eat small meals throughout the day and breaks to check her insulin levels. When Farah becomes pregnant, she experiences morning sickness that makes it difficult for her to eat in the morning. As a result, she needs more breaks for eating later in the day and occasionally needs a break to rest while at work. Absent undue hardship, the employer must provide Farah with the additional accommodations she requires due to her pregnancy under the PWFA.

13. In cases where both the ADA and PWFA apply, if an employer fails to provide an accommodation the employee could potentially file a claim for failure to accommodate under both the ADA and the PWFA. They also could file a separate ADA claim if they experienced disparate treatment based on a disability.

Prohibition on Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations and Protection of Medical Information

14. Important protections from the ADA that apply to all covered employees continue to apply when employees are seeking accommodations under the PWFA. First, the rules limiting the ability of covered entities to make disability-related inquiries or require medical exams in the ADA apply to all disability-related inquiries and medical exams

[196] 42 U.S.C. 12102(1); 29 CFR 1630.2(g).

[197] 42 U.S.C. 2000gg(4).

including those made in the context of requests for PWFA accommodation.[198] For example, a covered entity may not ask an employee who is seeking an accommodation under the PWFA whether the employee has asked for other accommodations in the past or has preexisting conditions because these questions are likely to elicit information about a disability and are not job-related and consistent with business necessity in this context. Similarly, an employer's response to an employee's request for accommodation under the PWFA that requires the employee to complete a release permitting the employer to obtain the employee's complete medical records would not be job-related or consistent with business necessity.

15. Second, under the ADA, covered entities are required to keep medical information of all applicants, employees, and former employees (whether or not those individuals have disabilities) confidential, with limited exceptions.[199] The Commission has repeatedly stated that the requirement applies to all medical information in the employer's possession, whether obtained through inquiries pursuant to the ADA or otherwise.[200] Thus, this protection applies to medical information obtained under the PWFA, including medical information provided voluntarily and medical information provided as part of the reasonable accommodation process. Moreover, as a practical matter, in many circumstances under the PWFA, the medical information obtained by an employer may involve a condition that could be a disability; rather than an employer attempting to parse out whether to keep certain information confidential or not, all medical information should be kept confidential.[201] Therefore, medical information obtained under the PWFA is subject to the ADA requirement that information regarding the medical condition or history of any employee be collected and maintained on separate forms and in separate medical files and be treated as a confidential medical record.[202]

16. That an employee is pregnant, has recently been pregnant, or has a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth is medical information. The ADA requires that employers keep such information confidential and only disclose it within the confines of the limited disclosure rules described in paragraphs 17 and 18 of this section. Similarly, disclosing that an employee is receiving or has requested an accommodation under the PWFA, or has limitations for which they requested or are receiving a reasonable accommodation under the PWFA, usually amounts to a disclosure that the employee is pregnant, has recently been pregnant, or has a related medical condition.

17. As set forth at 29 CFR 1630.14, under the ADA, medical information must be collected and maintained on separate forms and in separate medical files and be treated as a confidential medical record, except that:

(i) Supervisors and managers may be informed regarding necessary restrictions on the work or duties of the employee and necessary accommodations;

(ii) First aid and safety personnel may be informed, when appropriate, if the disability might require emergency treatment; and

(iii) Government officials investigating compliance with the ADA shall be provided relevant information on request.

18. In addition to what is stated in the ADA regulation: covered entities (iv) may disclose the medical information to State workers' compensation offices, State second

[198] *See* 42 U.S.C. 12112(d); 29 CFR 1630.13, 1630.14.

[199] 42 U.S.C. 12112(d)(3)(B); 29 CFR 1630.14(b)(1)(i) through (iii), (c)(1), (d)(4); *Enforcement Guidance on Disability-Related Inquiries*, *supra* note 152, at text accompanying nn.9–10 (''The ADA requires employers to treat any medical information obtained from a disability-related inquiry or medical examination . . ., as well as any medical information voluntarily disclosed by an employee, as a confidential medical record. Employers may share such information only in limited circumstances with supervisors, managers, first aid and safety personnel, and government officials investigating compliance with the ADA.'') and text after n.12 (''[T]he ADA's restrictions on inquiries and examinations apply to all employees, not just those with disabilities.''); *Enforcement Guidance: Preemployment Disability-Related Questions*, *supra* note 152, at text accompanying n.6 (''Medical information must be kept confidential.'').

[200] *See supra* note 199. This policy also appears in numerous EEOC technical assistance documents. *See, e.g.*, EEOC, *Visual Disabilities in the Workplace and the Americans with Disabilities Act*, at text preceding n.43 (2023), *https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/visual-disabilities-workplace-and-americans-disabilities-act#q8* (''With limited exceptions, an employer must keep confidential any medical information it learns about an applicant or employee.'').

[201] Requests for accommodation under the PWFA also may overlap with FMLA issues, and the FMLA requires medical information to be kept confidential as well. 29 CFR 825.500(g).

[202] 42 U.S.C. 12112(d)(3)(B); 29 CFR 1630.14(b)(1), (c)(1), and (d)(4)(i); *see Enforcement Guidance: Preemployment Disability-Related Questions*, *supra* note 152, at text accompanying the question ''Can medical information be kept in an employee's regular personnel file?''

injury funds, or workers' compensation insurance carriers in accordance with State workers' compensation laws; and (v) may use the medical information for insurance purposes.[203] All these disclosure exceptions apply to medical information obtained under the PWFA. Disclosing medical information in any circumstances, other than those set forth in these five recognized disclosure exceptions, violates the ADA's confidentiality rule.

19. In addition, as explained in section *1636.5(f)* of this appendix under *Possible Violations of 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)) Based on Seeking Supporting Documentation During the Reasonable Accommodation Process and Disclosure of Medical Information*, disclosing medical information, threatening to disclose medical information, or requiring an employee to share their medical information other than in the limited situations set out in paragraphs 17 and 18 of this section also may violate 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f) (§1636.5(f)).[204] Given the protections for confidential medical information under the ADA and the potential of violating 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–2(f), if a covered entity is under an obligation to disclose medical information received under the PWFA in any circumstances other than those provided in this Interpretive Guidance, before doing so it should inform the individual to whom the information relates of its intent to disclose the information; identify the specific reason for the disclosure; and provide sufficient time for the individual to object.

20. Finally, nothing in the PWFA, this part, or this Interpretive Guidance should be interpreted to reduce or limit any protections provided by the ADA.

1636.7(a)(2) Limitations Related to Employer-Sponsored Health Plans

21. The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–5(a)(2) states that nothing in the PWFA shall be construed to require an employer-sponsored health plan to pay for or cover any item, procedure, or treatment and, further, that nothing in the PWFA shall be construed to affect any right or remedy available under any other Federal, State, or local law with respect to any such payment or coverage requirement. For example, nothing in the PWFA requires, or forbids, an employer to pay for health insurance benefits for an abortion.

1636.7(b) Rule of Construction

22. The statute at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–5(b) provides a ''rule of construction'' stating that the PWFA is ''subject to the applicability to religious employment'' set forth in section 702(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–1(a). The relevant portion of section 702(a) provides that Title VII shall not apply to a religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society with respect to the employment of individuals of a particular religion to perform work connected with the carrying on by such corporation, association, educational institution, or society of its activities.[205] Section 1636.7(b) reiterates the PWFA statutory language and adds that nothing in 42 U.S.C. 2000g–5(b) or this part should be interpreted to limit the rights of a covered entity under the U.S. Constitution or the rights of an employee under other civil rights statutes. As with assertions of section 702(a) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in Title VII matters, when 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–5(b) is asserted by a respondent employer, the Commission will consider the application of the provision on a case-by-case basis.[206]

VII. 1636.8 SEVERABILITY

1. The PWFA at 42 U.S.C. 2000gg–6 contains a severability provision regarding the statute. Section 1636.8 repeats the statutory provision and also addresses the Commission's intent regarding the severability of the Commission's regulations in this part and this Interpretive Guidance.

2. Following Congress' rule for the statute, in places where this part uses the same language as the statute, if any of those identical regulatory provisions, or the application of those provisions to particular persons

[203] *See Enforcement Guidance: Preemployment Disability-Related Questions*, *supra* note 152, at text accompanying the heading ''Confidentiality.''

[204] *See, e.g., Haire* v. *Farm & Fleet of Rice Lake, Inc.*, No. 2:21–CV–10967, 2022 WL 128815, at *8–*9 (E.D. Mich. Jan. 12, 2022) (disclosing personal and confidential information about an employee's medical condition and mental health episodes to her coworkers could constitute retaliation under Title VII); *Holtrey* v. *Collier Cnty. Bd. of Cnty. Comm'rs*, No. 2:16–CV–00034, 2017 WL 119649, at *3 (M.D. Fla. Jan. 12, 2017) (determining that an employer's disclosure of its employee's confidential medical information about his genito-urinary system to his coworkers and subordinates could constitute retaliation under FMLA, relying on Title VII's definition of ''materially adverse action'').

[205] The PWFA makes no mention of section 703(e)(2) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which provides a second statutory exemption for religious educational institutions in certain circumstances.

[206] The case-by-case analysis of religious defenses asserted in response to a charge under the PWFA is consistent with the Commission's framework evaluating similar defenses under other statutes the Commission enforces. *See Compliance Manual on Religious Discrimination*, *supra* note 163, at (12–I)(C).

or circumstances, is held invalid or found to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this part and the application of that provision of this part to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

3. In other places, where this part or this Interpretive Guidance provide additional guidance to carry out the PWFA, including examples of reasonable accommodations, following Congress' intent regarding the severability of the provisions of the statute, it is the Commission's intent that if any of those regulatory provisions or the Interpretive Guidance or the application of those provisions or the Interpretive Guidance to particular persons or circumstances is held invalid or found to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this part or the Interpretive Guidance and the application of that provision of this part or the Interpretive Guidance to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected.

PART 1640—PROCEDURES FOR COORDINATING THE INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS OR CHARGES OF EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION BASED ON DISABILITY SUBJECT TO THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 301; 29 U.S.C. 794(d); 42 U.S.C. 12117(b).

SOURCE: 59 FR 39904, 39908, Aug. 4, 1994, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1640.1 Purpose and application.

(a) This part establishes the procedures to be followed by the Federal agencies responsible for processing and resolving complaints or charges of employment discrimination filed against recipients of Federal financial assistance when jurisdiction exists under both section 504 and title I.

(b) This part also repeats the provisions established by 28 CFR 35.171 for determining which Federal agency shall process and resolve complaints or charges of employment discrimination:

(1) That fall within the overlapping jurisdiction of titles I and II (but are not covered by section 504); and

(2) That are covered by title II, but not title I (whether or not they are also covered by section 504).

(c) This part also describes the procedures to be followed when a complaint or charge arising solely under section 504 or title I is filed with a section 504 agency or the EEOC.

(d) This part does not apply to complaints or charges against Federal contractors under section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act.

(e) This part does not create rights in any person or confer agency jurisdiction not created or conferred by the ADA or section 504 over any complaint or charge.

§ 1640.2 Definitions.

As used in this part, the term:

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 or *ADA* means the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Pub. L. 101–336, 104 Stat. 327, 42 U.S.C. 12101–12213 and 47 U.S.C. 225 and 611).

Assistant Attorney General refers to the Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, United States Department of Justice, or his or her designee.

Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission refers to the Chairman of the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or his or her designee.

Civil Rights Division means the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice.

Designated agency means any one of the eight agencies designated under §35.190 of 28 CFR part 35 (the Department's title II regulation) to implement and enforce title II of the ADA

with respect to the functional areas within their jurisdiction.

Dual-filed complaint or charge means a complaint or charge of employment discrimination that:

(1) Arises under both section 504 and title I;

(2) Has been filed with both a section 504 agency that has jurisdiction under section 504 and with the EEOC, which has jurisdiction under title I; and

(3) Alleges the same facts and raises the same issues in both filings.

Due weight shall mean, with respect to the weight a section 504 agency or the EEOC shall give to the other agency's findings and conclusions, such full and careful consideration as is appropriate, taking into account such factors as:

(1) The extent to which the underlying investigation is complete and the evidence is supportive of the findings and conclusions;

(2) The nature and results of any subsequent proceedings;

(3) The extent to which the findings, conclusions and any actions taken:

(i) Under title I are consistent with the effective enforcement of section 504; or

(ii) Under section 504 are consistent with the effective enforcement of title I; and

(4) The section 504 agency's responsibilities under section 504 or the EEOC's responsibilities under title I.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or *EEOC* refers to the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and, when appropriate, to any of its headquarters, district, area, local, or field offices.

