

§ 1615.151

29 CFR Ch. XIV (7-1-07 Edition)

undertaken to achieve program accessibility, the Commission shall develop, by December 26, 1989 a transition plan setting forth the steps necessary to complete such changes. The Commission shall provide an opportunity to interested persons, including individuals with handicaps and organizations representing individuals with handicaps, to participate in the development of the transition plan by submitting comments (both oral and written). A copy of the transition plan shall be made available for public inspection. The plan shall, at a minimum—(1) Identify physical obstacles in the Commission's facilities that limit the accessibility of its programs or activities to individuals with handicaps;

(2) Describe in detail the methods that will be used to make the facilities accessible;

(3) Specify the schedule for taking the steps necessary to achieve compliance with this section and, if the time period of the transition plan is longer than one year, identify steps that will be taken during each year of the transition period; and

(4) Indicate the official responsible for implementation of the plan.

§ 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 handicaps. The definitions, requirements, and standards of the Architectural Barriers Act (42 U.S.C. 4151-4157), as established in 41 CFR subpart 101-19.6, apply to buildings covered by this section.

§§ 1615.152-1615.159 [Reserved]

§ 1615.160 Communications.

(a) The Commission shall take appropriate steps to ensure effective communication with applicants, participants, personnel of other Federal entities, and members of the public.

(1) The Commission shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids where necessary to afford an individual with handicaps 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 handicaps.

(ii) The Commission need not provide individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices of a personal nature.

(2) Where the Commission communicates with applicants and beneficiaries by telephone, telecommunication devices for deaf persons (TDD's) or equally effective telecommunication systems shall be used.

(b) The Commission shall ensure that interested persons, including persons with impaired vision or hearing, can obtain information as to the existence and location of accessible services, activities, and facilities.

(c) The Commission shall provide signs at a primary entrance to each of its inaccessible facilities, directing users to a location at which they can obtain information about accessible facilities. The international symbol for accessibility shall be used at each primary entrance of an accessible facility.

(d) This section does not require the Commission to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a program or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. In those circumstances where Commission personnel believe that the proposed action would fundamentally alter the program or activity or would result in undue financial and administrative burdens, the Commission has the burden of proving that compliance with § 1615.160 would result in such alteration or burdens. The decision that compliance would result in such alteration or burdens must be made by the Chairman 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 handicaps receive the benefits and services of the program or activity.

§§ 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 handicap in programs or activities conducted by the Commission.

(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 1613 pursuant to section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791).

(c) Responsibility for implementation and operation of this section shall be vested in the Director, Equal Employment Opportunity Staff.

(d) *Filing a complaint.* (1) Who may file? Any person who believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by this part, or authorized representative of such person, may file a complaint with the Director, Office of Equal Opportunity. 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, Office of Equal Opportunity, 1801 "L" Street NW., Washington, DC 20507, within one hundred and eighty calendar days of the alleged act of discrimination. A complaint shall be deemed filed on the date it is post-marked, or, in the absence of a post-mark, 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 com-

plainant 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 handicaps.

(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 Chairman of the Commission by the complainant within ninety calendar days of receipt from