

§ 1472.670

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, Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement), that implements Execu-

29 CFR Ch. XII (7-1-21 Edition)

tive 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]

CHAPTER XIV—EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

<i>Part</i>		<i>Page</i>
1600	Employee responsibilities and conduct	151
1601	Procedural regulations	151
1602	Recordkeeping and reporting requirements under title VII, the ADA and GINA	174
1603	Procedures for previously exempt State and local government employee complaints of employment discrimination under section 304 of the Govern- ment Employee Rights Act of 1991	187
1604	Guidelines on discrimination because of sex	195
1605	Guidelines on discrimination because of religion ...	205
1606	Guidelines on discrimination because of national origin	209
1607	Uniform guidelines on employee selection proce- dures (1978)	212
1608	Affirmative action appropriate under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended	237
1610	Availability of records	244
1611	Privacy Act regulations	263
1612	Government in the Sunshine Act regulations	271
1614	Federal sector equal employment opportunity	277
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	319
1620	The Equal Pay Act	326
1621	Procedures—the Equal Pay Act	341
1625	Age Discrimination in Employment Act	342
1626	Procedures—Age Discrimination in Employment Act	364
1627	Records to be made or kept relating to age: No- tices to be posted	371
1630	Regulations to implement the equal employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act	377
1635	Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008	435

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

<i>Part</i>		<i>Page</i>
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	448
1641	Procedures for complaints/charges of employment discrimination based on disability filed against employers holding government contracts or sub-contracts	455
1650	Debt collection	459
1690	Procedures on interagency coordination of equal employment opportunity issuances	466
1691	Procedures for complaints of employment discrimination filed against recipients of Federal financial assistance	471
1692-1694	[Reserved]	
1695	Guidance procedures	475
1696-1899	[Reserved]	

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.

1601.1 Purpose.

Subpart A—Definitions

1601.2 Terms defined in title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act.

1601.3 Other definitions.

1601.4 Vice Chairman's functions.

1601.5 District; field; area; local authority.

Subpart B—Procedure for the Prevention of Unlawful Employment Practices

1601.6 Submission of information.

1601.7 Charges by or on behalf of persons claiming to be aggrieved.

1601.8 Where to make a charge.

1601.9 Form of charge.

1601.10 Withdrawal of a charge by a person claiming to be aggrieved.

1601.11 Charges by members of the Commission.

1601.12 Contents of charge; amendment of charge.

1601.13 Filing; deferrals to State and local agencies.

1601.14 Service of charge or notice of charge.

INVESTIGATION OF A CHARGE

1601.15 Investigative authority.

1601.16 Access to and production of evidence; testimony of witnesses; procedure and authority.

1601.17 Witnesses for public hearings.

PROCEDURE FOLLOWING FILING OF A CHARGE

1601.18 Dismissal: Procedure and authority.

1601.19 No cause determinations: Procedure and authority.

1601.20 Negotiated settlement.

1601.21 Reasonable cause determination: Procedure and authority.

1601.22 Confidentiality.

PROCEDURE TO RECTIFY UNLAWFUL EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

1601.23 Preliminary or temporary relief.

1601.24 Conciliation: Procedure and authority.

1601.25 Failure of conciliation; notice.

1601.26 Confidentiality of endeavors.

PROCEDURE CONCERNING THE INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ACTIONS

1601.27 Civil actions by the Commission.

1601.28 Notice of right to sue: Procedure and authority.

1601.29 Referral to the Attorney General.

Subpart C—Notices to Employees, Applicants for Employment and Union Members

1601.30 Notices to be posted.

Subpart D—Construction of Rules

1601.34 Rules to be liberally construed.

Subpart E—Issuance, Amendment, or Repeal of Rules

1601.35 Petitions.

1601.36 Action on petition.

Subpart F [Reserved]

Subpart G—FEP Agency Designation Procedures

1601.70 FEP agency qualifications.

1601.71 FEP agency notification.

1601.72–1601.73 [Reserved]

1601.74 Designated and notice agencies.

1601.75 Certification of designated FEP agencies.

1601.76 Right of party to request review.

1601.77 Review by the Commission.

1601.78 Evaluation of designated FEP agencies certified by the Commission.

1601.79 Revocation of certification.

1601.80 Certified designated FEP agencies.

Subpart H—Title VII Interpretations and Opinions by the Commission

1601.91 Request for title VII interpretation or opinion.

1601.92 Contents of request; where to file.

1601.93 Opinions—title VII.

§ 1601.1

AUTHORITY: 29 U.S.C. 621-634; 28 U.S.C. 2461 note; 5 U.S.C. 301; Pub. L. 99-502; 100 Stat. 3341; 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: 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, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008. Section 107 of the Americans with Disabilities Act and section 207 of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination 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, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination 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.

[74 FR 63982, Dec. 7, 2009]

Subpart A—Definitions

§ 1601.2 Terms defined in title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination 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 In-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

formation 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 terms *EEOC* or *Commission* shall mean the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or any of its designated representatives; *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]

§ 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]

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1601.7

§ 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, or GINA 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]

§ 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, or GINA 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.

§ 1601.8

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]

§ 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, or GINA.

[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]

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

§ 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, or GINA 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 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]

§ 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, or GINA 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, or GINA, 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1601.15

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]

§ 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 no-

tice 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, and GINA, 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 non-compliance 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]

§1601.17 Witnesses for public hearings.

(a) To effectuate the purposes of title VII, the ADA, and GINA, 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, and GINA 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]

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, or GINA, 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]

§ 1601.19

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

§ 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, or GINA. 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

§ 1601.22

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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, or GINA: *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]

§ 1601.22 Confidentiality.