Federal financial assistance shall have the meaning, with respect to each section 504 agency, as defined in such agency's regulations implementing section 504 for Federally- assisted programs.

Program or activity shall have the meaning defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. 93–112, 87 Stat. 394, 29 U.S.C. 794), as amended.

Public entity means:

(1) Any State or local government;

(2) Any department, agency, special purpose district, or other instrumentality of a State or States or local government; and

(3) The National Railroad Passenger Corporation, and any commuter authority (as defined in section 103(8) of the Rail Passenger Service Act, 45 U.S.C. 502(8)).

Recipient means any State, political subdivision of any State, or instrumentality of any State or political subdivision, any public or private agency, institution, organization, or other entity, or any individual, in any State, to whom Federal financial assistance is extended, directly or through another recipient, for any program, including any successor, assignee, or transferee thereof, but such term does not include any ultimate beneficiary under such program.

Section 504 means section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. 93–112, 87 Stat. 394, 29 U.S.C. 794), as amended.

Section 504 agency means any Federal department or agency that extends Federal financial assistance to programs or activities of recipients.

Title I means title I of the ADA.

Title II means subtitle A of title II of the ADA.

§ 1640.3 Exchange of information.

The EEOC, section 504 agencies, and designated agencies shall share any information relating to the employment policies and practices of a respondent that may assist each agency in carrying out its responsibilities, to the extent permissible by law. Such information shall include, but is not limited to, complaints, charges, investigative files, compliance review reports and files, affirmative action programs, and annual employment reports.

§ 1640.4 Confidentiality.

(a) When a section 504 agency or a designated agency receives information obtained by the EEOC, such agency shall observe the confidentiality requirements of section 706(b) and section 709(e) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000e-5(b) and 2000e-8(e)), as incorporated by section 107(a) of the ADA, to the same extent as these provisions would bind the EEOC, except when the agency receives the same information from a source

independent of the EEOC. Agency questions concerning the confidentiality requirements of title I shall be directed to the Associate Legal Counsel for Legal Services, Office of Legal Counsel, the EEOC.

(b) When the EEOC receives information from a section 504 or a designated agency, the EEOC shall observe any confidentiality requirements applicable to that information.

§ 1640.5 Date of receipt.

A complaint or charge of employment discrimination is deemed to be filed, for purposes of determining timeliness, on the date the complaint or charge is first received by a Federal agency with section 504 or ADA jurisdiction, regardless of whether it is subsequently transferred to another agency for processing.

§ 1640.6 Processing of complaints of employment discrimination filed with an agency other than the EEOC.

(a) *Agency determination of jurisdiction.* Upon receipt of a complaint of employment discrimination, an agency other than the EEOC shall:

(1) Determine whether it has jurisdiction over the complaint under section 504 or under title II of the ADA; and

(2) Determine whether the EEOC may have jurisdiction over the complaint under title I of the ADA.

(b) *Referral to the Civil Rights Division.* If the agency determines that it does not have jurisdiction under section 504 or title II, and determines that the EEOC does not have jurisdiction under title I, the agency shall promptly refer the complaint to the Civil Rights Division. The Civil Rights Division shall determine if another Federal agency may have jurisdiction over the complaint under section 504 or title II, and, if so, shall promptly refer the complaint to a section 504 or a designated agency with jurisdiction over the complaint.

(c) *Referral to the EEOC*—(1) *Referral by an agency without jurisdiction.* If an agency determines that it does not have jurisdiction over a complaint of employment discrimination under either section 504 or title II and determines that the EEOC may have jurisdiction under title I, the agency shall promptly refer the complaint to the EEOC for investigation and processing under title I of the ADA.

(2) *Referral by a section 504 agency.* (i) A section 504 agency that otherwise has jurisdiction over a complaint of employment discrimination under section 504 shall promptly refer to the EEOC, for investigation and processing under title I of the ADA, any complaint of employment discrimination that solely alleges discrimination against an individual (and that does not allege discrimination in both employment and in other practices or services of the respondent or a pattern or practice of employment discrimination), unless:

(A) The section 504 agency determines that the EEOC does not have jurisdiction over the complaint under title I; or

(B) The EEOC has jurisdiction over the complaint under title I, but the complainant, either independently, or following receipt of the notification letter required to be sent to the complainant pursuant to paragraph (c)(2)(ii) of this section, specifically requests that the complaint be investigated by the section 504 agency.

(ii) Prior to referring an individual complaint of employment discrimination to the EEOC pursuant to paragraph (c)(2)(i) of this section (but not prior to making such a referral pursuant to paragraph (c)(1) of this section), a section 504 agency that otherwise has jurisdiction over the complaint shall promptly notify the complainant, in writing, of its intention to make such a referral. The notice letter shall:

(A) Inform the complainant that, unless the agency receives a written request from the complainant within twenty days of the date of the notice letter requesting that the agency retain the complaint for investigation, the agency will forward the complaint to the EEOC for investigation and processing; and

(B) Describe the basic procedural differences between an investigation under section 504 and an investigation under title I, and inform the complainant of the potential for differing remedies under each statute.

(3) *Referral by a designated agency.* A designated agency that does not have

section 504 jurisdiction over a complaint of employment discrimination and that has determined that the EEOC may have jurisdiction over the complaint under title I shall promptly refer the complaint to the EEOC.

(4) *Processing of complaints referred to the EEOC.* (i) A complaint referred to the EEOC in accordance with this section by an agency with jurisdiction over the complaint under section 504 shall be deemed to be a dual-filed complaint under section 504 and title I. When a section 504 agency with jurisdiction over a complaint refers the complaint to the EEOC, the section 504 agency shall defer its processing of the complaint pursuant to §1640.10, pending resolution by the EEOC.

(ii) A complaint referred to the EEOC by an agency that has jurisdiction over the complaint solely under title II (and not under section 504) will be treated as a complaint filed under title I only.

(iii) Any complaint referred to the EEOC pursuant to this section shall be processed by the EEOC under its title I procedures.

(d) *Retention by the agency for investigation*—(1) *Retention by a section 504 agency.* A section 504 agency shall retain a complaint for investigation when the agency determines that it has jurisdiction over the complaint under section 504, and one or more of the following conditions are met:

(i) The EEOC does not have jurisdiction over the complaint under title I; or

(ii) The EEOC has jurisdiction over the complaint, but the complainant elects to have the section 504 agency process the complaint and the section 504 agency receives a written request from the complainant for section 504 agency processing within twenty days of the date of the notice letter required to be sent pursuant to paragraph (c)(2)(ii) of this section; or

(iii) The complaint alleges discrimination in both employment and in other practices or services of the respondent that are covered by section 504; or

(iv) The complaint alleges a pattern or practice of employment discrimination.

(2) *Retention by a designated agency.* A designated agency that does not have jurisdiction over the complaint under section 504 shall retain a complaint for investigation when the agency determines that it has jurisdiction over the complaint under title II of the ADA and that the EEOC does not have jurisdiction over the complaint under title I.

(3) *Processing of complaints retained by an agency.* Any complaint retained for investigation and processing by an agency pursuant to paragraphs (d)(1) and (d)(2) of this section will be investigated and processed under section 504, title II, or both, as applicable, and will not be considered to be dual filed under title I.

§1640.7 Processing of charges of employment discrimination filed with the EEOC.

(a) *EEOC determination of jurisdiction.* Upon receipt of a charge of employment discrimination, the EEOC shall:

(1) Determine whether it has jurisdiction over the charge under title I of the ADA. If it has jurisdiction, except as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, the EEOC shall process the charge pursuant to title I procedures.

(2) If the EEOC determines that it does not have jurisdiction under title I, the EEOC shall promptly refer the charge to the Civil Rights Division. The Civil Rights Division shall determine if a Federal agency may have jurisdiction over the charge under section 504 or title II, and, if so, shall refer the charge to a section 504 agency or to a designated agency with jurisdiction over the complaint.

(b) *Retention by the EEOC for investigation.* (1) The EEOC shall retain a charge for investigation when it determines that it has jurisdiction over the charge under title I.

(2) *Referral to an agency.* Any charge retained by the EEOC for investigation and processing will be investigated and processed under title I only, and will not be deemed dual filed under section 504, except that ADA cause charges (as defined in 29 CFR 1601.21) that also fall within the jurisdiction of a section 504 agency and that the EEOC (or the Civil Rights Division, if such a charge is against a government, governmental agency, or political subdivision) has declined to litigate shall be referred to

the appropriate section 504 agency for review of the file and any administrative or other action deemed appropriate under section 504. Such charges shall be deemed complaints, dual filed under section 504, solely for the purposes of the agency review and action described in this paragraph. The date of such dual filing shall be deemed to be the date the complaint was received by the EEOC.

§ 1640.8 Processing of complaints or charges of employment discrimination filed with both the EEOC and a section 504 agency.

(a) *Procedures for handling dual-filed complaints or charges.* As between the EEOC and a section 504 agency, except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, a complaint or charge of employment discrimination that is dual filed with both the EEOC and a section 504 agency shall be processed as follows:

(1) *EEOC processing.* The EEOC shall investigate and process the charge when the EEOC determines that it has jurisdiction over the charge under title I and the charge solely alleges employment discrimination against an individual, unless the charging party elects to have the section 504 agency process the charge and the section 504 agency receives a written request from the complainant for section 504 agency processing within twenty days of the date of the notice letter required to be sent pursuant to § 1640.6(c)(2)(ii).

(2) *Section 504 agency processing.* A section 504 agency shall investigate and process the complaint when the agency determines that it has jurisdiction over the complaint under section 504, and:

(i) The complaint alleges discrimination in both employment and in other practices or services of the respondent; or

(ii) The complaint alleges a pattern or practice of discrimination in employment; or

(iii) In the case of a complaint solely alleging employment discrimination against an individual, the complainant elects to have a section 504 agency process the complaint and the section 504 agency receives a written request from the complainant for section 504 agency processing within twenty days of the date of the notice letter required to be sent pursuant to § 1640.6(c)(2)(ii).

(b) *Referral to the Civil Rights Division.* If the EEOC determines that it does not have jurisdiction under title I, and the section 504 agency determines that it does not have jurisdiction under section 504 or title II, the complaint or charge shall be promptly referred to the Civil Rights Division. The Civil Rights Division shall determine if another Federal agency may have jurisdiction over the complaint under section 504 or title II, and, if so, shall promptly refer the complaint to a section 504 or a designated agency with jurisdiction over the complaint.

(c) *Procedures for determining whether a complaint or charge has been dual filed.* The EEOC and each agency with jurisdiction to investigate and process complaints of employment discrimination under section 504 shall jointly develop procedures for determining whether complaints or charges of discrimination have been dual filed with the EEOC and with one or more other agencies.

(d) *Notification of deferral.* The agency required to process a dual-filed complaint or charge under this section shall notify the complainant or charging party and the respondent that the complaint or charge was dual filed with one or more other agencies and that such other agencies have agreed to defer processing and will take no further action except as provided in § 1640.10 or § 1640.11, as applicable.

(e) *Exceptions.* When special circumstances make deferral as provided in this section inappropriate, the EEOC, and an agency with investigative authority under section 504, may jointly determine to reallocate investigative responsibilities. Special circumstances include, but are not limited to, cases in which the EEOC has already commenced its investigation at the time that the agency discovers that the complaint or charge is a dual-filed complaint or charge in which the complainant has elected section 504 processing, alleged discrimination in both employment and in other practices or services of the respondent, or alleged a pattern or practice of employment discrimination.

§ 1640.9 Processing of complaints or charges of employment discrimination filed with a designated agency and either a section 504 agency, the EEOC, or both.

(a) *Designated agency processing.* A designated agency shall investigate and process a complaint that has been filed with it and with the EEOC, a section 504 agency, or both, when either of the following conditions is met:

(1) The designated agency determines that it has jurisdiction over the complaint under title II and that neither the EEOC nor a section 504 agency (other than the designated agency, if the designated agency is also a section 504 agency) has jurisdiction over the complaint; or

(2) The designated agency determines that it has jurisdiction over the complaint under section 504 and the complaint meets the requirements for processing by a section 504 agency set forth in §1640.8(a)(2).

