court of the United States, which shall have jurisdiction over such an action without regard to the amount in controversy, and which action shall, at the request of either party to such action, be tried by the court with a jury. The action shall be governed by the same legal burdens of proof specified in paragraph (2)(B) for review by the Secretary of Labor.

(d) Remedies

(1) In general

An employee prevailing in any action under subsection (c) shall be entitled to all relief necessary to make the employee whole.

(2) Damages

Relief in an action under subsection (c) (including an action described in (c)(7))[2] shall include—

(A) reinstatement with the same seniority status that the employee would have had, but for the discrimination;

(B) any backpay, with interest; and

(C) compensatory damages, including compensation for any special damages sustained as a result of the discrimination, including litigation costs, expert witness fees, and reasonable attorney fees.

(3) Possible relief

Relief in any action under subsection (c) may include punitive damages in an amount not to exceed $250,000.

(e) Election of remedies

An employee may not seek protection under both this section and another provision of law for the same allegedly unlawful act of the public transportation agency.

(f) No preemption

Nothing in this section preempts or diminishes any other safeguards against discrimination, demotion, discharge, suspension, threats, harassment, reprimand, retaliation, or any other manner of discrimination provided by Federal or State law.

(g) Rights retained by employee

Nothing in this section shall be construed to diminish the rights, privileges, or remedies of any employee under any Federal or State law or under any collective bargaining agreement. The rights and remedies in this section may not be waived by any agreement, policy, form, or condition of employment.

(h) Disclosure of identity

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, or with the written consent of the employee, the Secretary of Transportation or the Secretary of Homeland Security may not disclose the name of an employee who has provided information described in subsection (a)(1).

(2) The Secretary of Transportation or the Secretary of Homeland Security shall disclose to the Attorney General the name of an employee described in paragraph (1) of this subsection if the matter is referred to the Attorney General for enforcement. The Secretary making such disclosure shall provide reasonable advance notice to the affected employee if disclosure of that person's identity or identifying information is to occur.

(i) Process for reporting security problems to the Department of Homeland Security

(1) Establishment of process

The Secretary shall establish through regulations after an opportunity for notice and comment, and provide information to the public regarding, a process by which any person may submit a report to the Secretary regarding public transportation security problems, deficiencies, or vulnerabilities.

(2) Acknowledgment of receipt

If a report submitted under paragraph (1) identifies the person making the report, the Secretary shall respond promptly to such person and acknowledge receipt of the report.

(3) Steps to address problem

The Secretary shall review and consider the information provided in any report submitted under paragraph (1) and shall take appropriate steps to address any problems or deficiencies identified.

(Pub. L. 110–53, title XIV, § 1413, Aug. 3, 2007, 121 Stat. 414.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Inspector General Act of 1978, referred to in subsec. (a)(1)(A), is Pub. L. 95–452, Oct. 12, 1978, 92 Stat. 1101, which is set out in the Appendix to Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

§ 1143. Security background checks of covered individuals for public transportation

(a) Definitions

In this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) Security background check

The term ''security background check'' means reviewing the following for the purpose of identifying individuals who may pose a threat to transportation security, national security, or of terrorism:

(A) Relevant criminal history databases.

(B) In the case of an alien (as defined in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(3))), the relevant databases to determine the status of the alien under the immigration laws of the United States.

(C) Other relevant information or databases, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) Covered individual

The term ''covered individual'' means an employee of a public transportation agency or a contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency.

(b) Guidance

(1) Any guidance, recommendations, suggested action items, or any other widely disseminated voluntary action item issued by the Secretary to a public transportation agency or a contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency relating to performing a security background check of a covered individual shall con-

[2] So in original. Probably should be ''subsection (c)(7))''.

tain recommendations on the appropriate scope and application of such a security background check, including the time period covered, the types of disqualifying offenses, and a redress process for adversely impacted covered individuals consistent with subsections (c) and (d) of this section.

(2) Not later than 60 days after August 3, 2007, any guidance, recommendations, suggested action items, or any other widely disseminated voluntary action item issued by the Secretary prior to August 3, 2007, to a public transportation agency or a contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency relating to performing a security background check of a covered individual shall be updated in compliance with paragraph (b)(1).

(3) If a public transportation agency or a contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency performs a security background check on a covered individual to fulfill guidance issued by the Secretary under paragraph (1) or (2), the Secretary shall not consider such guidance fulfilled unless an adequate redress process as described in subsection (d) is provided to covered individuals.

(c) Requirements

If the Secretary issues a rule, regulation or directive requiring a public transportation agency or contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency to perform a security background check of a covered individual, then the Secretary shall prohibit a public transportation agency or contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency from making an adverse employment decision, including removal or suspension of the employee, due to such rule, regulation, or directive with respect to a covered individual unless the public transportation agency or contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency determines that the covered individual—

(1) has been convicted of, has been found not guilty of by reason of insanity, or is under want, warrant, or indictment for a permanent disqualifying criminal offense listed in part 1572 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations;

(2) was convicted of or found not guilty by reason of insanity of an interim disqualifying criminal offense listed in part 1572 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, within 7 years of the date that the public transportation agency or contractor or subcontractor of the public transportation agency performs the security background check; or

(3) was incarcerated for an interim disqualifying criminal offense listed in part 1572 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, and released from incarceration within 5 years of the date that the public transportation agency or contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency performs the security background check.