Neither a charge, nor information obtained during the investigation of a charge of employment discrimination under title VII, the ADA, or GINA, nor information obtained from records required to be kept or reports required to be filed pursuant to title VII, the ADA, or GINA, shall be made matters of public information by the Commission

prior to the institution of any proceeding under title VII, the ADA, or GINA 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 for the carrying out of the Commission's function under title VII, the ADA, or GINA, 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.]

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

§ 1601.25

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

case pending further efforts of the Commission to obtain voluntary compliance.

(c) Proof of compliance with title VII, the ADA, or GINA 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, or GINA.

(d) In any conciliation process pursuant to this section, after the respondent has agreed to engage in conciliation, the Commission will:

(1) To the extent it has not already done so, provide the respondent with a written summary of the known facts and non-privileged information that the Commission relied on in its reasonable cause finding, including identifying known aggrieved individuals or known groups of aggrieved individuals for whom relief is being sought, unless the individual(s) has requested anonymity. In the event that it is anticipated that a claims process will be used subsequently to identify aggrieved individuals, to the extent it has not already done so, identify for respondent the criteria that will be used to identify victims from the pool of potential class members. In cases in which that information does not provide an accurate assessment of the size of the class, for example, in harassment or reasonable accommodation cases, the Commission shall provide more detail to respondent, such as the identities of the harassers or supervisors, if known, or a description of the testimony or facts we have gathered from identified class members during the investigation. The Commission will disclose the current class size and, if class size is expected to grow, an estimate of potential additional class members to the extent known;

(2) To the extent it has not already done so, provide the respondent with a written summary of the Commission's legal basis for finding reasonable cause, including an explanation as to

how the law was applied to the facts. In addition, the Commission may, but is not required to, provide a response to the defenses raised by respondent;

(3) Provide the respondent with the basis for monetary or other relief, including the calculations underlying the initial conciliation proposal and an explanation thereof in writing. A written explanation is not required for subsequent offers and counteroffers;

(4) If it has not already done so, and if there is a designation at the time of the conciliation, advise the respondent in writing that the Commission has designated the case as systemic, class, or pattern or practice as well as the basis for the designation; and

(5) Provide the respondent at least 14 calendar days to respond to the Commission's initial conciliation proposal.

(e) The Commission shall not disclose any information pursuant to paragraph (d) of this section where another federal law prohibits disclosure of that information or where the information is protected by privilege.

(f) Any information the Commission provides pursuant to paragraph (d) of this section to the Respondent, except for information about another charging party or aggrieved individual, will also be provided to the charging party, upon request. Any information the Commission provides pursuant to paragraph (d) of this section about an aggrieved individual will also be provided to the aggrieved individual, upon request.

[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]

§ 1601.25 Failure of conciliation; notice.

Where the Commission is unable to obtain voluntary compliance as provided by title VII, the ADA, or GINA 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1601.28

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]

§ 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, or GINA: *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, or GINA.

(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]

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;

§ 1601.28

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

or the General Counsel, determines at that time or at a later time that it would effectuate the purpose of title VII, the ADA, or GINA 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, or GINA has been violated, has been unable to obtain voluntary compliance with title VII, the ADA, or GINA, 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, or GINA pursuant to section 706(f)(1) of title VII, section 107 of the ADA, or section 207 of GINA 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;

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1601.36

(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]

§ 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, or GINA 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, and GINA. 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 punish-

able by a fine of not more than \$576 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]

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, and GINA.

[44 FR 4670, Jan. 23, 1979. Redesignated and amended at 56 FR 9624, 9625, Mar. 7, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009]

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, or genetic information; 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, or GINA, 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]

§ 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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1601.74

(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 designations²:

(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 Commission³
Austin (TX) Human Relations Commission⁴
Baltimore (MD) Community Relations Commission

²State 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.

³The 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 shall be deemed a “Notice agency” pursuant to 29 CFR 1601.71(b).

⁴The 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).

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 Board⁵
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Department of Labor⁶
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

⁵The 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).

⁶The 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.

§ 1601.74

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 Practices⁷
Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations⁸
Hillsborough County (FL) Equal Opportunity and Human Relations Department
Howard County (MD) Human Rights Commission⁹
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
Lincoln (NE) Commission on Human Rights¹⁰

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 Commission¹¹
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

⁷The 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.

⁸The 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."

⁹The 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."

¹⁰The 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).

¹¹The 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).

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1601.75

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 Division¹²
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
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 Commission¹³
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

¹²On 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.

¹³The 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).

§ 1601.76

(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 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]

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

§ 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, or GINA. 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1601.80

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]

§ 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

§ 1601.91

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

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 AND GINA

Subpart A—General

Sec.

1602.1 Purpose and scope.

1602.2–1602.6 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Employer Information Report

1602.7 Requirement for filing of report.

1602.8 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

1602.9 Commission’s remedy for employer’s failure to file report.

1602.10 Employer’s exemption from reporting requirements.

1602.11 Additional reporting requirements.

Subpart C—Recordkeeping by Employers

1602.12 Records to be made or kept.

1602.13 Records as to racial or ethnic identity of employees.

1602.14 Preservation of records made or kept.

Subpart D—Apprenticeship Information Report

1602.15 Requirement for filing and preserving copy of report.

1602.16 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

1602.17 Commission’s remedy for failure to file report.

1602.18 Exemption from reporting requirements.

1602.19 Additional reporting requirements.

Subpart E—Apprenticeship Recordkeeping

1602.20 Records to be made or kept.

1602.21 Preservation of records made or kept.

Subpart F—Local Union Equal Employment Opportunity Report

1602.22 Requirements for filing and preserving copy of report.

1602.23 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on reports.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1602.1