(b) *Referral by a designated agency.* A designated agency that has jurisdiction over a complaint solely under title II (and not under section 504) shall forward a complaint that has been filed with it and with the EEOC, a section 504 agency, or both, to either the EEOC or to a section 504 agency, as follows:

(1) If the designated agency determines that the EEOC is the sole agency, other than the designated agency, with jurisdiction over the complaint, the designated agency shall forward the complaint to the EEOC for processing under title I; or

(2) If the designated agency determines that the section 504 agency is the sole agency, other than the designated agency, with jurisdiction over the complaint, the designated agency shall forward the complaint to the section 504 agency for processing under section 504; or

(3) If the designated agency determines that both the EEOC and a section 504 agency have jurisdiction over the complaint, the designated agency shall forward the complaint to the EEOC if it determines that the complaint solely alleges employment discrimination against an individual, or it shall forward the complaint to the section 504 agency if it determines that the complaint meets the requirements for processing by a section 504 agency set out in §1640.8(a)(2)(i) or (a)(2)(ii).

§ 1640.10 Section 504 agency review of deferred complaints.

(a) *Deferral by the section 504 agency.* When a section 504 agency refers a complaint to the EEOC pursuant to §1640.6(c)(2) or when it is determined that, as between the EEOC and a section 504 agency, the EEOC is the agency that shall process a dual-filed complaint or charge under §1640.8(a)(1) or §1640.8(e), the section 504 agency shall defer further action until:

(1) The EEOC issues a no cause finding and a notice of right-to-sue pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.19; or

(2) The EEOC enters into a conciliation agreement; or

(3) The EEOC issues a cause finding and a notice of failure of conciliation pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.21, and:

(i) If the recipient is not a government, governmental agency, or political subdivision, the EEOC completes enforcement proceedings or issues a notice of right-to-sue in accordance with 29 CFR 1601.28; or

(ii) If the recipient is a government, governmental agency, or political subdivision, the EEOC refers the charge to the Civil Rights Division in accordance with 29 CFR 1601.29, and the Civil Rights Division completes enforcement proceedings or issues a notice of right-to-sue in accordance with 29 CFR 1601.28(d); or

(4) The EEOC or, when a case has been referred pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.29, the Civil Rights Division, otherwise resolves the charge.

(b) *Notification of the deferring agency.* The EEOC or the Civil Rights Division, as appropriate, shall notify the agency that has deferred processing of the charge upon resolution of any dual-filed complaint or charge.

(c) *Agency review.* After receipt of notification that the EEOC or the Civil Rights Division, as appropriate, has resolved the complaint or charge, the agency shall promptly determine what further action by the agency is warranted. In reaching that determination, the agency shall give due weight to the findings and conclusions of the EEOC and to those of the Civil Rights Division, as applicable. If the agency

proposes to take an action inconsistent with the EEOC's or the Civil Rights Division's findings and conclusions as to whether a violation has occurred, the agency shall notify in writing the Assistant Attorney General, the Chairman of the EEOC, and the head of the EEOC office that processed the complaint. In the written notification, the agency shall state the action that it proposes to take and the basis of its decision to take such action.

(d) *Provision of information.* Upon written request, the EEOC or the Civil Rights Division shall provide the section 504 agency with any materials relating to its resolution of the charge, including its findings and conclusions, investigative reports and files, and any conciliation agreement.

§ 1640.11 EEOC review of deferred charges.

(a) *Deferral by the EEOC.* When it is determined that a section 504 agency is the agency that shall process a dual-filed complaint or charge under §1640.8(a)(2) or §1640.8(e), the EEOC shall defer further action until the section 504 agency takes one of the following actions:

(1) Makes a finding that a violation has not occurred;

(2) Enters into a voluntary compliance agreement;

(3) Following a finding that a violation has occurred, refers the complaint to the Civil Rights Division for judicial enforcement and the Civil Rights Division resolves the complaint;

(4) Following a finding that a violation has occurred, resolves the complaint through final administrative enforcement action; or

(5) Otherwise resolves the charge.

(b) *Notification of the EEOC.* The section 504 agency shall notify the EEOC upon resolution of any dual-filed complaint or charge.

(c) *Agency review.* After receipt of notification that the section 504 agency has resolved the complaint, the EEOC shall promptly determine what further action by the EEOC is warranted. In reaching that determination, the EEOC shall give due weight to the section 504 agency's findings and conclusions. If the EEOC proposes to take an action inconsistent with the section 504 agency's findings and conclusions as to whether a violation has occurred, the EEOC shall notify in writing the Assistant Attorney General, the Chairman of the EEOC, and the head of the section 504 agency that processed the complaint. In the written notification, the EEOC shall state the action that it proposes to take and the basis of its decision to take such action.

(d) *Provision of information.* Upon written request, the section 504 agency shall provide the EEOC with any materials relating to its resolution of the complaint, including its conclusions, investigative reports and files, and any voluntary compliance agreement.

§ 1640.12 Standards.

In any investigation, compliance review, hearing or other proceeding, the standards used to determine whether section 504 has been violated in a complaint alleging employment discrimination shall be the standards applied under title I of the ADA and the provisions of sections 501 through 504, and 510, of the ADA, as such sections relate to employment. Section 504 agencies shall consider the regulations and appendix implementing title I of the ADA, set forth at 29 CFR part 1630, and case law arising under such regulations, in determining whether a recipient of Federal financial assistance has engaged in an unlawful employment practice.

§ 1640.13 Agency specific memoranda of understanding.

When a section 504 agency amends its regulations to make them consistent with title I of the ADA, the EEOC and the individual section 504 agency may elect to enter into a memorandum of understanding providing for the investigation and processing of complaints dual filed under both section 504 and title I of the ADA by the section 504 agency.

PART 1641—PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS/CHARGES OF EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION BASED ON DISABILITY FILED AGAINST EMPLOYERS HOLDING GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS OR SUBCONTRACTS

Sec.
1641.1 Purpose and application.
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AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 12117(b).

SOURCE: 57 FR 2962, 2964, Jan. 24, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1641.1 Purpose and application.

The purpose of this part is to implement procedures for processing and resolving complaints/charges of employment discrimination filed against employers holding government contracts or subcontracts, where the complaints/charges fall within the jurisdiction of both section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (hereinafter ''Section 503'') and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (hereinafter ''ADA''). The promulgation of this part is required pursuant to section 107(b) of the ADA. Nothing in this part should be deemed to affect the Department of Labor's (hereinafter ''DOL'') Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs' (hereinafter ''OFCCP'') conduct of compliance reviews of government contractors and subcontractors under section 503. Nothing in this part is intended to create rights in any person.

§ 1641.2 Exchange of information.

(a) EEOC and OFCCP shall share any information relating to the employment policies and practices of employers holding government contracts or subcontracts that may assist each office in carrying out its responsibilities. Such information shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, affirmative action programs, annual employment reports, complaints, charges, investigative files, and compliance review reports and files.

(b) All requests by third parties for disclosure of the information described in paragraph (a) of this section shall be coordinated with the agency which initially compiled or collected the information.

(c) Paragraph (b) of this section is not applicable to requests for data in EEOC files made by any State or local agency designated as a ''FEP agency'' with which EEOC has a charge resolution contract and a work-sharing agreement containing the confidentiality requirements of sections 706(b) and 709(e) of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e *et seq.*). However, such an agency shall not disclose any of the information, initially compiled by OFCCP, to the public without express written approval by the Director of OFCCP.

§ 1641.3 Confidentiality.

When the Department of Labor receives information obtained by EEOC, the Department of Labor shall observe the confidentiality requirements of sections 706(b) and 709(e) of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as incorporated by section 107(a) of the ADA, as would EEOC, except in cases where DOL receives the same information from a source independent of EEOC. Questions concerning confidentiality shall be directed to the Associate Legal Counsel for Legal Services, Office of Legal Counsel of EEOC.

§ 1641.4 Standards for investigations, hearings, determinations and other proceedings.

In any OFCCP investigation, hearing, determination or other proceeding involving a complaint/charge that is dual filed under both section 503 and the ADA, OFCCP will utilize legal standards consistent with those applied under the ADA in determining whether an employer has engaged in an unlawful employment practice. EEOC and OFCCP will coordinate the arrangement of any necessary training regarding the substantive or procedural provisions of the ADA, and of EEOC's implementing regulations (29 CFR part 1630 and 29 CFR part 1601).

§ 1641.5 Processing of complaints filed with OFCCP.

(a) Complaints of employment discrimination filed with OFCCP will be considered charges, simultaneously dual filed, under the ADA whenever the complaints also fall within the jurisdiction of the ADA. OFCCP will act as EEOC's agent for the sole purposes of receiving, investigating and processing the ADA charge component of a section 503 complaint dual filed under the ADA, except as otherwise set forth in paragraph (e) of this section.

(b) Within ten days of receipt of a complaint of employment discrimination under section 503 (charge under the ADA), OFCCP shall notify the contractor/respondent that it has received a complaint of employment discrimination under section 503 (charge under the ADA). This notification shall state the date, place and circumstances of the alleged unlawful employment practice.

(c) Pursuant to work-sharing agreements between EEOC and State and local agencies designated as FEP agencies, the deferral period for section 503 complaints/ADA charges dual filed with OFCCP will be waived.

(d) OFCCP shall transfer promptly to EEOC a complaint of employment discrimination over which it does not have jurisdiction but over which EEOC may have jurisdiction. At the same time, OFCCP shall notify the complainant and the contractor/respondent of the transfer, the reason for the transfer, the location of the EEOC office to which the complaint was transferred and that the date OFCCP received the complaint will be deemed the date it was received by EEOC.

(e) OFCCP shall investigate and process as set forth in this section all section 503 complaints/ADA charges dual filed with OFCCP, except as specifically provided in this paragraph. Section 503 complaints/ADA charges raising Priority List issues, those which also include allegations of discrimination of an individual nature on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, and those which also include an allegation of discrimination on the basis of age will be referred in their entirety by OFCCP to EEOC for investigation, processing and final resolution, provided that such complaints/charges do not include allegations of violation of affirmative action requirements under section 503. In such a situation, OFCCP will bifurcate the complaints/charges and refer to EEOC the Priority List issues or allegations of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age. OFCCP shall normally retain, investigate, process and resolve all allegations of discrimination, over which it has jurisdiction, of a systemic or class nature on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin that it receives. However, in appropriate cases the EEOC may request that it be referred such allegations so as to avoid duplication of effort and assure effective law enforcement.

(1) *No cause section 503 complaints/ADA charges.* If the OFCCP investigation of the section 503 complaint/ADA charge results in a finding of no violation under section 503 (no cause under the ADA), OFCCP will issue a determination of no violation/no cause under both section 503 and the ADA, and issue a right-to-sue letter under the ADA, closing the complaint/charge.

(2) *Cause section 503 complaints/ADA charges*—(i) *Successful conciliation.* If the OFCCP investigation of the section 503 complaint/ADA charge results in a finding of violation under section 503 (cause under the ADA), OFCCP will issue a finding of violation/cause under both section 503 and ADA. OFCCP shall attempt conciliation to obtain appropriate full relief for the complainant (charging party), consistent with EEOC's standards for remedies. If conciliation is successful and the contractor/respondent agrees to provide full relief, the section 503 complaint/ADA charge will be closed and the conciliation agreement will state that the complainant (charging party) agrees to waive the right to pursue the subject issues further under section 503 and/or the ADA.

(ii) *Unsuccessful conciliation.* All section 503 complaints/ADA charges not successfully conciliated will be considered for OFCCP administrative litigation under section 503, consistent with OFCCP's usual procedures. (See 41 CFR part 60–741, subpart B.) If OFCCP pursues administrative litigation under

section 503, OFCCP will close the complaint/charge at the conclusion of the litigation process (including the imposition of appropriate sanctions), unless the complaint/charge is dismissed on procedural grounds or because of a lack of jurisdiction, or the contractor/respondent fails to comply with an order to provide make whole relief. In these three cases, OFCCP will refer the matter to EEOC for any action it deems appropriate. If EEOC declines to pursue further action, it will issue a notice of right-to-sue. If OFCCP does not pursue administrative enforcement, it will close the section 503 component of the complaint/charge and refer the ADA charge component to EEOC for litigation review under the ADA. If EEOC declines to litigate, EEOC will close the ADA charge and issue a notice of right-to-sue.

(f) Consistent with the ADA procedures set forth at 29 CFR 1601.28, OFCCP shall promptly issue upon request a notice of right-to-sue after 180 days from the date the complaint/charge was filed. Issuance of a notice of right-to-sue shall terminate further OFCCP processing of any complaint/charge unless it is determined at that time or at a later time that it would effectuate the purposes of section 503 and/or the ADA to further process the complaint/charge.

(g) If an individual who has already filed a section 503 complaint with OFCCP subsequently attempts to file or files an ADA charge with EEOC covering the same facts and issues, EEOC will decline to accept the charge (or, alternatively, dismiss a charge that has been filed) on the grounds that such charge has already been filed under the ADA, simultaneous with the filing of the earlier section 503 complaint, and will be processed by OFCCP in accordance with the provisions of this section.

