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(c) Beginning with the effective date of an agency's final regulations, the agency may not impose a new age distinction unless the age distinction is adopted by regulation under the Administrative Procedure Act using the notice and comment procedures specified in 5 U.S.C. 553.

(d) Beginning 12 months after the publication of its age discrimination regulations, an agency may not continue an existing age distinction, unless the age distinction has already been adopted by regulation or is adopted by regulation under the Administrative Procedure Act using the notice and comment procedures specified in 5 U.S.C. 553.

§ 90.33 Interagency cooperation.

Where two or more agencies provide Federal financial assistance to a recipient or class of recipients, the Secretary may designate one of the agencies as the sole agency for all compliance and enforcement purposes with respect to those recipients, except for the ordering of termination of funds and the notification of the appropriate committees of Congress.

§ 90.34 Agency reports.

Each agency shall submit to the Secretary not later than December 31 of each year, beginning in 1979, a report which:

(a) Describes in detail the steps taken during the preceding fiscal year to carry out the Act; and

(b) Contains data on the frequency, type, and resolution of complaints and on any compliance reviews, sufficient to permit analysis of the agency's progress in reducing age discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the agency; and

(c) Contains data directly relevant to the extent of any pattern or practice of age discrimination which the agency has identified in any programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the agency and to progress toward eliminating it; and

(d) Contains evaluative or interpretative information which the agency determines is useful in analyzing agency progress in reducing age discrimination in programs or activities receiving

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Federal financial assistance from the agency; and

(e) Contains whatever other data the Secretary may require.

[44 FR 33776, June 12, 1979, as amended at 70 FR 24321, May 9, 2005]

Subpart D—Investigation, Conciliation and Enforcement Procedures

§ 90.41 What is the purpose of this subpart?

This subpart sets forth requirements for the establishment of compliance, investigation, conciliation, and enforcement procedures by agencies which extend Federal financial assistance.

§ 90.42 What responsibilities do recipients and agencies have generally to ensure compliance with the Act?

(a) A recipient has primary responsibility to ensure that its programs or activities are in compliance with the Age Discrimination Act and shall take steps to eliminate violations of the Act. A recipient also has responsibility to maintain records, provide information, and to afford access to its records to an agency to the extent required to determine whether it is in compliance with the Act.

(b) An agency has responsibility to attempt to secure recipient compliance with the Act by voluntary means. This may include the use of the services of appropriate Federal, State, local, or private organizations. An agency also has the responsibility to enforce the Age Discrimination Act when a recipient fails to eliminate violations of the Act.

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§ 90.43 What specific responsibilities do agencies and recipients have to ensure compliance with the Act?

(a) *Written notice, technical assistance, and educational materials.* Each agency shall: (1) Provide written notice to each recipient of its obligations under the Act. The notice shall include a requirement that where the recipient initially receiving funds makes the funds

available to a sub-recipient, the recipient must notify the sub-recipient of its obligations under the Act.

(2) Provide technical assistance, where necessary, to recipients to aid them in complying with the Act.

(3) Make available educational materials setting forth the rights and obligations of beneficiaries and recipients under the Act.

(b) *Self-evaluation.* (1) Each agency shall require each recipient employing the equivalent of 15 or more full time employees to complete a written self-evaluation of its compliance under the Act within 18 months of the effective date of the agency regulations.

(2) Each recipient's self-evaluation shall identify and justify each age distinction imposed by the recipient.

(3) Each recipient shall take corrective and remedial action whenever a self-evaluation indicates a violation of the Act.

(4) Each recipient shall make the self-evaluation available on request to the agency and to the public for a period of 3 years following its completion.

(c) *Complaints*—(1) *Receipt of complaints.* Each agency shall establish a complaint processing procedure which includes the following:

(i) A procedure for the filing of complaints with the agency;

(ii) A review of complaints to assure that they fall within the coverage of the Act and contain all information necessary for further processing;

(iii) Notice to 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; and

(iv) Notice to the complainant and the recipient (or their representatives) of their right to contact the agency for information and assistance regarding the complaint resolution process.

(2) *Prompt resolution of complaints.* Each agency shall establish procedures for the prompt resolution of complaints. These procedures shall require each recipient and complainant to participate actively in efforts toward speedy resolution of the complaint.