1602.24 Commission's remedy for failure to file report.

1602.25 Exemption from reporting requirements.

1602.26 Additional reporting requirements.

Subpart G—Recordkeeping by Labor Organizations

1602.27 Records to be made or kept.

1602.28 Preservation of records made or kept.

Subpart H—Records and Inquiries as to Race, Color, National Origin, or Sex

1602.29 Applicability of State or local law.

Subpart I—State and Local Governments Recordkeeping

1602.30 Records to be made or kept.

1602.31 Preservation of records made or kept.

Subpart J—State and Local Government Information Report

1602.32 Requirement for filing and preserving copy of report.

1602.33 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

1602.34 Commission's remedy for political jurisdiction's failure to file report.

1602.35 Political jurisdiction's exemption from reporting requirements.

1602.36 Schools exemption.

1602.37 Additional reporting requirements.

Subpart K—Records and Inquiries as to Race, Color, National Origin, or Sex

1602.38 Applicability of State or local law.

Subpart L—Elementary and Secondary School Systems, Districts, and Individual Schools Recordkeeping

1602.39 Records to be made or kept.

1602.40 Preservation of records made or kept.

Subpart M—Elementary-Secondary Staff Information Report

1602.41 Requirement for filing and preserving copy of report.

1602.42 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

1602.43 Commission's remedy for school systems' or districts' failure to file report.

1602.44 School systems' or districts' exemption from reporting requirements.

1602.45 Additional reporting requirements.

Subpart N—Records and Inquiries as to Race, Color, National Origin, or Sex

1602.46 Applicability of State or local law.

Subpart O—Recordkeeping for Institutions of Higher Education

1602.47 Definition.

1602.48 Records to be made or kept.

1602.49 Preservation of records made or kept.

Subpart P—Higher Education Staff Information Report EEO-6

1602.50 Requirement for filing and preserving copy of report.

1602.51 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

1602.52 Commission's remedy for failure to file.

1602.53 Exemption from reporting requirements.

1602.54 Additional reporting requirements.

Subpart Q—Records and Inquiries as to Race, Color, National Origin, or Sex

1602.55 Applicability of State or local law.

Subpart R—Investigation of Reporting or Recordkeeping Violations

1602.56 Investigation of reporting or recordkeeping violations.

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.

Subpart A—General

§ 1602.1 Purpose and scope.

Section 709 of title VII (42 U.S.C. 2000e), section 107 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C. 12117), and section 207(a) of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) (42 U.S.C. 2000ff-6) 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.

[74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009]

§§ 1602.2–1602.6

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

§§ 1602.2–1602.6 [Reserved]

§ 1602.10 Employer’s exemption from reporting requirements.

Subpart B—Employer Information Report

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.

§ 1602.7 Requirement for filing of report.

[56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991]

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]

§ 1602.11 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, or GINA. 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, or section 207(a) of GINA and as otherwise prescribed by law.

§ 1602.8 Penalty for making of willfully false statements on report.

[31 FR 2833, Feb. 17, 1966, as amended at 56 FR 35755, July 26, 1991; 74 FR 63983, Dec. 7, 2009]

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.

Subpart C—Recordkeeping by Employers

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.

§ 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

[31 FR 2833, Feb. 17, 1966]

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, or GINA. 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, or section 207(a) of GINA, 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]

§ 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 appren-

ticeship) 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]

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

§ 1602.16

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 des-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

ignated 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, or GINA. 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, or section 207(a) of GINA 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]

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 disposition 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]

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

§ 1602.23

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

title VII, the ADA, or GINA. 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, or section 207(a) of GINA, 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]

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]

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 record-keeping 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

¹NOTE: Instructions were published as an appendix to the proposed regulations on Mar. 2, 1973 (38 FR 5662).

§ 1602.32

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. 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]

Subpart J—State and Local Government Information Report

SOURCE: 38 FR 12605, May 14, 1973, unless otherwise noted.

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

§ 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1602.40

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, or GINA. 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, or section 207(a) of GINA 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]

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

¹NOTE: Instructions were published as an appendix to the proposed regulations on June 12, 1973 (38 FR 15463).

§ 1602.41

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 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]

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 imprisonment as set forth therein.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1602.48

§ 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, or GINA. 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, or section 207(a) of GINA 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]

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

¹NOTE: Instructions were published as an appendix to the regulations at 40 FR 25188, June 12, 1975.

§ 1602.49

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 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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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, or GINA. 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, or section 207(a) of GINA 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]

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.

Subpart A—Administrative Process

- 1603.101 Coverage.
- 1603.102 Filing a complaint.
- 1603.103 Referral of complaints.
- 1603.104 Service of the complaint.
- 1603.105 Withdrawal of a complaint.
- 1603.106 Computation of time.
- 1603.107 Dismissals of complaints.
- 1603.108 Settlement and alternative dispute resolution.

§ 1603.100

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

1603.109 Investigations.

Subpart B—Hearings

1603.201 Referral and scheduling for hearing.
1603.202 Administrative law judge.
1603.203 Unavailability or withdrawal of administrative law judges.
1603.204 Ex parte communications.
1603.205 Separation of functions.
1603.206 Consolidation and severance of hearings.
1603.207 Intervention.
1603.208 Motions.
1603.209 Filing and service.
1603.210 Discovery.
1603.211 Subpoenas.
1603.212 Witness fees.
1603.213 Interlocutory review.
1603.214 Evidence.
1603.215 Record of hearings.
1603.216 Summary decision.
1603.217 Decision of the administrative law judge.

Subpart C—Appeals

1603.301 Appeal to the Commission.
1603.302 Filing an appeal.
1603.303 Briefs on appeal.
1603.304 Commission decision.
1603.305 Modification or withdrawal of Commission decision.
1603.306 Judicial review.

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 2000e–16c; 42 U.S.C. 2000ff–6(b).

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, or genetic information, 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]

§ 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.

§ 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.

§ 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

§ 1603.108

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]

§ 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.

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

§ 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.

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.

§ 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;

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1603.206

(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).

§ 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.