§ 1641.6 Processing of charges filed with EEOC.

(a) *ADA cause charges falling within the jurisdiction of section 503 that the Commission has declined to litigate.* ADA cause charges that also fall within the jurisdiction of section 503 and that the Commission has declined to litigate will be referred to OFCCP for review of the file and any administrative action deemed appropriate under section 503. Such charges will be considered to be complaints, simultaneously dual filed under section 503, solely for the purposes of OFCCP review and administrative action described in this paragraph.

(b) *ADA charges which also include allegations of failure to comply with section 503 affirmative action requirements.* ADA charges filed with EEOC, in which both allegations of discrimination under the ADA and violation of affirmative action requirements under section 503 are made, will be referred in their entirety to OFCCP for processing and resolution under section 503 and the ADA, unless the charges also include allegations of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or age, or include allegations involving Priority List issues, or the charges are otherwise deemed of particular importance to EEOC's enforcement of the ADA. In such situations, EEOC will bifurcate the charges and retain the ADA component of the charges (and when applicable, the allegations pertaining to discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or age), referring the section 503 affirmative action component of the charges to OFCCP for processing and resolution under section 503. ADA charges which raise both discrimination issues under the ADA and section 503 affirmative action issues will be considered complaints, simultaneously dual filed under section 503, solely for the purposes of referral to OFCCP for processing, as described in this paragraph.

(c) EEOC shall transfer promptly to OFCCP a charge of disability-related employment discrimination over which it does not have jurisdiction, but over which OFCCP may have jurisdiction. At the same time, EEOC shall notify the charging party and the contractor/respondent of the transfer, the reason for the transfer, the location of the OFCCP office to which the charge was transferred and that the date EEOC received the charge will be deemed the date it was received by OFCCP.

(d) Except as otherwise stated in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, individuals alleging violations of laws enforced by DOL and over which EEOC

has no jurisdiction will be referred to DOL to file a complaint.

(e) If an individual who has already filed an ADA charge with EEOC subsequently attempts to file or files a section 503 complaint with OFCCP covering the same facts and issues, OFCCP will accept the complaint, but will adopt as a disposition of the complaint EEOC's resolution of the ADA charge (including EEOC's termination of proceedings upon its issuance of a notice of right-to-sue).

§ 1641.7 Review of this part.

This part shall be reviewed by the Chairman of the EEOC and the Director of OFCCP periodically, and as appropriate, to determine whether changes to the part are necessary or desirable, and whether the part should remain in effect.

§ 1641.8 Definitions.

As used in this part, the term:

ADA refers to title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*).

Affirmative action requirements refers to affirmative action requirements required by DOL pursuant to section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, that go beyond the nondiscrimination requirements imposed by the ADA.

Chairman of the EEOC refers to the Chairman of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or his or her designee.

Complaint/Charge means a section 503 complaint/ADA charge. The terms are used interchangeably.

Director of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs refers to that individual or his or her designee.

DOL means the U.S. Department of Labor, and where appropriate, any of its headquarters or regional offices.

EEOC means the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and where appropriate, any of its headquarters, district, area, local, or field offices.

Government means the government of the United States of America.

Priority List refers to a document listing a limited number of controversial topics under the ADA on which there is not yet definitive guidance setting forth EEOC's position. The Priority List will be jointly developed and periodically reviewed by EEOC and DOL. Any policy documents involving Priority List issues will be coordinated between DOL and EEOC pursuant to Executive Order 12067 (3 CFR, 1978 Comp., p. 206) prior to final approval by EEOC.

OFCCP means the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, and where appropriate, any of its regional or district offices.

Section 503 refers to section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 793).

Section 503 complaint/ADA charge refers to a complaint that has been filed with OFCCP under section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act, and has been deemed to be simultaneously dual filed with EEOC under the ADA.

PART 1650—DEBT COLLECTION

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AUTHORITY: 31 U.S.C. 3701 *et seq.*

Subpart A also issued under 5 U.S.C. 5514; 5 CFR 550.1101.

Subpart B also issued under 31 U.S.C. 3720A; 31 CFR 285.5(d)(4).

Subpart C also issued under 31 U.S.C. 3716.

Subpart D also issued under 31 U.S.C. 3720D.

SOURCE: 73 FR 49093, Aug. 20, 2008, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Procedures for the Collection of Debts by Salary Offset

§ 1650.101 Purpose.

This subpart sets forth the procedures to be followed in the collection by salary offset of debts owed to the United States under 5 U.S.C. 5514. The general standards and procedures governing the collection, compromise, termination, and referral to the Department of Justice of claims for money and property that are prescribed in the regulations issued jointly by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General of the United States, the Federal Claims Collection Standards (31 CFR Parts 900–904), apply to the administrative collection activities of the EEOC. Debts owed by current federal employees to Government travel charge card contractors will be collected in accordance with the regulations issued by the General Services Administration at 41 CFR part 301–54.

§ 1650.102 Delegation of authority.

The Chair delegated to the Chief Human Capital Officer the authority to collect debts owed by current EEOC employees, and to the Chief Financial Officer the authority to collect debts owed by former EEOC employees and non-EEOC employees.

§ 1650.103 Scope.

(a) This subpart applies to the collection of certain debts by salary offset against an employee's disposable pay.

(1) This subpart applies to collections by the EEOC from:

(i) Federal employees who are indebted to the EEOC; and

(ii) EEOC employees who are indebted to other agencies.

(2) This subpart does not apply:

(i) To debts or claims arising under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 1 *et seq.*), the Social Security Act 42 U.S.C. 301 *et seq.*, or the tariff laws of the United States;

(ii) In any case where collection of a debt is explicitly provided for or prohibited by another statute (*e.g.*, travel advances in 5 U.S.C. 5705 and employee training expenses in 5 U.S.C. 4108).

(b) Nothing in this subpart precludes the compromise, suspension, or termination of collection actions where appropriate under the standards implementing the Federal Claims Collection Act, 31 U.S.C. 3711, namely, 31 CFR Parts 900–904; or the waiver of a debt where appropriate under 5 U.S.C. 5584 or 5 U.S.C. 5524a.

§ 1650.104 Definitions.

For the purpose of this subpart, terms are defined as follows:

(a) *Agency* means:

(1) An Executive agency as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code, including the U.S. Postal Service and the U.S. Postal Rate Commission;

(2) A military department as defined in section 102 of title 5, United States Code;

(3) An agency or court in the judicial branch, including a court as defined in section 610 of title 28, United States Code, the District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation;

(4) An agency of the legislative branch, including the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives; and

(5) Other independent establishments that are entities of the Federal Government.

(b) *Commission* means those officers, employees, and agents of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission who are responsible for debt collection activities.

(c) *Debt* means money owed by an employee of the Federal Government to an agency of the Federal Government, including direct loans, loans insured or guaranteed by the United States and all other amounts due the Government from fees, leases, rents, royalties, services, sales of real or personal property, overpayments, penalties, damages, interest, fines and forfeitures (except those arising under the Uniform Code of Military Justice), erroneous salary payments, and all other similar amounts owing to the Federal Government.

(d) *Disposable pay* means that part of current basic pay, special pay, incentive pay, retired pay, retainer pay, or, in the case of an employee not entitled to basic pay, other authorized pay remaining after the deduction of any amount required by law to be withheld. Deductions described in 5 CFR 581.105(b) through (f) will be used to determine disposable pay subject to salary offset.

(e) *Employee* means a current employee of an agency, including a current member of the Armed Forces or a Reserve of the Armed Forces (Reserves).

(f) *Salary Offset* means the collection of a debt under 5 U.S.C. 5514 by deduction(s) at one or more officially established pay intervals from the current pay account of an employee without his or her consent.

§ 1650.105 Notice of Debt.

(a) *Timing and contents of notice.* Notice of the Commission's intent to collect a debt by salary offset shall be given at least 30 days before salary offset deductions are to begin. The written notice shall include the following:

(1) The Commission's determination that a debt is owed, including the origin, nature, and amount of the debt;

(2) The Commission's intention to collect the debt by means of deduction from the employee's current disposable pay account until the debt and all accumulated interest, penalties, and administrative costs are paid in full;

(3) The estimated amount, frequency, beginning date, and duration of the intended deductions;

(4) An explanation of the Commission's policy concerning interest, penalties, and administrative costs;

(5) The employee's right to inspect and copy the Commission's records pertaining to the debt or to receive copies of such records if the employee is unable personally to inspect the records, due to geographical or other constraints;

(6) The opportunity to propose a voluntary repayment schedule and agreement that is acceptable to the Commission in lieu of the proposed offset;

(7) The employee's right to a hearing conducted by an impartial hearing official (an Administrative Law Judge or an individual not under the supervision or control of the Chair) with respect to the existence and amount of the debt claimed or the repayment schedule (*i.e.*, the percentage of disposable pay to be deducted each pay period); the method and time period for requesting a hearing; that the timely request for a hearing will stay the commencement of collection proceedings; and that a final decision will be issued at the earliest practical date, but not later than 60 days after receipt of the hearing request;

(8) The employee's right to request a waiver under 5 U.S.C. 5584 or 5 U.S.C. 5524a, or compromise under 31 U.S.C. 3711;

(9) The making of any knowingly false or frivolous statements, representations, or evidence may subject the employee to:

(i) Disciplinary procedures appropriate under 5 U.S.C. chapter 75, 5 CFR part 752, or any other applicable statutes or regulations;

(ii) Penalties under the False Claims Act, 31 U.S.C. 3729 *et seq.*, or under any other applicable statutory authority; or

(iii) Criminal penalties under 18 U.S.C. 286, 287, 1001, and 1002 or under any other applicable statutory authority; and

(10) Unless there are applicable contractual or statutory provisions to the contrary, amounts paid on or deducted from debts that are later waived or found not to be owed to the United States will be promptly refunded to the employee.

(b) *Exception to the advance notice requirement.* Advance notice under paragraph (a) of this section is not required:

(1) Where an adjustment to pay arises out of an employee's election of coverage, or change in coverage, under a Federal benefits program requiring periodic deductions from the employee's pay and the amount to be recovered was accumulated over four pay periods or less;

(2) Where a routine intra-agency adjustment of pay is made to correct an overpayment of pay attributable to clerical or administrative errors or delays in processing pay documents, if the overpayment occurred within the four pay periods preceding the adjustment and, at the time of such adjustment, or as soon thereafter as practical, the individual is provided written notice of the nature and the amount of the adjustment and a point of contact for contesting such adjustment;

(3) Where any adjustment of pay to collect a debt amounting to $50 or less is made, if, at the time of such adjustment, or as soon thereafter as practical, the individual is provided written notice of the nature and the amount of the adjustment and a point of contact for contesting such adjustment; or

(4) Where an employee consents to withholdings from his or her current pay account.

(c) *Receipt of notice of debt.* The Notice of Debt will be sent by certified mail, return-receipt requested. The date on which the return-receipt is signed is the date on which the employee is deemed to have received the Notice of Debt.

§ 1650.106 Right to inspect and copy records related to the debt.

An employee who desires to inspect or copy Commission records related to the debt must send a request to the official designated in the Notice of Debt. In response, the Commission will notify the employee of the location and time when the employee may inspect and copy the records or send copies of such records to the employee.

§ 1650.107 Voluntary repayment agreements.

(a) In response to a Notice of Debt, an employee may propose a written repayment schedule in lieu of the proposed salary offset. Any proposal under this subsection must be received by the office of the official designated in the notice within 15 calendar days after receipt of the Notice of Debt.

(b) It is within the Commission's discretion to accept or reject a voluntary repayment proposal. The Commission shall send the employee a written decision.

(c) If the Commission decides that the proposed repayment schedule is unacceptable, and that the written proposed repayment schedule was timely received, the employee shall have a further 15 days from the date he or she received the decision on the proposed repayment schedule in which to file a request for a hearing.

(d) If the Commission decides that the proposed repayment schedule is acceptable, the agreement shall be put in writing and signed by both the employee and the Commission.

§ 1650.108 Waiver.

The Commission may waive debts, to the extent authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5584, arising out of erroneous payments of pay, when collection would be against equity and good conscience and not in the best interests of the United States, and so long as there is no indication of fraud, fault, or lack of good faith on the part of the employee. Interest, penalties, and administrative costs may also be waived under 31 U.S.C. 3717(h) and 31 CFR 901.9(g), on a case-by-case basis, if collection would be against equity and good conscience and not in the best interests of the United States.

§ 1650.109 Hearing.