(3) *Mediation of complaints.* Each agency shall promptly refer all com-

plaints which fall within the coverage of the Act to a mediation agency designated by the Secretary.

(i) The referring agency shall require the participation of the recipient and the complainant in the mediation process, although both parties need not meet with the mediator at the same time.

(ii) If the complainant and recipient reach a mutually satisfactory resolution of the complaint during the mediation period, they shall reduce the agreement to writing. The mediator shall send a copy of the settlement to the referring agency. No further action shall be taken based on that complaint unless it appears that the complainant or the recipient is failing to comply with the agreement.

(iii) Not more than 60 days after the agency receives the complaint, the mediator shall return a still unresolved complaint to the referring agency for initial investigation. The mediator may return a complaint at any time before the end of the 60 day period if it appears that the complaint cannot be resolved through mediation.

(iv) 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 approval of the head of the agency appointing the mediator.

(4) *Federal initial investigation.* Each agency shall investigate complaints unresolved after mediation or reopened because of a violation of the mediation agreement. As part of the initial investigation, the agency shall use informal fact finding methods including joint or individual discussions with the complainant and the recipient to establish the facts, and, if possible, resolve the complaint to the mutual satisfaction of the parties. The agency may seek the assistance of any involved State agency.

(5) *Formal investigation, conciliation, and hearing.* If the agency cannot resolve the complaint during the early stages of the investigation, it shall:

(i) Complete the investigation of the complaint.

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(ii) Attempt to achieve voluntary compliance satisfactory to the agency, if the investigation indicates a violation.

(iii) Arrange for enforcement as described in § 90.47, if necessary.

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§ 90.44 Compliance reviews.

(a) Each agency shall provide in its regulations that it may conduct compliance reviews, pre-award reviews, and other similar procedures which permit the agency to investigate, and correct, violations of the Act without regard to its procedures for handling complaints.

(b) If a compliance review or pre-award review indicates a violation of the Act, the agency shall attempt to achieve voluntary compliance with the Act. If voluntary compliance cannot be achieved, the agency shall arrange for enforcement as described in § 90.47.

§ 90.45 Information requirements.

Each agency shall provide in its regulations a requirement that the recipient:

(a) Provide to the agency information necessary to determine whether the recipient is in compliance with the Act; and

(b) Permit reasonable access by the agency to the books, records, accounts, and other recipient facilities and sources of information to the extent necessary to determine whether a recipient is in compliance with the Act.

§ 90.46 Prohibition against intimidation or retaliation.

Each agency shall provide in its regulations that recipients may not engage in acts of intimidation or retaliation against any person who:

(a) Attempts to assert a right protected by the Act; or

(b) Cooperates in any mediation, investigation, hearing, or other part of the agency's investigation, conciliation, and enforcement process.

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§ 90.47 What further provisions must an agency make in order to enforce its regulations after an investigation indicates that a violation of the Act has been committed?

(a) Each agency shall provide for enforcement of its regulations through:

(1) Termination of a recipient's Federal financial assistance under the program or activity involved where the recipient has violated the Act or the agency's regulations. The determination of the recipient's violation may be made only after a recipient has had an opportunity for a hearing on the record before an administrative law judge.

(2) Any other means authorized by law including but not limited to:

(i) Referral to the Department of Justice for proceedings to enforce any rights of the United States or obligations of the recipient created by the Act or the agency's regulations.

(ii) Use of any requirement of or referral to any Federal, State, or local government agency which will have the effect of correcting a violation of the Act or implementing regulations.

(b) Any termination under paragraph (a)(1) shall be limited to the particular recipient and particular program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or portion thereof found to be in violation of the Act or agency regulations. No termination shall be based in whole or in part on a finding with respect to any program or activity which does not receive Federal financial assistance.

(c) No action under paragraph (a) of this section may be taken until:

(1) The head of the agency involved has advised the recipient of its failure to comply with the Act or the agency's regulations and has determined that voluntary compliance cannot be obtained.

(2) Thirty days have elapsed after the head of the agency involved has sent a written report of the circumstances and grounds of the action to the committees of the Congress having legislative jurisdiction over the program or activity involved. A report shall be filed whenever any action is taken under paragraph (a) of this section.

(d) An agency may defer granting new Federal financial assistance to a