§ 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. Commu-

nications 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.

§ 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.

§ 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.

§ 1603.207

(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.

§ 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.

§ 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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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.

§ 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.

§ 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.

§ 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).

§ 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 of-

ferred 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

§ 1603.214

a stay unless the motion was first made to the administrative law judge.

§ 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.

§ 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.

§ 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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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.

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.

§ 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]

§ 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1604.1

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.

§ 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.

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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1604.6

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 mem-

bers 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

§ 1604.7

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 occupational 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 con-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

sideration 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]

¹The principles involved here continue to apply to race, color, religion or national origin.

(d) With respect to conduct between fellow employees, an employer is responsible for acts of sexual harassment in the workplace where the employer (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. Similarly, 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 woman 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 childcare 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. Similarly, 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 employ-

ment, 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 non-discriminatory. 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

¹See CD 76-104 (1976), CCH ¶ 6500; CD 71-2620 (1971), CCH ¶ 6283; CD 71-779 (1970), CCH ¶ 6180.

§ 1605.2

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

intended to provide guidance for statutes which require accommodation on bases other than religion such as section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 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 apprenticeship 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 opportunities, 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

²See *Trans World Airlines, Inc. v. Hardison*, 432 U.S. 63, 74 (1977).

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1605.2

1605.3. The principles expressed in these Guidelines apply as well to such requests for accommodation.

(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 do 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

³On 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.

§ 1605.3

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

from a bona fide seniority system is necessary in order to accommodate an 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:

⁵The 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.

(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]

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.*

§ 1606.1

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 require-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

ments 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

¹See 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.

²See *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.

³See 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).

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1606.8

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 vio-

lates 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.

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).

Pt. 1607

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

(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

- Sec.
- 1607.1 Statement of purpose.
- 1607.2 Scope.

- 1607.3 Discrimination defined: Relationship between use of selection procedures and discrimination.
- 1607.4 Information on impact.
- 1607.5 General standards for validity studies.
- 1607.6 Use of selection procedures which have not been validated.
- 1607.7 Use of other validity studies.
- 1607.8 Cooperative studies.
- 1607.9 No assumption of validity.
- 1607.10 Employment agencies and employment services.
- 1607.11 Disparate treatment.
- 1607.12 Retesting of applicants.
- 1607.13 Affirmative action.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

- 1607.14 Technical standards for validity studies.

DOCUMENTATION OF IMPACT AND VALIDITY EVIDENCE

- 1607.15 Documentation of impact and validity evidence.

DEFINITIONS

- 1607.16 Definitions.

APPENDIX

- 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

§ 1607.3

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 guide-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

lines, 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 (4/5) (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

§ 1607.5

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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.,^{1/4} 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 satisfies 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 devise 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

§ 1607.12

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 State-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

ment 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 comparison 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 coefficient) 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 selec-

tion 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 behaviors 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 se-

lection 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 analysis 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 com-

pares 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 than 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 compatibility 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 valida-

tion 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 tendency (e.g., means) and measures of dispersion (e.g., standard deviations) and estimates of reliability 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 subcontractor 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 psychomotor 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 per-

sons 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 percentages of sex, race, or ethnic groups in individual job classifications are substantially similar to the percentages 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.

§ 1607.17

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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.
- 1608.2 Written interpretation and opinion.
- 1608.3 Circumstances under which voluntary affirmative action is appropriate.
- 1608.4 Establishing affirmative action plans.
- 1608.5 Affirmative action compliance programs under Executive Order No. 11246, as amended.
- 1608.6 Affirmative action plans which are part of Commission conciliation or settlement agreements.
- 1608.7 Affirmative action plans or programs under State or local law.
- 1608.8 Adherence to court order.
- 1608.9 Reliance on directions of other government agencies.
- 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 non-discrimination 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

²Congress 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.

³Equal 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," includ-

⁴Affirmative 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).

ing 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

§ 1608.4

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 experience 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.

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

§ 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

§ 1608.5

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1608.9

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

§ 1608.10

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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.

1610.1 Definitions.

1610.2 Statutory requirements.

1610.3 Purpose and scope.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1610.3

- 1610.4 Public reference facilities and current index.
- 1610.5 Request for records.
- 1610.6 [Reserved]
- 1610.7 Where to make request; form.
- 1610.8 Authority to determine.
- 1610.9 Responses: Timing.
- 1610.10 Responses: Form and content.
- 1610.11 Appeals to the Legal Counsel from initial denials.
- 1610.13 Maintenance of files.
- 1610.14 Waiver of user charges.
- 1610.15 Schedule of fees and method of payment for services rendered.
- 1610.16 [Reserved]
- 1610.17 Exemptions.
- 1610.18 Information to be disclosed.
- 1610.19 Predisclosure notification procedures for confidential commercial information.
- 1610.20 [Reserved]
- 1610.21 Annual report.

Subpart B—Production in Response to Subpoenas or Demands of Courts or Other Authorities

- 1610.30 Purpose and scope.
- 1610.32 Production prohibited unless approved by the Legal Counsel.
- 1610.34 Procedure in the event of a demand for production or disclosure.
- 1610.36 Procedure in the event of an adverse ruling.

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, non-search 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

§ 1610.4

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);

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

(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).

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1610.5

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 informa-

tion 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.

§ 1610.6

(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 employ-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

ment 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.*); or the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 2000ff *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) 653-6034, by email to FOIA@eoc.gov, or by Internet to <https://publicportalfoiapal.eoc.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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1610.8

(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]

§ 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

§ 1610.11

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 Pro-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

grams. 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) 653-6034, by email to FOIA@eoc.gov, or online at <https://publicportalfoiapal.eoc.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]

§ 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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1610.15

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:

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1610.17

(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 infor-

mation, 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

§ 1610.18

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) and section 207(a) of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 2000ff-6) 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 or the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination 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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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]

§ 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

§ 1610.20

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 non-disclosure 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 Attor-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

ney 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 subpoena, 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]

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1611.1

§ 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.