(a) *Request for a hearing.* An employee who wants a hearing on the existence of the debt, its amount, or on the proposed offset schedule must send a written request to the official designated in the Notice of Debt. The request for a hearing must be received by the designated office on or before the 15th calendar day following receipt by the employee of the Notice of Debt. The request must be signed by the employee

and must contain a brief summary of the facts, evidence, and witnesses, if any, that the employee believes support his or her position. If the employee wants an oral hearing, the request must also explain why the matter cannot be resolved by review of documentary evidence alone (*e.g.*, how an issue of credibility or veracity is involved). Because proof of the existence or amount of a debt rarely requires an evaluation of the credibility of witnesses, oral hearings will only rarely be granted. The timely filing of a request for hearing shall automatically stay the commencement of collection proceedings.

(b) *Failure to timely submit.* If the request for hearing is late, the Commission may still grant the request if the employee can show that the delay was the result of circumstances beyond his or her control or that he or she failed to receive actual notice of the filing deadline.

(c) *Procedure*—(1) *Hearing official.* The hearing official will be an Administrative Law Judge or an individual who is not under the supervision or control of the Chair.

(2) *Notice.* The hearing official shall notify the employee whether the hearing will be oral or documentary. If the hearing will be oral, the notice shall set forth the date, time, and location of the hearing, which must occur no more than 30 days after the request is received. If the hearing will be conducted by examination of documents, the employee shall be notified that he or she should submit evidence and arguments in writing to the hearing official by a specified date after which the record shall be closed. This date shall give the employee reasonable time to submit documentation.

(3) *Oral hearing.* The hearing official may grant a request for an oral hearing if he or she determines that the issues raised by the employee cannot be resolved by review of documentary evidence alone (*e.g.*, when credibility or veracity are at issue). An oral hearing is not required to be an adversarial adjudication, and the hearing official is not required to apply rules of evidence. Oral hearings may take the form of, but are not limited to:

(i) Informal conferences with the hearing official in which the employee and agency representative are given a full opportunity to present evidence, witnesses, and argument;

(ii) Informal meetings in which the hearing examiner interviews the employee and, as necessary, others with relevant evidence; or

(iii) Formal written submissions followed by an opportunity for oral presentation. Witnesses who testify in oral hearings shall do so under oath or affirmation.

(4) *Documentary hearing.* If an oral hearing is not necessary, the hearing official shall make the determination based upon a review of the written record.

(d) *Record.* The hearing official shall maintain a summary record of any hearing conducted under this section.

(e) *Date of decision.* The hearing official shall issue a written decision as soon as practicable after the hearing, but not later than 60 days after the date on which the request for hearing was received by the Commission, unless the hearing was delayed at the request of the employee, in which case the 60 day decision period shall be extended by the number of days by which the hearing was postponed.

(f) *Content of decision.* The written decision shall include:

(1) A summary of the facts concerning the origin, nature, and amount of the debt;

(2) The hearing official's findings, analysis, and conclusions; and

(3) The revised terms of any repayment schedule, if applicable.

(g) *Failure to appear.* In the absence of good cause, if the employee or the representative of the agency fails to appear, the hearing official shall proceed with the hearing as scheduled, and make his or her determination based upon the oral testimony presented and the documentation submitted by both parties.

§ 1650.110 Implementation of salary offset.

(a) *Method of collection.* A debt will be collected in a lump sum or by installment deductions at officially established pay intervals from an employee's current pay account, unless the

employee and the Commission agree in writing to alternate arrangements for repayment.

(b) *Source of deductions.* Deductions will be made only from basic pay, special pay, incentive pay, retired pay, retainer pay or in the case of an employee not entitled to basic pay, other authorized pay.

(c) *Duration of deductions.* Debts will be collected in one lump sum when possible to minimize interest costs and administrative processing fees for the employee. If the employee is financially unable to pay in one lump sum and the amount of debt exceeds 15 percent of the employee's disposable pay for an officially established pay interval, collection by offset will be made in installments. Such installment deductions will be made over a period not greater than the anticipated period of active duty or employment of the employee and, except in rare circumstances, not to exceed 3 years.

(d) *Limitation on amount of deductions.* The size and frequency of installment deductions will bear a reasonable relationship to the size of the debt and the employee's ability to pay. The amount deducted for any period, however, will not exceed 15 percent of the disposable pay from which the deduction is made, unless the employee has agreed in writing to the deduction of a greater amount. Installment payments of less than $25 will be accepted only in the most unusual circumstances.

(e) *When deductions may begin.* (1) If the employee files a timely request for hearing, or a proposed voluntary repayment agreement, deductions will begin in the next bi-weekly salary payment after a final decision is issued on the request or repayment proposal.

(2) If the employee fails to submit a timely request for hearing or proposal for a voluntary repayment agreement, deductions will commence in the next bi-weekly salary payment after the expiration of 30 days following the employee's receipt of the Notice of Debt under 1650.105(c).

(f) *Lump-sum deduction from final check.* When the employee retires, resigns, or ends his or her period of active duty before the debt is collected in full, the employee's debt will be automatically deducted from the final payments (*e.g.*, final salary payment, lump-sum leave, etc.) due the employee to the extent necessary to liquidate the debt. If the employee's final pay is not sufficient to permit all deductions to be made, the order of precedence for the deductions will be: Retirement and FICA; Medicare; Federal income taxes; health benefits; group life insurance; indebtedness due to the United States; State income taxes; and voluntary deductions and allotments.

§ 1650.111 Recovery from other payments due a separated employee.

When a debt owed to EEOC has not been completely liquidated through salary offset and the employee has separated from EEOC, the Commission shall, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3716 and the Federal Claims Collection Standards, 31 CFR parts 900–904, seek to offset the balance of the debt against any financial payment due the employee from the U.S. Government.

§ 1650.112 Interest, penalties, and administrative costs.

Unless a debt is paid in full within 30 days of receipt of the Notice of Debt, the Commission will charge interest at the rate established in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3717 effective on the date of delinquency, and a processing charge pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3717. The Commission will charge a penalty, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3717(e)(2) not to exceed 6 percent a year, on the amount due on a debt that is delinquent more than 90 days. This charge shall accrue from the date of delinquency. If an employee files a timely proposal for a repayment agreement, request for waiver, or a request for a hearing, interest, penalties, and administrative costs will be suspended during the time the Commission is considering such request(s).

§ 1650.113 Non-waiver of rights by payments.

An employee's payment of all or any portion of a debt collected by salary offset will not be construed as a waiver of any right the employee may have under 5 U.S.C. 5514 or any other provision of contract or law, unless there are statutory or contractual provisions to the contrary.

§ 1650.114 Refunds.

Amounts paid, or deducted by salary offset, by an employee for a debt that is waived or otherwise not found owing to the United States will be refunded promptly to the employee. Refunds do not bear interest unless required by law or contract.

Subpart B—Procedures for the Collection of Debts by Federal Tax Refund Offset

§ 1650.201 Purpose.

This subpart establishes procedures for EEOC to refer past-due legally enforceable debts to the Department of the Treasury (Treasury) for offset against the income tax refunds of persons owing debts to EEOC pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3720A and 31 CFR 285.2. The general standards and procedures governing the collection, compromise, termination, and referral to the Department of Justice of claims for money and property that are prescribed in the regulations issued jointly by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General of the United States, the Federal Claims Collection Standards (31 CFR parts 900–904), apply to the administrative collection activities of the EEOC.

§ 1650.202 Past-due legally enforceable debt.

A past due, legally enforceable debt is a debt:

(a) That accrued within ten years of referral to Treasury;

(b) That is at least $25.00; and

(c) That the agency has made reasonable efforts to collect by:

(1) Submitting the debt to Treasury, Financial Management Service, for collection by Administrative Offset and complying with 31 U.S.C. 3716(a) and related regulations, to the extent that collection by administrative offset is not prohibited by statute;

(2) Notifying, or making a reasonable attempt to notify, the debtor that the debt is past-due, and unless repaid within 60 days after the date of the notice, will be referred to Treasury for tax refund offset;

(3) Giving the debtor at least 60 days from the date of notification to present evidence that all or part of the debt is not past-due or legally enforceable, considering any evidence presented by such debtor, and determining that an amount of such debt is past-due and legally enforceable; and

(4) Providing the debtor with an opportunity to make a written agreement to repay the amount of the debt.

§ 1650.203 Notification of intent to collect.

EEOC's notification of intent to collect by tax refund offset shall provide:

(a) The amount of the debt;

(b) That unless the debt is repaid within 60 days from the date of EEOC's notification of intent, EEOC intends to collect the debt by requesting Treasury to offset an amount equal to the amount of the debt and all accumulating interest and other charges against any overpayment of tax after liabilities subject to 26 U.S.C. 6402(a) and (c) have been satisfied;

(c) A mailing address for forwarding any written correspondence and a contact and a telephone number for any questions;

(d) That the debtor may make a written agreement with EEOC to repay the amount of the debt; and

(e) That the debtor may present evidence within 60 days to EEOC that all or part of the debt is not past due or legally enforceable by:

(1) Sending a written request for a review of the evidence to the address provided in the notification;

(2) Stating in the request for review the amount disputed and the reasons why the debtor believes that the debt is not past-due or is not legally enforceable; and

(3) Including in the request for review any documents that the debtor wishes to be considered, or stating that the additional information will be submitted within the remainder of the 60 day period.

§ 1650.204 Reasonable attempt to notify.

In order to constitute a reasonable attempt to notify the debtor, EEOC may use the last known address on record with the EEOC. In addition, the EEOC may attempt to obtain a more current address from notices returned

by the United States Postal Service, or by using the Treasury's Internal Revenue Service (IRS) address inquiry. If the debtor cannot be notified by EEOC through these procedures, the debt will be sent to Treasury for collection.

§ 1650.205 Consideration of evidence submitted as a result of notification of intent.

(a) *Consideration of evidence.* If, as a result of the notification of intent, EEOC receives notice that the debtor will submit additional evidence or receives additional evidence from the debtor within the prescribed time period, collection will be stayed until EEOC:

(1) Considers the evidence presented by the debtor;

(2) Determines whether all or a portion of the debt is still past-due and legally enforceable; and

(3) Notifies the debtor of its determination.

Failure to submit the evidence within 60 days from the date of notification of intent will result in a referral of the debt to Treasury.

(b) *Notification to the debtor.* Following its review of the evidence, EEOC will issue a written decision notifying the debtor whether EEOC has sustained, amended, or canceled its determination that the debt is past-due and legally enforceable. The notice will advise the debtor of any further action to be taken, such as any modification of the debt amount and/or referral of the debt to Treasury, and explain the supporting rationale for the decision.

§ 1650.206 Notification to Treasury.

(a) When referring a debt to Treasury, EEOC will certify that the debt meets all of the requirements in §1650.202 and will provide the name, taxpayer identifying number (as defined in 26 U.S.C. 6109) of the debtor, the amount of the debt, the date on which the debt became past-due, and the designation of EEOC as the agency referring the debt.

(b) After EEOC's initial notification and referral of a debt to Treasury for offset against a debtor's Federal income tax refund, EEOC will promptly notify Treasury of any changes in the notification, if EEOC:

(1) Determines that an error has been made with respect to the information contained in the notification;

(2) Receives a payment or credits a payment to the account of the debtor named in the notification that reduces the amount of the debt referred to Treasury for offset; or

(3) Refunds all or part of the offset amount to the debtor.

(c) When EEOC requests Treasury to increase the amount of a debt owed by a debtor named in EEOC's original notification to Treasury, EEOC will certify that the additional amount meets all of the requirements in §1650.202.

(d) If the amount of a debt is reduced after referral by EEOC and offset by the Treasury, EEOC will refund to the debtor any excess amount and will promptly notify the Treasury of any refund made by EEOC.

§ 1650.207 Administrative charges.

All administrative charges incurred in connection with the referral of a debt to the Treasury and all costs of collection of the debt will be assessed on the debt and thus increase the amount of the offset.

Subpart C—Procedures for Collection of Debts by Administrative Offset

§ 1650.301 Purpose and regulatory procedures for the collection of debts by administrative offset.

The Commission hereby adopts by cross-reference the administrative offset regulation issued by the Department of the Treasury at 31 CFR 285.5. The general standards and procedures governing the collection, compromise, termination, and referral to the Department of Justice of claims for money and property that are prescribed in the regulations issued jointly by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General of the United States, the Federal Claims Collection Standards (31 CFR Parts 900–904), apply to the administrative collection activities of the EEOC. The authority to collect debts by administrative offset is delegated to the CFO.

Subpart D—Procedures for the Collection of Debts by Administrative Wage Garnishment

§ 1650.401 Purpose and regulatory procedures for the collection of debts by administrative wage garnishment.