(d) Redress process

If the Secretary issues a rule, regulation, or directive requiring a public transportation agency or contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency to perform a security background check of a covered individual, the Secretary shall—

(1) provide an adequate redress process for a covered individual subjected to an adverse employment decision, including removal or suspension of the employee, due to such rule, regulation, or directive that is consistent with the appeals and waiver process established for applicants for commercial motor vehicle hazardous materials endorsements and transportation workers at ports, as required by section 70105(c) of title 49;[1] and

(2) have the authority to order an appropriate remedy, including reinstatement of the covered individual, should the Secretary determine that a public transportation agency or contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency wrongfully made an adverse employment decision regarding a covered individual pursuant to such rule, regulation, or directive.

(e) False statements

A public transportation agency or a contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency may not knowingly misrepresent to an employee or other relevant person, including an arbiter involved in a labor arbitration, the scope, application, or meaning of any rules, regulations, directives, or guidance issued by the Secretary related to security background check requirements for covered individuals when conducting a security background check. Not later than 1 year after August 3, 2007, the Secretary shall issue a regulation that prohibits a public transportation agency or a contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency from knowingly misrepresenting to an employee or other relevant person, including an arbiter involved in a labor arbitration, the scope, application, or meaning of any rules, regulations, directives, or guidance issued by the Secretary related to security background check requirements for covered individuals when conducting a security background check.

(f) Rights and responsibilities

Nothing in this section shall be construed to abridge a public transportation agency's or a contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency's rights or responsibilities to make adverse employment decisions permitted by other Federal, State, or local laws. Nothing in the section shall be construed to abridge rights and responsibilities of covered individuals, a public transportation agency, or a contractor or subcontractor of a public transportation agency under any other Federal, State, or local laws or collective bargaining agreement.

(g) No preemption of Federal or State law

Nothing in this section shall be construed to preempt a Federal, State, or local law that requires criminal history background checks, immigration status checks, or other background checks of covered individuals.

(h) Statutory construction

Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the process for review established under section 70105(c) of title 46, including regulations issued pursuant to such section.

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[1] So in original. Probably should be title ''46;''.

(Pub. L. 110–53, title XIV, § 1414, Aug. 3, 2007, 121 Stat. 419.)

§ 1144. Limitation on fines and civil penalties

(a) Inspectors

Surface transportation inspectors shall be prohibited from issuing fines to public transportation agencies for violations of the Department's regulations or orders except through the process described in subsection (b).

(b) Civil penalties

The Secretary shall be prohibited from assessing civil penalties against public transportation agencies for violations of the Department's regulations or orders, except in accordance with the following:

(1) In the case of a public transportation agency that is found to be in violation of a regulation or order issued by the Secretary, the Secretary shall seek correction of the violation through a written notice to the public transportation agency and shall give the public transportation agency reasonable opportunity to correct the violation or propose an alternative means of compliance acceptable to the Secretary.

(2) If the public transportation agency does not correct the violation or propose an alternative means of compliance acceptable to the Secretary within a reasonable time period that is specified in the written notice, the Secretary may take any action authorized in section 114 of title 49.

(c) Limitation on Secretary

The Secretary shall not initiate civil enforcement actions for violations of administrative and procedural requirements pertaining to the application for and expenditure of funds awarded under transportation security grant programs under this subchapter.

(Pub. L. 110–53, title XIV, § 1415, Aug. 3, 2007, 121 Stat. 422.)

SUBCHAPTER IV—SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY

PART A—GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 1151. Definitions

In this subchapter, the following definitions apply:

(1) Appropriate congressional committees

The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

(2) Secretary

The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(3) Department

The term ''Department'' means the Department of Homeland Security.

(4) Over-the-road bus

The term ''over-the-road bus'' means a bus characterized by an elevated passenger deck located over a baggage compartment.

(5) Over-the-road bus frontline employees

In this section,[1] the term ''over-the-road bus frontline employees'' means over-the-road bus drivers, security personnel, dispatchers, maintenance and maintenance support personnel, ticket agents, other terminal employees, and other employees of an over-the-road bus operator or terminal owner or operator that the Secretary determines should receive security training under this subchapter.

(6) Railroad frontline employees

In this section,[1] the term ''railroad frontline employees'' means security personnel, dispatchers, locomotive engineers, conductors, trainmen, other onboard employees, maintenance and maintenance support personnel, bridge tenders, and any other employees of railroad carriers that the Secretary determines should receive security training under this subchapter.

(7) Railroad

The term ''railroad'' has the meaning that term has in section 20102 of title 49.

(8) Railroad carrier

The term ''railroad carrier'' has the meaning that term has in section 20102 of title 49.

(9) State

The term ''State'' means any one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

(10) Terrorism

The term ''terrorism'' has the meaning that term has in section 101 of this title.

(11) Transportation

The term ''transportation'', as used with respect to an over-the-road bus, means the movement of passengers or property by an over-the-road bus—

(A) in the jurisdiction of the United States between a place in a State and a place outside the State (including a place outside the United States); or

(B) in a State that affects trade, traffic, and transportation described in subparagraph (A).

(12) United States

The term ''United States'' means the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

(13) Security-sensitive material

The term ''security-sensitive material'' means a material, or a group or class of material, in a particular amount and form that the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, determines, through a rule-

[1] So in original. ''In this section,'' probably should not appear.