

(2) Denying or limiting individuals in their opportunity to participate in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

(c) The specific forms of age discrimination listed in paragraph (b) of this section do not necessarily constitute a complete list.

§ 17.311 Exceptions to the rules against age discrimination.

(a) Definitions. For purposes of this section, the terms “normal operation” and “statutory objective” shall have the following meaning:

(1) *Normal operation* means the operation of a program or activity without significant changes that would impair its ability to meet its objectives.

(2) *Statutory objective* means any purpose of a program or activity expressly stated in any Federal, State, or local statute or ordinance adopted by an elected, general purpose legislative body.

(b) Exceptions to the rules against age discrimination: Normal operation or statutory objective of any program or activity.

A recipient is permitted to take an action otherwise prohibited by § 17.310 if the action reasonably takes into account age as a factor necessary to the normal operation or the achievement of any statutory objective of a program or activity. An action reasonably takes into account age as a factor necessary to the normal operation or the achievement of any statutory objective of a program or activity, if:

(1) Age is used as a measure or approximation of one or more other characteristics; and

(2) The other characteristic(s) must be measured or approximated in order for the normal operation of the program or activity to continue, or to achieve any statutory objective of the program or activity; and

(3) The other characteristic(s) can be reasonably measured or approximated by the use of age; and

(4) The other characteristic(s) are impractical to measure directly on an individual basis.

(c) Exceptions to the rules against age discrimination: Reasonable factors other than age. A recipient is permitted to take an action otherwise pro-

hibited by § 17.310 which is based on a factor other than age, even though that action may have a disproportionate effect on persons of different ages. An action may be based on a factor other than age only if the factor bears a direct and substantial relationship to the normal operation of the program or activity or to the achievement of a statutory objective.

§ 17.312 Burden of proof.

The burden of proving that an age distinction or other action falls within the exceptions outlined in §§ 17.311(b) and 17.311(c), is on the recipient of Federal financial assistance.

§ 17.313 Special benefits for children and the elderly.

If a recipient operating a program or activity provides special benefits to the elderly or to children, such use of age distinctions shall be presumed to be necessary to the normal operation of the program or activity, notwithstanding the provisions of § 17.311.

§ 17.314 Age distinctions contained in DOI regulations.

Any age distinctions contained in a rule or regulation issued by DOI shall be presumed to be necessary to the achievement of a statutory objective of the program or activity to which the rule or regulation applies, notwithstanding the provisions of § 17.311.

§ 17.315 Affirmative action by recipients.

Even in the absence of a finding of discrimination, a recipient may take affirmative action to overcome the effects of conditions that resulted in limited participation in the recipient's program or activity on the basis of age.

DUTIES OF DOI RECIPIENTS

§ 17.320 General responsibilities.

Each DOI recipient has primary responsibility to ensure that its programs or activities are in compliance with the Act and these regulations, and shall take steps to eliminate violations of the Act. A recipient also has responsibility to maintain records, provide information, and to afford DOI access to its records to the extent DOI finds

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necessary to determine whether the recipient is in compliance with the Act and these regulations.

§ 17.321 Notice to subrecipients and beneficiaries.

(a) Where a recipient extends Federal financial assistance from DOI to subrecipients, the recipient shall provide the subrecipients written notice of their obligations under the Act and these regulations.

(b) Each recipient shall make necessary information about the Act and these regulations available to its beneficiaries in order to inform them of the protections against discrimination provided by the Act and these regulations.

§ 17.322 Assurance of compliance and recipient assessment of age distinctions.

(a) Each recipient of Federal financial assistance from DOI shall sign a written assurance as specified by DOI that it will comply with the Act and these regulations.

(b) *Recipient assessment of age distinctions.* (1) As part of a compliance review under §17.330 or complaint investigation under §17.331, DOI may require a recipient employing the equivalent of 15 or more employees to complete a written self-evaluation, in a manner specified by the responsible Department official, of any age distinction imposed in its program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance from DOI to assess the recipient's compliance with the Act.

(2) Whenever an assessment indicates a violation of the Act and the DOI regulations, the recipient shall take corrective action.

§ 17.323 Information collection requirements.

Each recipient shall:

(a) Keep records in a form and containing information which DOI determines may be necessary to ascertain whether the recipient is complying with the Act and these regulations.

(b) Provide to DOI, upon request, information and reports which DOI determines are necessary to ascertain whether the recipient is complying with the Act and these regulations.

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(c) Permit reasonable access by DOI to the books, records, accounts, and other recipient facilities and sources of information to the extent DOI determines necessary to ascertain whether the recipient is complying with the Act and these regulations.

(d) The information collection requirements contained in this section have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.* and assigned clearance number 1084-0027. The information will be collected and used to assess recipients' compliance with the Act. Response is required to obtain a benefit.

(e) Public reporting burden for this information is estimated to average 8 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed; and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to: Departmental Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of the Interior, 18th and C Streets, NW., Washington, DC 20240, Mail Stop 2242; and the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503.

INVESTIGATION, CONCILIATION, AND ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

§ 17.330 Compliance reviews.

(a) DOI may conduct compliance reviews and pre-award reviews of recipients or use other similar procedures that will permit it to investigate and correct violations of the Act and these regulations. DOI may conduct these reviews even in the absence of a complaint against a recipient. The reviews may be as comprehensive as necessary to determine whether a violation of the Act and these regulations has occurred.

(b) If a compliance review or pre-award review indicates a violation of the Act or these regulations, DOI will attempt to secure voluntary compliance with the Act. If voluntary compliance cannot be achieved, DOI will arrange for enforcement as described in § 17.335.