The Commission hereby adopts by cross-reference the administrative wage garnishment regulation issued by the Department of the Treasury at 31 CFR 285.11. The general standards and procedures governing the collection, compromise, termination, and referral to the Department of Justice of claims for money and property that are prescribed in the regulations issued jointly by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General of the United States, the Federal Claims Collection Standards (31 CFR Parts 900–904), apply to the administrative collection activities of the EEOC. The authority to collect debts by administrative wage garnishment is delegated to the CFO.

PART 1690—PROCEDURES ON INTERAGENCY COORDINATION OF EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ISSUANCES

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1690.401 Reporting requirements.

AUTHORITY: Sec. 715 of title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, (42 U.S.C. 2000e–14); Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1978, 43 FR 19807; E.O. 12067, 43 FR 28967.

SOURCE: 45 FR 68361, Oct. 14, 1980, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 1690.101 Subject.

Procedures on Interagency Coordination of Equal Employment Opportunity Issuances.

§ 1690.102 Purpose.

These regulations prescribe the means by which review and consultation shall occur between the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and other Federal agencies having responsibility for enforcement of Federal statutes, Executive Orders, regulations and policies which require equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or disability. Subsequent regulations will expand on standards for the coordination of specific matters referenced or alluded to herein.

[45 FR 68361, Oct. 14, 1980, as amended at 74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009]

§ 1690.103 Supersession.

None. These regulations are the first in a series of instructions issued by EEOC pursuant to its authority under Executive Order 12067.

§ 1690.104 Authority.

These regulations are prepared pursuant to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's obligation and authority under sections 1–303 and 1–304 of Executive Order 12067 (Providing for Coordination of Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Programs) 43 FR 28967, July 5, 1978. (These regulations will also appear as EEOC Management Directive No. 1000).

§ 1690.105 Policy intent.

These procedures will govern the conduct of such agencies in the development of uniform standards, guidelines

and policies for defining discrimination, uniform procedures for investigations and compliance reviews and uniform recordkeeping and reporting requirements and training programs. These procedures will also facilitate information sharing and programs to develop appropriate publications and other cooperative programs. The goals of uniformity and consistency are to be achieved with the maximum participation and review on both an informal and formal basis by the relevant Federal agencies and, finally, by the public.

§ 1690.106 Scope.

These regulations apply to Federal agencies having equal employment opportunity program responsibilities or authority other than equal employment responsibilities for their own Federal employees or applicants for employment. Its provisions do not apply to issuances related to internal management or administration of the agency.

§ 1690.107 Definitions.

(a) *Affected agency* means any agency whose programs, policies, procedures, authority or other statutory mandates (including coverage of groups of employers, unions, State and local governments or other organizations mandated by statute or Executive Order) indicate that the agency may have an interest in the proposed issuance.

(b) *Agencies* means those Executive and independent agencies, agency components, regulatory commissions, and advisory bodies having equal employment opportunity program responsibilities or authority other than equal employment opportunity responsibilities for their own Federal employees.

(c) *Consultation* means the exchange of advice and opinions on a subject occurring among the EEOC and affected agencies before formal submission of the issuance.

(d) *Formal submission* means the transmittal of a written, publication-ready document by the issuing agency to the EEOC and other affected agencies for at least 15 working days from date of receipt. The formal submission shall take place before the publication of any issuance as a final document.

(e) *Internal or administrative documents*, pursuant to 1–304 of the Order, may include, but are not limited to, forms for internal audit and recordkeeping; forms for performance and program evaluation; internal directives dealing with program accountability; routine intra-agency budget forms; intra-agency agreements; correspondence which does not transmit significant new policy interpretations or program standards having an impact upon other Federal agencies; tables of organization; and other documents setting forth administrative procedures for the conduct of programs. Internal or administrative documents do not include compliance manuals, training materials, publications or any other internal documents setting forth procedures for the resolution of complaints, standards of review or proof, or any other policies, standards or directives having implications for non-Federal employees.

(f) *Issuance* refers to any rule, regulation, guideline, order, policy directive, procedural directive, legislative proposal, publication, or data collection or recordkeeping instrument. It also includes agency documents as described above, or revisions of such documents, developed pursuant to court order. *Issuance* does not include orders issued to specific parties as a result of adjudicatory-type processes.

(g) *Order* means Executive Order 12067 (Providing for Coordination of Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Programs).

(h) *Public announcement* means the publication of a document in final form in the FEDERAL REGISTER or any other promulgation for general agency or public reference.

(i) *Significant issuance* means any issuance which the public must be afforded an opportunity to comment upon. In determining whether an issuance is significant, the EEOC shall apply the following criteria:

(1) The type and number of individuals, businesses, organizations, employers, labor unions, or State and local governments affected;

(2) The compliance and reporting requirements likely to be involved;

(3) The impact on the identification and elimination of discrimination in employment;

(4) The relationship of the proposed issuance to those of other programs and agencies.

[45 FR 68361, Oct. 14, 1980, as amended at 45 FR 71799, Oct. 30, 1980]

Subpart B—Responsibilities

§ 1690.201 Responsibilities.

(a) The Associate Legal Counsel, Coordination and Guidance Services is responsible for coordinating the consultation and review process with other agencies on any issuances covered by the Order.

(b) All Federal agencies shall advise and offer to consult with the EEOC during the development of any proposed issuances, concerning equal employment opportunity which affect the obligations of employers, labor organizations, employment agencies or other Federal agencies.

(c) The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shall advise and offer to consult with the affected Federal agencies during the development of any proposed issuances concerning equal employment opportunity which affect the obligations of employers, labor organizations, employment agencies or other Federal agencies.

[45 FR 68361, Oct. 14, 1980, as amended at 47 FR 46276, Oct. 18, 1982]

Subpart C—Policies and Procedures

§ 1690.301 Notification to EEOC during development of issuances.

(a) Agencies shall notify the Commission whenever they intend to develop a significant issuance or an issuance affecting other agencies so that potential duplication, overlap, or inconsistency with the proposed issuances of other agencies can be identified before substantial agency time and resources have been expended. The requirement for consultation applies whether or not the agency plans to publish the issuance in the FEDERAL REGISTER for public comment.

(b) Whenever an agency of the Federal government (initiating agency) develops a proposed issuance which will require consultation among the affected agencies, a responsible official of that agency or agency component shall initiate consultation by submitting an early draft of the appropriate documents, preferably after review at the first or second supervisory level, to the chair of the EEOC (ATTN: Associate Legal Counsel, Coordination and Guidance Services). The submission shall be made prior to the point that the issuance is deemed final and ready for publication and shall indicate the appropriate office or person responsible for development of the issuance.

(c) EEOC recognizes that subsequent intra-agency clearance activities may change the policies outlined in the issuance and may add or delete items included in prior drafts. Therefore, during this period of policy development, an initiating agency shall not be bound by the contents of drafts which precede the final draft.

(d) Except as provided in § 1690.307, in no instance shall there be formal submission to the EEOC or the affected agencies without prior consultation pursuant to section 1–304 of the Order.

(e) Where an agency issuance is related to the internal management or administration of the agency, the issuance is exempt from the consultation process under the Order. The initiating agencies will make the determination of what must be submitted. When the agencies are in doubt, EEOC will determine the extent to which a particular issuance is covered by this exemption.

[45 FR 68361, Oct. 14, 1980, as amended at 47 FR 46276, Oct. 18, 1982]

§ 1690.302 Issuances proposed by EEOC.

Whenever the EEOC proposes to develop a significant issuance or any issuance requiring consultation, the procedure outlined in these regulations, shall also apply, as set forth in section 1–303 of the Order. The EEOC shall advise and consult with other affected agencies whenever it develops an issuance, in the same manner and to the same extent as other agencies are required to do in § 1690.301 of this part, and in other sections below.

§ 1690.303 Consultation with affected agencies.

At the start of consultation, the EEOC shall determine which other agencies would be affected by the proposed issuance, and the initiating agency shall consult with such agencies. Initiating agencies shall also consult with other agencies which claim that their internal equal employment opportunity or personnel programs are affected by proposed issuances otherwise directed at external equal employment opportunity efforts. Agencies may consult with any other agencies that they believe would be affected by the issuance. The consultation period shall be determined by the parties. During the consultation period, the EEOC shall seek to resolve any disputes with the initiating agency before publication.

§ 1690.304 Coordination of proposed issuance.

(a) *Procedure for publication of proposed issuance.* (1) If the initiating agency, after consultation with EEOC, proposes to publish the issuance for purposes of receiving comments from the public, it shall confer with EEOC and agree on a mutually agreeable length of time, no less than 15 working days, during which the proposal shall be submitted to all affected Federal agencies pursuant to section 1–304 of the Order. The period of review shall be sufficient to allow all affected agencies reasonable time in which to properly review the proposal.

(2) When an affected agency wishes an extension of the review period, it shall make such request of the initiating agency. If the initiating agency does not grant the request, the affected agency may then make that request of EEOC. EEOC may, at its discretion, grant the additional time requested, whereupon EEOC will inform the initiating agency which shall extend the review period. EEOC shall also inform the initiating agency of the reasons for the extension.

(3) After 15 working days, if the EEOC has not requested an extension of time or otherwise communicated the need for more time to review the proposal, the initiating agency may proceed to publication of the proposed significant issuance for public comment for at least 60 days.

(4) During this public comment period, certain issues may be submitted to employer and employee representatives for comment pursuant to section 2(c) of Executive Order 12044 (Improving Government Regulations) which requires that agencies give the public an early and meaningful opportunity to participate in the development of significant regulations.

(b) *Procedure for publication of final issuance.* After the period for public comment has closed, the initiating agency shall then incorporate the changes it deems appropriate and forward to EEOC for review, a copy of the document as published, a copy of the document as amended, with changes highlighted, any staff analysis, and a list of commentors. EEOC or affected agencies may review and copy the comments received. The time needed to review these materials shall be agreed on by the EEOC and the initiating agency. After completion of this review, the initiating agency shall formally submit the proposed final issuance to all affected agencies for at least 15 working days prior to publication.

§ 1690.305 Nondisclosure of proposed issuances.

(a) In the interest of encouraging full interagency discussion of these matters and expediting the coordination process, the EEOC will not discuss the proposed issuances of other agencies at an open Commission meeting where disclosure of information would be likely to significantly frustrate implementation of a proposed agency action. The Commission will make this determination on a case by case basis.

(b) Requests by the public for drafts of proposed issuances of another agency will be coordinated, in appropriate circumstances, with that agency and the person submitting the request shall be so notified. The decision made by that agency with respect to such proposed issuances will be honored by the Commission.

[45 FR 68361, Oct. 14, 1980, as amended at 45 FR 71799, Oct. 30, 1980]

§ 1690.306 Formal submission in absence of consultation.

If an initiating agency has an issuance which was already under development on or before July 1, 1978, when Executive Order 12067 became effective, and on which there has been no consultation, the agency shall immediately notify the EEOC of the existence of such proposals and the following procedure shall apply:

(a) EEOC shall confer with the initiating agency and shall determine whether the proposal should be the subject of informal consultation and/or formal submission to other affected Federal agencies pursuant to section 1–304 of the Order. This does not preclude the right of the agency to consult with any other agency it wishes.

(b) If the EEOC decides that informal consultation and/or formal submission is necessary, it shall confer with the proposing agency and agree on a mutually acceptable length of time for one or both (the informal consultation and/or formal submission).

(c) The period of formal submission shall be sufficient to allow all affected agencies time in which to properly review the proposal. While such period may be longer, in no instance may it be shorter than 15 working days.

§ 1690.307 Temporary waivers.

(a) In the event that the proposed issuance is of great length or complexity, the EEOC may, at its discretion, grant a temporary waiver of the requirements contained in §1690.303 or §1690.304. Such waivers may be granted if:

(1) The period of consultation and thorough review required for these documents would be so long as to disrupt normal agency operations; or

(2) The initiating agency is issuing a document to meet an immediate statutory deadline; or

(3) The initiating agency presents other compelling reasons why interim issuance is essential.

(b) In the event of a waiver, the initiating agency shall clearly indicate that the issuance is interim, has been published pursuant to a wavier, and is subject to review. EEOC reserves the right, after publication, to review the document in light of the objectives of the Order. The initiating agency may make substantive conforming changes in light of comments by EEOC and other affected agencies.

[45 FR 68361, Oct. 14, 1980, as amended at 45 FR 71799, Oct. 30, 1980]

§ 1690.308 Notice of unresolved disputes.