- 1611.1 Purpose and scope.
- 1611.2 Definitions.
- 1611.3 Procedures for requests pertaining to individual records in a record system.
- 1611.4 Times, places, and requirements for identification of individuals making requests.
- 1611.5 Disclosure of requested information to individuals.
- 1611.6 Special procedures: Medical records.
- 1611.7 Request for correction or amendment to record.
- 1611.8 Agency review of request for correction or amendment to record.
- 1611.9 Appeal of initial adverse agency determination on correction or amendment.
- 1611.10 Disclosure of record to person other than the individual to whom it pertains.
- 1611.11 Fees.
- 1611.12 Penalties.
- 1611.13 Specific Exemptions—Charge and complaint files.
- 1611.14 Exemptions—Office of Inspector General Files.
- 1611.15 Exemption—EEOC Personnel Security Files.

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.

§ 1611.2

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1611.5

(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 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.

(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

§ 1611.6

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 regula-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

tions, 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1611.8

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

§ 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:

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1611.13

(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, and GINA 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, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination 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, and GINA 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]

§ 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.

- 1612.1 Purpose and scope.
- 1612.2 Definitions.
- 1612.3 Open meeting policy.
- 1612.4 Exemptions to open meeting policy.
- 1612.5 Closed meeting procedures: agency initiated requests.
- 1612.6 Closed meeting procedures: request initiated by an interested person.
- 1612.7 Public announcement of agency meetings.
- 1612.8 Public announcement of changes in meetings.
- 1612.9 Legal Counsel's certification in closing a meeting.
- 1612.10 Recordkeeping requirements.
- 1612.11 Public access to records.
- 1612.12 Fees.

§ 1612.1

1612.13 Meetings closed by regulation.
1612.14 Judicial review.

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.

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

(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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1612.5

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

§ 1612.6

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 informa-

tion 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

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 202-663-7100, 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

§ 1612.8

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]

§ 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.

§ 1612.9

(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;

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

(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 chal-

lenge 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**

**Subpart A—Agency Program To Promote
Equal Employment Opportunity**

- Sec.
- 1614.101 General policy.
- 1614.102 Agency program.
- 1614.103 Complaints of discrimination covered by this part.
- 1614.104 Agency processing.
- 1614.105 Pre-complaint processing.
- 1614.106 Individual complaints.
- 1614.107 Dismissals of complaints.
- 1614.108 Investigation of complaints.
- 1614.109 Hearings.
- 1614.110 Final action by agencies.

**Subpart B—Provisions Applicable to
Particular Complaints**

- 1614.201 Age Discrimination in Employment Act.
- 1614.202 Equal Pay Act.
- 1614.203 Rehabilitation Act.
- 1614.204 Class complaints.

Subpart C—Related Processes

- 1614.301 Relationship to negotiated grievance procedure.
- 1614.302 Mixed case complaints.
- 1614.303 Petitions to the EEOC from MSPB decisions on mixed case appeals and complaints.
- 1614.304 Contents of petition.
- 1614.305 Consideration procedures.
- 1614.306 Referral of case to Special Panel.
- 1614.307 Organization of Special Panel.
- 1614.308 Practices and procedures of the Special Panel.
- 1614.309 Enforcement of Special Panel decision.
- 1614.310 Right to file a civil action.

Subpart D—Appeals and Civil Actions

- 1614.401 Appeals to the Commission.
- 1614.402 Time for appeals to the Commission.
- 1614.403 How to appeal.
- 1614.404 Appellate procedure.

§ 1614.101

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

- 1614.405 Decisions on appeals.
- 1614.406 Time limits. [Reserved]
- 1614.407 Civil action: Title VII, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Rehabilitation Act, and Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act.
- 1614.408 Civil action: Equal Pay Act.
- 1614.409 Effect of filing a civil action.

Subpart E—Remedies and Enforcement

- 1614.501 Remedies and relief.
- 1614.502 Compliance with final Commission decisions.
- 1614.503 Enforcement of final Commission decisions.
- 1614.504 Compliance with settlement agreements and final action.
- 1614.505 Interim relief.

Subpart F—Matters of General Applicability

- 1614.601 EEO group statistics.
- 1614.602 Reports to the Commission.
- 1614.603 Voluntary settlement attempts.
- 1614.604 Filing and computation of time.
- 1614.605 Representation and official time.
- 1614.606 Joint processing and consolidation of complaints.
- 1614.607 Delegation of authority.

Subpart G—Procedures Under the Notification and Federal Employee Anti-discrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act)

- 1614.701 Purpose and scope.
- 1614.702 Definitions.
- 1614.703 Manner and format of data.
- 1614.704 Information to be posted—all Federal agencies.
- 1614.705 Comparative data—all Federal agencies.
- 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 and 2000ff–6(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 per-

sons, to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information 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.*), or the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) (42 U.S.C. 2000ff *et seq.*) or for participating in any stage of administrative or judicial proceedings under those statutes.

[74 FR 63984, Dec. 7, 2009]

§ 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, or genetic information, 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 Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1614.102

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

§ 1614.103

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

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]

§ 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), or GINA (discrimination on the basis of genetic information) 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;

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1614.105

(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]

§ 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, or genetic information 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]

§ 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.

(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. The complainant shall send a copy of the re-

quest 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]

§ 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 send 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]

§ 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

§ 1614.201

§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.

[64 FR 37657, July 12, 1999]

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

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 (1) 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, or genetic information.

(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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1614.204

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.

(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.

(1) *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 acknowledgment 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.

[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]

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, or genetic information 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, or genetic information.

(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]

§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, or genetic information;

(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]

§ 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

§ 1614.306

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.

