

§ 1252.402

(4) Notifying the complainant and the recipient of their rights and obligations under the complaint procedure, including the right to have a representative at all stages of the complaint procedure.

(5) Notifying the complainant and the recipient (or their representatives) of their right to contact NASA for information and assistance regarding the complaint resolution process.

(c) NASA will return to the complainant any complaint outside the jurisdiction of these regulations, and will state the reason(s) why it is outside the jurisdiction of these regulations.

§ 1252.402 Mediation.

(a) Referral of complaints for mediation. NASA will refer to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service all complaints that:

(1) Fall within the jurisdiction of the Act and these regulations; and

(2) Contain all information necessary for further processing.

(b) Both the complainant and the recipient shall participate in the mediation process to the extent necessary to reach an agreement or make an informed judgment that an agreement is not possible. There must be at least one meeting with the mediator before NASA will accept a judgment that an agreement is not possible. However, the recipient and the complainant need not meet with the mediator at the same time.

(c) If the complainant and the recipient reach an agreement, the mediator shall prepare a written statement of the agreement and have the complainant and recipient sign it. The mediator shall send a copy of the agreement to NASA. NASA will take no further action on the complaint unless the complainant or the recipient fails to comply with the agreement. However, NASA retains the right to monitor the recipient's compliance with the agreement.

(d) The mediator shall protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of the mediation process. No mediator shall testify in any adjudicative proceeding, produce any document, or otherwise disclose any information obtained in the course of the mediation process without prior

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approval of the head of the mediation agency.

(e) NASA will use the mediation process for a maximum of 60 days after receiving a complaint.

(f) Mediation ends if:

(1) 60 days elapse from the time NASA receives the complaint; or

(2) Prior to the end of that 60-day period, an agreement is reached; or

(3) Prior to the end of that 60-day period, the mediator determines that an agreement cannot be reached.

(g) The mediator shall return unresolved complaints to NASA.

§ 1252.403 Investigation.

(a) *Informal inquiry.* (1) NASA will investigate complaints that are unresolved after mediation or are reopened because of a violation of a mediation agreement.

(2) As part of the initial inquiry, NASA will use informal fact finding methods, including joint or separate discussions with the complainant and recipient to establish the facts, and, if possible, settle the complaint on terms that are mutually agreeable to the parties. NASA may seek the assistance of any involved State agency.

(3) NASA will put any agreement in writing and have it signed by the parties and an authorized official at NASA.

(4) The settlement shall not affect the operation of any other enforcement effort of NASA, including compliance reviews and investigation of other complaints which may involve the recipient.

(5) The settlement is not a finding of discrimination against a recipient.

(b) *Formal investigation.* If NASA cannot resolve the complaint through informal means it will develop formal findings through further investigations of the complaint. If the investigation indicates a violation of these regulations, NASA will attempt to obtain voluntary compliance. If NASA cannot obtain voluntary compliance, it will begin enforcement as described in §1252.405.

[50 FR 13311, Apr. 4, 1985, as amended at 68 FR 51352, Aug. 26, 2003]