(a) The disputes resolution mechanism in section 1–307 of the Executive Order should be used only in extraordinary circumstances, and only when further good faith efforts on the part of the EEOC and the agency involved would be ineffective in achieving a resolution of the dispute. Before using the disputes resolution mechanism, the EEOC or the initiating agency must have fully participated in the coordination process, including giving notification to the EEOC and the affected agencies of its intention to publish in final within 15 working days.

(b) EEOC or the affected agency shall then send written notification of the dispute and the reasons for it to the EEOC and to the other affected agencies. Thereafter, but within the 15 day notice period, the EEOC or the affected agency may refer the dispute to the Executive Office of the President. Such reference may be made by the Chair of the EEOC or the head of the Federal agency. If no reference is made within 15 working days, the decision of the agency which initiated the proposed issuance will become effective.

§ 1690.309 Interpretation of the Order.

Subject to the dispute resolution procedures set forth above and in accordance with the objectives set forth in 1–201 and the procedures in 1–303 of the Order, the EEOC shall interpret the meaning and intent of the Order. EEOC also will issue procedural changes under the Order, as appropriate, after advice and consultation with affected agencies as provided for in these procedures.

Subpart D—Reporting Requirements

§ 1690.401 Reporting requirements.

The regulations do not establish reporting requirements other than the

required notices of proposed rulemaking and formal and informal review.

PART 1691—PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS OF EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION FILED AGAINST RECIPIENTS OF FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Sec.

1691.1 Purpose and application.
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AUTHORITY: E.O. 12250, 45 FR 72995 (November 4, 1980) and E.O. 12067, 43 FR 28967 (June 30, 1978).

SOURCE: 48 FR 3574, Jan. 25, 1983, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1691.1 Purpose and application.

The purpose of this regulation is to implement procedures for processing and resolving complaints of employment discrimination filed against recipients of Federal financial assistance subject to title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972, as amended, and provisions similar to title VI and title IX in Federal grant statutes. Enforcement of such provisions in Federal grant statutes is covered by this regulation to the extent they relate to prohibiting employment discrimination on the ground of race, color, national origin, religion or sex in programs receiving Federal financial assistance of the type subject to title VI or title IX. This regulation does not, however, apply to the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, as amended, the Comprehensive Employment Training Act of 1973, as amended, or Executive Order 11246.

§ 1691.2 Exchange of information.

EEOC and agencies shall share any information relating to the employment policies and practices of recipients of Federal financial assistance that may assist each office in carrying out its responsibilities. Such information shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, affirmative action programs, annual employment reports, complaints, investigative files, conciliation or compliance agreements, and compliance review reports and files.

§ 1691.3 Confidentiality.

When an agency receives information obtained by EEOC, the agency shall observe the confidentiality requirements of sections 706(b) and 709(e) of title VII as would EEOC, except in cases where the agency receives the same information from a source independent of EEOC or has referred a joint complaint to EEOC under this regulation. In such cases, the agency may use independent source information or information obtained by EEOC under the agency's investigative authority in a subsequent title VI, title IX or revenue sharing act enforcement proceeding. Agency questions concerning confidentiality shall be directed to the Deputy Legal Counsel, EEOC.

[48 FR 3574, Jan. 25, 1983, as amended at 52 FR 4902, Feb. 18, 1987]

§ 1691.4 Standards for investigation, reviews and hearings.

In any investigation, compliance review, hearing or other proceeding, agencies shall consider title VII case law and EEOC Guidelines, 29 CFR parts 1604–1607, unless inapplicable, in determining whether a recipient of Federal financial assistance has engaged in an unlawful employment practice.

§ 1691.5 Agency processing of complaints of employment discrimination.

(a) Within ten days of receipt of a complaint of employment discrimination, an agency shall notify the respondent that it has received a complaint of employment discrimination, including the date, place and circumstances of the alleged unlawful employment practice.

(b) Within thirty days of receipt of a complaint of employment discrimination an agency shall:

(1) Determine whether it has jurisdiction over the complaint under title VI, title IX, or the revenue sharing act; and

(2) Determine whether EEOC may have jurisdiction over the complaint under title VII or the Equal Pay Act.

(c) An agency shall transfer to EEOC a complaint of employment discrimination over which it does not have jurisdiction but over which EEOC may have jurisdiction within thirty days of receipt of a complaint. At the same time, the agency shall notify the complainant and the respondent of the transfer, the reason for the transfer, the location of the EEOC office to which the complaint was transferred and that the date the agency received the complaint will be deemed the date it was received by EEOC.

(d) If an agency determines that a complaint of employment discrimination is a joint complaint, then the agency may refer the complaint to EEOC. The agency need not consult with EEOC prior to such a referral. An agency referral of a joint complaint should occur within thirty days of receipt of the complaint.

(e) An agency shall refer to EEOC all joint complaints solely alleging employment discrimination against an individual. If an agency determines that special circumstances warrant its investigation of such a joint complaint, then the agency shall determine whether the complainant has filed a similar charge of employment discrimination with EEOC.

(1) If an agency determines that the complainant has filed a similar charge of employment discrimination with EEOC, then the agency may investigate the complaint if EEOC agrees to defer its investigation pending the agency investigation.

(2) If an agency determines that the complainant has not filed a similar charge of employment discrimination with EEOC, then the agency may investigate the complaint if special circumstances warrant such action. In such cases, EEOC shall defer its investigation of the referred joint complaint pending the agency investigation.

(f) An agency shall not refer to EEOC a joint complaint alleging a pattern or practice of employment discrimination unless special circumstances warrant agency referral of the complaint to EEOC.

(g) If a joint complaint alleges discrimination in employment and in other practices of a recipient, an agency should, absent special circumstances, handle the entire complaint under the agency's own investigation procedures. In such cases, the agency shall determine whether the complainant has filed a similar charge of employment discrimination with EEOC. If such a charge has been filed, the agency and EEOC shall coordinate their activities. Upon agency request, EEOC should ordinarily defer its investigation pending the agency investigation.

(h) When a joint complaint is referred to EEOC for investigation, the agency shall advise EEOC of the relevant civil rights provision(s) applicable to the employment practices of the recipient, whether the agency wants to receive advance notice of any conciliation negotiations, whether the agency wants EEOC to seek information concerning the relationship between the alleged discrimination and the recipient's Federally assisted programs or activities and, where appropriate, whether a primary objective of the Federal financial assistance is to provide employment. The agency shall also notify the complainant and the recipient of the referral, the location of the EEOC office to which the complaint was referred, the identity of the civil rights provision(s) involved, the authority of EEOC under this regulation and that the date the agency received the complaint will be deemed the date it was received by EEOC. Specifically, the notice shall inform the recipient that the agency has

delegated to EEOC its investigative authority under title VI, title IX, or the revenue sharing act, and the relevant act's implementing regulations. The agency, therefore, may use information obtained by EEOC under the agency's investigative authority in a subsequent title VI, title IX or revenue sharing act enforcement proceeding.

§ 1691.6 General rules concerning EEOC action on complaints.

(a) A complaint of employment discrimination filed with an agency, which is transferred or referred to EEOC under this regulation, shall be deemed a charge received by EEOC. For all purposes under title VII and the Equal Pay Act, the date such a complaint was received by an agency shall be deemed the date it was received by EEOC.

(b) When EEOC investigates a joint complaint it shall, where appropriate, seek sufficient information to allow the referring agency to determine whether the alleged employment discrimination is in a program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance and/or whether the alleged employment discrimination causes discrimination with respect to beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries of the assisted program.

(c) Upon referral of a joint complaint alleging a pattern or practice of employment discrimination, EEOC generally will limit its investigation to the allegation(s) which directly affect the complainant.

(d) If EEOC, in the course of an investigation of a joint complaint, is unable to obtain information from a recipient through voluntary means, EEOC shall consult with the referring agency to determine an appropriate course of action.

(e) If EEOC agrees to defer its investigation of a complaint of employment discrimination pending an agency investigation of the complaint, then EEOC shall give due weight to the agency's determination concerning the complaint.

§ 1691.7 EEOC dismissals of complaints.

If EEOC determines that the title VII allegations of a joint complaint should be dismissed, EEOC shall notify the complainant and the recipient of the reason for the dismissal and the effect the dismissal has on the complainant's rights under the relevant civil rights provision(s) of the referring agency, and issue a notice of right to sue under title VII. At the same time, EEOC shall transmit to the referring agency a copy of EEOC's file.

§ 1691.8 Agency action on complaints dismissed by EEOC.

Upon EEOC's transmittal of a dismissal under § 1691.7 of this part, the referring agency shall determine within thirty days, what, if any, action the agency intends to take with respect to the complaint and then notify the complainant and the recipient. In reaching that determination, the referring agency shall give due weight to EEOC's determination that the title VII allegations of the joint complaint should be dismissed. If the referring agency decides to take action with respect to a complaint that EEOC has dismissed for lack of reasonable cause to believe that title VII has been violated, the agency shall notify the Assistant Attorney General and the Chairman of the EEOC in writing of the action it plans to take and the basis of its decision to take such action.

§ 1691.9 EEOC reasonable cause determinations and conciliation efforts.

(a) If EEOC, after investigation of a joint complaint, determines that reasonable cause exists to believe that title VII has been violated, EEOC shall advise the referring agency, the complainant and the recipient of that determination and attempt to resolve the complaint by informal methods of conference, conciliation and persuasion. If EEOC would like the referring agency to participate in conciliation negotiations, EEOC shall so notify the agency and the agency shall participate. EEOC shall provide advance notice of any conciliation negotiations to referring agencies that request such notice, whether or not EEOC requests their participation in the negotiations.

(b) If EEOC's efforts to resolve the complaint by informal methods of conference, conciliation and persuasion fail, EEOC shall:

(1) Issue a notice of failure of conciliation to the recipient in accordance with 29 CFR 1601.25;

(2) Transmit to the referring agency a copy of EEOC's investigative file, including its Letter of Determination and notice of failure of conciliation;

(3) If the recipient is not a government, governmental entity or political subdivision, determine whether EEOC will bring suit under title VII and, in accordance with 29 CFR 1601.28, issue a notice of right to sue under title VII;

(4) If the recipient is a government, governmental entity or political subdivision, refer the matter to the Attorney General in accordance with 29 CFR 1601.29. The Attorney General, or his or her delegate, will determine whether the Department of Justice will bring suit under title VII and, in accordance with 29 CFR 1601.28, issue a notice of right to sue under title VII.

§ 1691.10 Agency enforcement of unresolved complaints.

(a) Upon EEOC's transmittal of a reasonable cause determination and notice of failure of conciliation under §1691.9(b)(2) of this regulation, the referring agency shall determine, within thirty days, whether the recipient has violated any applicable civil rights provision(s) which the agency has a responsibility to enforce. The referring agency shall give due weight to EEOC's determination that reasonable cause exists to believe that title VII has been violated.

(b) If the referring agency determines that the recipient has violated any applicable civil rights provision(s) which the agency has a responsibility to enforce, the agency shall so notify the complainant and the recipient and determine whether further efforts to obtain voluntary compliance are warranted. In reaching that determination, the agency shall give due weight to the failure of EEOC's efforts to resolve the complaint by informal methods. If the referring agency determines that further efforts to obtain voluntary compliance are not warranted or if such further efforts fail, the agency shall initiate appropriate enforcement proceedings under its own regulations.

(c) If the referring agency determines that the recipient has not violated any applicable civil rights provision(s) which the agency has a responsibility to enforce, the agency shall notify the complainant, the recipient, the Assistant Attorney General and the Chairman of the EEOC in writing of the basis of that determination.

§ 1691.11 EEOC negotiated settlements and conciliation agreements.

If the parties enter into a negotiated settlement (as described in 29 CFR 1601.20) prior to a determination or a conciliation agreement (as described in 29 CFR 1601.24) after a determination, EEOC shall notify the referring agency that the complaint has been settled. The agency shall take no further action on the complaint of employment discrimination thereafter except that the agency may take the existence of the complaint into account in scheduling the recipient for a review under the agency's regulations.

§ 1691.12 Interagency consultation.

(a) Before investigating whether the employment practices of a recipient of Federal financial assistance constitute a pattern or practice of unlawful discrimination or initiating formal administrative enforcement procedures on that basis, an agency shall, to the extent practical, consult with the Chairman of the EEOC and the Assistant Attorney General to assure that duplication of effort will be minimized.

(b) Prior to the initiation of any legal action against a recipient of Federal financial assistance alleging unlawful employment practices, the Department of Justice and/or EEOC shall, to the extent practical, notify the appropriate agency or agencies of the proposed action and the substance of the allegations.

§ 1691.13 Definitions.