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

§ 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 consid-

ered 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

§ 1614.401

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 Author-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

ity (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, 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 fil-

ings 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]

§ 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;

(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

§ 1614.406

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 or her civil action rights, and be transmitted to the complainant and the agency by first class mail.

(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]

§ 1614.406 Time limits. [Reserved]

§ 1614.407 Civil action: Title VII, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Rehabilitation Act, and Genetic Information Nondiscrimination 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, and Genetic Information Nondiscrimination 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]

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1614.501

§ 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 never-

theless 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 print-

ing 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

§ 1614.503

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 noncompliance.

(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 or the Rehabilitation 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.

§ 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

§ 1614.601

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

and benefits must be provided. The termination 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1614.605

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) The 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.

[57 FR 12646, Apr. 10, 1992, as amended at 64 FR 37661, July 12, 1999]

§ 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

§ 1614.606

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]

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

§ 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(1)(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, or genetic information). 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.*, and the Genetic Information Non-discrimination Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000ff *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]

§ 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.

§ 1614.704

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

(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;

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1614.707

(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.

(1) 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 (1)(1),

(i) The number of individuals who filed those complaints, and

(ii) The number that are pending, respectively, at the investigation, hear-

ing, 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

§ 1614.707

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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.
- 1615.101 Purpose.
- 1615.102 Application.
- 1615.103 Definitions.
- 1615.104–1615.110 [Reserved]
- 1615.111 Notice.
- 1615.112–1615.129 [Reserved]
- 1615.130 General prohibitions against discrimination.
- 1615.131–1615.134 [Reserved]
- 1615.135 Electronic and information technology requirements.
- 1615.136–1615.139 [Reserved]
- 1615.140 Employment.
- 1615.141–1615.148 [Reserved]
- 1615.149 Program accessibility: Discrimination prohibited.
- 1615.150 Program accessibility: Existing facilities.
- 1615.151 Program accessibility: New construction and alterations.
- 1615.152–1615.159 [Reserved]
- 1615.160 Communications.
- 1615.161–1615.169 [Reserved]
- 1615.170 Compliance procedures.
- 1615.171–1615.999 [Reserved]

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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1615.130

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.

§§ 1615.131–1615.134

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

(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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1615.151

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,

§§ 1615.152–1615.159

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

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.

§§ 1615.171–1615.999

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

(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]

EDITORIAL NOTE: At 74 FR 3430, Jan. 21, 2009, §1615.170 was amended by removing the text “1801 ‘L’ Street NW.” and adding, in its place, the text “131 M Street, NE.” in paragraphs (d)(2) and (i); however, the amendment could not be incorporated because the text does not exist.

§§ 1615.171–1615.999 [Reserved]

PART 1620—THE EQUAL PAY ACT

- Sec.
- 1620.1 Basic applicability of the Equal Pay Act.
- 1620.2 General coverage of employees “engaged in commerce.”
- 1620.3 General coverage of employees “engaged in * * * the production of goods for commerce.”
- 1620.4 “Closely related” and “directly essential” activities.
- 1620.5 What goods are considered as “produced for commerce.”
- 1620.6 Coverage is not based on amount of covered activity.
- 1620.7 “Enterprise” coverage.
- 1620.8 “Employer,” “employee,” and “employ” defined.
- 1620.9 Meaning of “establishment.”
- 1620.10 Meaning of “wages.”
- 1620.11 Fringe benefits.
- 1620.12 Wage “rate.”
- 1620.13 “Equal Work”—What it means.
- 1620.14 Testing equality of jobs.
- 1620.15 Jobs requiring equal skill in performance.
- 1620.16 Jobs requiring equal effort in performance.
- 1620.17 Jobs requiring equal responsibility in performance.
- 1620.18 Jobs performed under similar working conditions.
- 1620.19 Equality of wages—application of the principle.
- 1620.20 Pay differentials claimed to be based on extra duties.
- 1620.21 Head of household.
- 1620.22 Employment cost not a “factor other than sex.”
- 1620.23 Collective bargaining agreements not a defense.
- 1620.24 Time unit for determining violations.
- 1620.25 Equalization of rates.
- 1620.26 Red circle rates.
- 1620.27 Relationship to the Equal Pay Act to title VII of the Civil Rights Act.
- 1620.28 Relationship to other equal pay laws.
- 1620.29 Relationship to other labor laws.
- 1620.30 Investigations and compliance assistance.
- 1620.31 Issuance of subpoenas.
- 1620.32 Recordkeeping requirements.
- 1620.33 Recovery of wages due; injunctions; penalties for willful violations.
- 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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1620.3

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 outlined in § 1620.2. "Goods" is also comprehensively defined in section 3(i) of the FLSA and includes "articles or

§ 1620.4

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

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 employee’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

§ 1620.9

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 "es-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

tablishment" 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

§ 1620.14

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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

§ 1620.15

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 dif-

ferences 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

§ 1620.18

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

"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

§ 1620.27

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1620.32

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 Direc-

tor, 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

§ 1620.33

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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.
- 1625.2 Discrimination prohibited by the Act.
- 1625.3 Employment agency.
- 1625.4 Help wanted notices or advertisements.
- 1625.5 Employment applications.
- 1625.6 Bona fide occupational qualifications.
- 1625.7 Differentiations based on reasonable factors other than age.
- 1625.8 Bona fide seniority systems.
- 1625.9 Prohibition of involuntary retirement.
- 1625.10 Costs and benefits under employee benefit plans.
- 1625.11 Exemption for employees serving under a contract of unlimited tenure.
- 1625.12 Exemption for bona fide executive or high policymaking employees.

Subpart B—Substantive Regulations

- 1625.21 Apprenticeship programs.
- 1625.22 Waivers of rights and claims under the ADEA.
- 1625.23 Waivers of rights and claims: Tender back of consideration.