As used in this regulation, the term:

(a) *Agency* means any Federal department or agency which extends Federal financial assistance subject to any civil rights provision(s) to which this regulation applies.

(b) *Assistant Attorney General* refers to the Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, United States Department of Justice, or his or her delegate.

(c) *Chairman of the EEOC* refers to the Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or his or her delegate.

(d) *EEOC* means the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and, where appropriate, any of its District Offices and its Washington Field Office.

(e) *Federal financial assistance* includes:

(1) Grants and loans of Federal funds,

(2) The grant or donation of Federal property and interests in property,

(3) The detail of Federal personnel,

(4) The sale and lease of, and the permission to use (on other than a casual or transient basis), Federal property or any interest in such property without consideration or at a nominal consideration, or at a consideration which is reduced for the purpose of assisting the recipient, or in recognition of the public interest to be served by such sale or lease to the recipient, and

(5) Any Federal agreement, arrangement, or other contract which has as one of its purposes the provision of assistance.

For purposes of this regulation, the term *Federal financial assistance* also includes funds disbursed under the revenue sharing act.

(f) *Joint complaint* means a complaint of employment discrimination covered by title VII or the Equal Pay Act and by title VI, title IX, or the revenue sharing act.

(g) *Recipient* means any State, political subdivision of any State, or instrumentality of any State or political subdivision, any public or private agency, institution, organization, or other entity, or any individual, in any State, to whom Federal financial assistance is extended, directly or through another recipient, for any program, including any successor, assign, or transferee thereof, but such term does not include any ultimate beneficiary under such program.

(h) *Revenue sharing act* refers to the State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972, as amended, 31 U.S.C. 1221 *et seq*.

(i) *Title VI* refers to title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d–4. Where appropriate, *title VI* also refers to the civil rights provisions of other Federal statutes or regulations to the extent that they prohibit employment discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex or national origin in programs receiving Federal financial assistance of the type subject to title VI itself.

(j) *Title VII* refers to title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, *et seq*.

(k) *Title IX* refers to title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 to 1683.

[48 FR 3574, Jan. 25, 1983, as amended at 54 FR 32063, Aug. 4, 1989]

PARTS 1692–1694 [RESERVED]

PART 1695—GUIDANCE PROCEDURES

Sec.

1695.0 Applicability.
1695.1 Definitions.
1695.2 Guidance requirements.
1695.3 Good faith cost estimates.
1695.4 Significance determination.
1695.5 Significant guidance requirements.
1695.6 Notice and public comment.
1695.7 Petitions.
1695.8 Public access to current guidance documents.
1695.9 Rescinded guidance.
1695.10 No judicial review or enforceable rights.

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 553, 42 U.S.C. 2000e–12, 29 U.S.C. 201 *et seq*., 29 U.S.C. 628, 42 U.S.C. 12116, 42 U.S.C. 2000ff–10; E.O. 13891, 84 FR 55235; OMB Memorandum M–20–02.

SOURCE: 85 FR 69170, Nov. 2, 2020, unless otherwise noted.

§ 1695.0 Applicability.

This part prescribes general procedures that apply to guidance documents of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC or Commission) under all statutes enforced by the Commission.

§ 1695.1 Definitions.

(a) *Guidance document* means any statement of Commission policy or interpretation concerning a statute, regulation, or technical matter within its jurisdiction that is intended to have general applicability and future effect, but which is not intended to be binding in its own right and is not otherwise

required by statute to satisfy the rulemaking procedures specified in 5 U.S.C. 553 or 5 U.S.C. 556. The term is not confined to formal written documents, and may include letters, memoranda, circulars, bulletins, and advisories that set forth for the first time a new regulatory policy. It may also include equivalent video, audio, and web-based formats. The definition does not apply to:

(1) Rules promulgated pursuant to notice and comment requirements under 5 U.S.C. 553 or similar statutory provisions.

(2) Rules exempt from rulemaking requirements under 5 U.S.C. 553(a);

(3) Rules of Commission organization, procedure, or practice;

(4) Decisions of Commission adjudications under 5 U.S.C. 554 or similar statutory provisions;

(5) Internal executive branch legal advice or legal advisory opinions addressed to executive branch officials;

(6) Commission statements of specific applicability, including advisory or legal opinions directed to particular parties about circumstance-specific questions, notices regarding particular locations or facilities, and correspondence with individual persons or entities;

(7) Legal briefs, other court filings, or positions taken in litigation or enforcement actions;

(8) Commission statements that do not set forth a policy on a statutory, regulatory, or technical issue or an interpretation of a statute or regulation, including speeches and individual presentations, PowerPoint slides, editorials, media interviews, press materials, or congressional testimony that do not set forth for the first time a new regulatory policy;

(9) Guidance pertaining to military or foreign affairs functions;

(10) Grant solicitations and awards;

(11) Contract solicitations and awards; or

(12) Purely internal Commission policies or guidance directed solely to EEOC employees or contractors or to other Federal agencies that are not anticipated to have substantial future effect on the behavior of regulated parties outside of the government; for example, Volume I of the Commission's Compliance Manual, which is only for internal use.

(b) *Significant guidance document.* (1) *Significant guidance document* means a guidance document that will be disseminated to regulated entities or the general public and that may reasonably be anticipated:

(i) To lead to an annual effect on the economy of $100 million or more or adversely affect in a material way the U.S. economy, a sector of the U.S. economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or State, local, or tribal governments or communities;

(ii) To create serious inconsistency or otherwise interfere with an action taken or planned by another Federal agency;

(iii) To alter materially the budgetary impact of entitlements, grants, user fees, or loan programs or the rights and obligations of recipients thereof; or

(iv) To raise novel legal or policy issues arising out of legal mandates, the President's priorities, or the principles set forth in E.O. 12866, as further amended.

(2) It does not include any other category of guidance documents exempted in writing by OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA).

§ 1695.2 Guidance requirements.

(a) Each guidance document shall comply with all relevant statutes and regulations.

(b) It shall be written in plain and understandable English and avoid using mandatory language, such as ''shall,'' ''must,'' ''required,'' or ''requirement,'' unless the language describes an established statutory or regulatory requirement or is addressed to EEOC staff and will not foreclose the Commission's consideration of positions advanced by affected private parties;

(c) It shall identify or include:

(1) The term ''guidance'' or its functional equivalent and that the Commission is issuing the document;

(2) A unique identifier that provides information on whether the document was subject to a vote (CV) or not (NVTA), the year of issuance, and

unique number of its issuance and, if applicable, a Z–RIN;

(3) The activity or entities to which the guidance applies;

(4) A short summary of the subject matter covered in the guidance document at the top of the document.

(5) A statement noting whether the guidance is intended to revise or replace any previously issued guidance and, if so, sufficient information to identify the previously issued guidance; and

(6) Citations to applicable statutes and regulations;

(7)(i) A clear and prominent statement of the following: ''The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or Commission policies.''

(ii) When binding guidance is authorized by law or is incorporated into contract, the language in paragraph (c)(7)(i) of this section may be modified to reflect either of those facts.

(d) If the guidance document sets forth the Commission's position on a legal principle for the first time or changes the Commission's legal position on any issue, the Commission must approve the guidance document by majority vote. Any significant guidance or guidance that is otherwise subject to notice and comment procedures must be approved by a Commission vote. Any guidance document that requires a vote of the Commission to be approved shall be circulated to the Commissioners, and, if approved, shall be signed by the Chair on behalf of the Commission. If the document is not setting forth a new or changed legal position, is reiterating already established Commission policies, or is otherwise simply providing technical assistance on the laws the Commission enforces without announcing any new policy or legal position, it shall be circulated to the Commission for informational purposes for a period of not less than five days, unless emergency circumstances do not allow, and shall only require approval, but not signature, by the Chair.

§ 1695.3 Good faith cost estimates.

(a) A good faith effort shall be made, to the extent practicable, to estimate the likely economic cost impact of the guidance document to determine whether the document might be significant. It may, however, be difficult to predict with precision the economic impact of voluntary guidance.

(b) When determining the likely economic cost impact, the same level of analysis should be given as that required for a major determination under the Congressional Review Act (5 U.S.C. 801 *et seq.*) and the economic impact on small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*).

§ 1695.4 Significance determination.

(a) Prior to issuance, the Commission shall provide OIRA with an opportunity to review a guidance document to determine if it meets the definition of ''significant guidance document.''

(b) If the guidance document is determined not to be significant, the Commission shall proceed with issuance of the guidance without going through the procedures described in § 1695.5.

(c) In emergency situations, or when required by statutory deadline or court order to act more quickly than normal review procedures allow, the Chair shall notify OIRA and all Commissioners as soon as possible and, to the extent practicable, comply with the requirements of this part at the earliest opportunity.

§ 1695.5 Significant guidance requirements.

(a) Each proposed significant guidance document shall be:

(1) Approved by the Commission before issuance and assigned a Z–RIN through the Regulatory Management System (RMS), or a successor data management system.

(2) Comply with the applicable requirements for regulations, including significant regulatory actions, in E.O. 12866, E.O. 13563, E.O. 13609, E.O. 13771, and E.O. 13777.

(3) Submitted to OMB for coordinated review. Proposed guidance documents that are otherwise important to the Commission's interests may also be submitted for review.

(4) Reviewed by OIRA under E.O. 12866 before issuance.

(b) The Chair may determine that it is appropriate to coordinate with OMB in the review of guidance documents that are otherwise of importance to the Commission's interests.

§ 1695.6 Notice and public comment.

(a) Each proposed significant guidance document shall have a period of notice and public comment of at least 30 days, unless the Commission, in consultation with OIRA, finds good cause that such notice and public comment are impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest, and incorporates such finding and a brief statement of reasons therefor into the guidance document.

(b) Notice shall be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER announcing that a draft of the proposed guidance document is publicly available on the Federal e-regulation website, and the proposed significant guidance document also shall be posted on the Commission website.

(c) The Commission shall prepare and post a public response to major concerns raised in the comments, as appropriate, either before or when the significant guidance document is finalized and issued.

(d) When appropriate, the Chair may determine that a guidance document that is not otherwise required to go through notice and public comment shall also be subject to a period of public comment following the document's approval by the Commission before the document becomes effective.

(e) Unless otherwise determined in writing by the Chair, upon issuing a significant guidance document, a report shall be submitted to Congress and GAO in accordance with the procedures described in 5 U.S.C. 801 (the ''Congressional Review Act'').

§ 1695.7 Petitions.

(a) Any interested person may petition the Commission, in writing, for the issuance, amendment, or repeal of a guidance. Such petition shall state the guidance, regulation, or rule, together with a statement of grounds in support of such petition.

(b) Petitions may be filed with the EEOC, Office of Executive Secretariat, either electronically at the EEOC guidance portal, *http://www.eeoc.gov/guidance*, or in hard copy to U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Executive Secretariat, 131 M Street NE, Washington, DC 20507.

(c) Upon the filing of such petition, the Commission shall consider the same and may thereupon either grant or deny the petition in whole or in part, conduct an appropriate proceeding thereon, or make other disposition of the petition.

(d) The Commission should respond to all petitions in a timely manner, but no later than 90 days after receipt of the petition, as to how it intends to proceed. Should the petition be denied in whole or in part, prompt notice shall be given of the denial, accompanied by a simple statement of the grounds unless the denial be self-explanatory.

(e) The issuance, amendment, or repeal of a guidance in response to a petition shall be considered by the Commission pursuant to its regular procedures.

§ 1695.8 Public access to current guidance documents.

(a) All current guidance documents shall be published with a unique identifier including, at a minimum, the document's title, date of issuance or revision, and its Z–RIN (if applicable).

(b) All current guidance documents shall made available through a single ''guidance portal'' on the Commission website, together with a single, searchable, indexed database available to the public;

(c) The guidance portal shall include a statement that guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, except as authorized by law or as incorporated into a contract;

(d) The Commission shall maintain and advertise on its website a means for the public to comment electronically on any guidance documents that are subject to the notice and comment procedures described in § 1695.6 and to submit requests electronically for issuance, reconsideration, modification, or rescission of guidance documents in accordance with § 1695.7; and

(e) Designate an office to receive and address complaints from the public that the Commission is not following the relevant requirements for issuing guidance or is improperly treating a guidance document as a binding requirement.

§ 1695.9 Rescinded guidance.

The Commission shall not cite, use, or rely on guidance documents that are rescinded, except to establish historical facts.

§ 1695.10 No judicial review or enforceable rights.

This part is intended to improve the internal management of the Commission. As such, it is for the use of EEOC personnel only and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its agencies or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

PARTS 1696–1899 [RESERVED]

FINDING AIDS

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