Subpart C—Administrative Exemptions

- 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1625.7

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, con-

ditions, 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

§ 1625.8

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

(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 guid-

ance 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 un-reduced 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 intended 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 consummated.

(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 fa-

vorable 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 ex-

pectation 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 “ad-

vised 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 * * *

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1625.22

(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

§ 1625.22

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 ear-

lier 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
	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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1625.22

Job Title	Age	No. Se-lected	No. not se-lected
	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 para-

graph (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

§ 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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 ben-

efits, 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.

1626.1 Purpose.

1626.2 Terms defined in the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended.

1626.3 Other definitions.

1626.4 Information concerning alleged violations of the Act.

1626.5 Where to submit complaints and charges.

1626.6 Form of charge.

1626.7 Timeliness of charge.

1626.8 Contents of charge; amendment of charge.

1626.9 Referral to and from State agencies; referral States.

1626.10 Agreements with State or local fair employment practices agencies.

1626.11 Notice of charge.

1626.12 Conciliation efforts pursuant to section 7(d) of the Act.

1626.13 Withdrawal of charge.

1626.14 Right to inspect or copy data.

1626.15 Commission enforcement.

1626.16 Subpoenas.

1626.17 Notice of dismissal or termination.

1626.18 Filing of private lawsuit.

1626.19 Filing of Commission lawsuit.

1626.20 Procedure for requesting an opinion letter.

1626.21 Effect of opinions and interpretations of the Commission.

1626.22 Rules to be liberally construed.

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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1626.7

§ 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 Commis-

sion 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,

§ 1626.8

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

(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,

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1626.12

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.

(a) 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.

(b) In any conciliation process pursuant to this section the Commission will:

(1) If it has not already done so, provide the respondent with a written summary of the known facts and non-privileged information that form the basis of the allegation(s), including identifying known aggrieved individuals or known groups of aggrieved individuals, for whom relief is being sought, but not if the individual(s) has requested anonymity. In the event that it is anticipated that a claims process will be used subsequently to identify aggrieved individuals, if it has not already done so, identify for respondent the criteria that will be used to identify victims from the pool of potential class members;

(2) If it has not already done so, provide the respondent with a written summary of the legal basis for the allegation(s). In addition, the Commission may, but is not required to provide a response to the defenses raised by respondent;

(3) Provide a written basis for any monetary or other relief including the calculations underlying the initial conciliation proposal, and an explanation thereof. A written explanation is not required for subsequent offers and counteroffers;

(4) If it has not already done so, advise the respondent in writing that the Commission has designated the case as systemic, class, or pattern or practice, if the designation has been made at the time of the conciliation, and the basis for the designation; and

(5) Provide the respondent at least 14 calendar days to respond to the Commission's initial conciliation proposal.

(c) The Commission shall not disclose any information pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section where another federal law prohibits disclosure of that information or where the information is protected by privilege.

(d) Any information the Commission provides pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section to the respondent, except for information about another charging party or aggrieved individual, will also be provided to the charging party, upon request. Any information the Commission provides pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section to the respondent about

§ 1626.13

an aggrieved individual will be provided to the aggrieved individual, upon request.

[86 FR 2985, Jan. 14, 2021]

§ 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 record-keeping 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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

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. Any conciliation process under this paragraph shall follow the procedures as described in § 1626.12.

(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]

§ 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1626.18

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), or the Genetic Information Non-

discrimination Act (GINA), 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, or GINA.

(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]

§ 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.

§ 1626.19

(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 for-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

mal 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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1627.1

(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 em-

ployer 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;

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1627.6

(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 con-

sidered 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

§ 1627.7

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 alter-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

native 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 satisfied 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 requirement 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 pro-

vided 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 $\$40,000 \times \$96,000 / \$96,000 + \$144,000$

= \$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.
- 1630.1 Purpose, applicability, and construction.
- 1630.2 Definitions.
- 1630.3 Exceptions to the definitions of "Disability" and "Qualified Individual with a Disability."
- 1630.4 Discrimination prohibited.
- 1630.5 Limiting, segregating, and classifying.
- 1630.6 Contractual or other arrangements.
- 1630.7 Standards, criteria, or methods of administration.
- 1630.8 Relationship or association with an individual with a disability.
- 1630.9 Not making reasonable accommodation.
- 1630.10 Qualification standards, tests, and other selection criteria.
- 1630.11 Administration of tests.
- 1630.12 Retaliation and coercion.
- 1630.13 Prohibited medical examinations and inquiries.
- 1630.14 Medical examinations and inquiries specifically permitted.
- 1630.15 Defenses.
- 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

§ 1630.2

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 dis-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

ability 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 (1) 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.

(1) *“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 limita-

tions 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

§ 1630.3

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 pro-

fessional, 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;

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1630.9

(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 bar-

gaining 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

§ 1630.10

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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

§ 1630.16

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

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

¹Claims 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. Steeltex, 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).

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.”

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(1) (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 ac-

tivity,” “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-Hitchcock 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 lim-

ited 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 indi-

vidual 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

²In addition, many cases previously analyzed in terms of whether the plaintiff was

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 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

“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).

³In 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

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

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.

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 "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

⁴480 U.S. at 282-83.

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 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 im-

pairment" 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 ADA: "[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 *Deater 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) [herein-

after 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 non-essential, 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 *Mantoletto 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. Choute*, 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 contractor's 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 en-

able 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 sub-

stances 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 non-participation, 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 clear-

ly 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 non-smoker 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 non-discrimination 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 (in-

cluding, 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 in-

formation 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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1635.2

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.

- 1635.1 Purpose.
- 1635.2 Definitions—general.
- 1635.3 Definitions specific to GINA.
- 1635.4 Prohibited practices—in general.
- 1635.5 Limiting, segregating, and classifying.
- 1635.6 Causing a covered entity to discriminate.
- 1635.7 Retaliation.
- 1635.8 Acquisition of genetic information.
- 1635.9 Confidentiality.
- 1635.10 Enforcement and remedies.
- 1635.11 Construction.

1635.12 Medical information that is not genetic information.

AUTHORITY: 29 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

§ 1635.2

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 At-

mospheric 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

§ 1635.4

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 indi-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

vidual 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 co-worker); 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 re-

quirement 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)(i) 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

§ 1635.11

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 regula-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

tion 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).

§ 1635.12

(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 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.

- 1640.1 Purpose and application.
- 1640.2 Definitions.
- 1640.3 Exchange of information.
- 1640.4 Confidentiality.
- 1640.5 Date of receipt.
- 1640.6 Processing of complaints of employment discrimination filed with an agency other than the EEOC.
- 1640.7 Processing of charges of employment discrimination filed with the EEOC.
- 1640.8 Processing of complaints or charges of employment discrimination filed with both the EEOC and a section 504 agency.
- 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.
- 1640.10 Section 504 agency review of deferred complaints.
- 1640.11 EEOC review of deferred charges.
- 1640.12 Standards.
- 1640.13 Agency specific memoranda of understanding.

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).

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1640.2

(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-

§ 1640.3

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.

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

§ 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:

§ 1640.11

(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 sec-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

tion 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,

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1641.2

investigative reports and files, and any voluntary compliance agreement.

SOURCE: 57 FR 2962, 2964, Jan. 24, 1992, unless otherwise noted.

§ 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.
- 1641.2 Exchange of information.
- 1641.3 Confidentiality.
- 1641.4 Standards for investigations, hearings, determinations and other proceedings.
- 1641.5 Processing of complaints filed with OFCCP.
- 1641.6 Processing of charges filed with EEOC.
- 1641.7 Review of this part.
- 1641.8 Definitions.

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 12117(b).

§ 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

§ 1641.3

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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

§ 1641.7

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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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

Subpart A—Procedures for the Collection of Debts by Salary Offset

Subpart A—Procedures for the Collection of Debts by Salary Offset

- Sec.
- 1650.101 Purpose.
 - 1650.102 Delegation of authority.
 - 1650.103 Scope.
 - 1650.104 Definitions.
 - 1650.105 Notice of Debt.
 - 1650.106 Right to inspect and copy records related to the debt.
 - 1650.107 Voluntary repayment agreements.
 - 1650.108 Waiver.
 - 1650.109 Hearing.
 - 1650.110 Procedures for salary offset.
 - 1650.111 Recovery from other payments due a separated employee.
 - 1650.112 Interest, penalties, and administrative costs.
 - 1650.113 Non-waiver of rights by payments.
 - 1650.114 Refunds.

Subpart B—Procedures for the Collection of Debts by Federal Tax Refund Offset

- 1650.201 Purpose.
- 1650.202 Past-due legally enforceable debt.
- 1650.203 Notification of intent to collect.
- 1650.204 Reasonable attempt to notify.
- 1650.205 Consideration of evidence submitted as a result of notification of intent.
- 1650.206 Notification to Treasury.
- 1650.207 Administrative charges.

Subpart C—Procedures for Collection of Debts by Administrative Offset

- 1650.301 Purpose and regulatory procedures for the collection of debts by administrative offset.

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.

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.

§ 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).

§ 1650.104

(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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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.

§ 1650.108

(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

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 em-

ployee 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

§ 1650.112

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 gov-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

erning 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

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1650.206

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

§ 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 col-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

lect debts by administrative wage garnishment is delegated to the CFO.

PART 1690—PROCEDURES ON INTERAGENCY COORDINATION OF EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ISSUANCES

Subpart A—General

Sec.	Subject.
1690.101	Subject.
1690.102	Purpose.
1690.103	Supersession.
1690.104	Authority.
1690.105	Policy intent.
1690.106	Scope.
1690.107	Definitions.

Subpart B—Responsibilities

1690.201	Responsibilities.
----------	-------------------

Subpart C—Policies and Procedures

1690.301	Notification to EEOC during development of issuances.
1690.302	Issuances proposed by EEOC.
1690.303	Consultation with affected agencies.
1690.304	Coordination of proposed issuance.
1690.305	Nondisclosure of proposed issuances.
1690.306	Formal submission in absence of consultation.
1690.307	Temporary waivers.
1690.308	Notice of unresolved disputes.
1690.309	Interpretation of the Order.

Subpart D—Reporting Requirements

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.

§ 1690.201

(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.

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

(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 commentators. EEOC or affected

§ 1690.305

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 mutu-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

ally 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 waiver, 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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1691.3

(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 rule-making 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.
- 1691.2 Exchange of information.
- 1691.3 Confidentiality.
- 1691.4 Standards for investigation, reviews and hearings.
- 1691.5 Agency processing of complaints of employment discrimination.
- 1691.6 General rules concerning EEOC action on complaints.
- 1691.7 EEOC dismissals of complaints.
- 1691.8 Agency action on complaints dismissed by EEOC.
- 1691.9 EEOC reasonable cause determinations and conciliation efforts.

1691.10 Agency enforcement of unresolved complaints.

1691.11 EEOC negotiated settlements and conciliation agreements.

1691.12 Interagency consultation.

1691.13 Definitions.

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

§ 1691.4

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 loca-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

tion 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,

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1691.8

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 em-

ployment 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

§ 1691.9

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

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 re-

ferred 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 in-

cludes 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.

§ 1695.0

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 rule-making 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 correspond-

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-21 Edition)

ence 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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1695.4

(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

§ 1695.5

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7–1–21 Edition)

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 sig-

nificant 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.

Equal Employment Opportunity Comm.

§ 1695.10

§ 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 be 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]