

§ 115.266

practitioners, investigators, and facility leadership.

§ 115.266 Preservation of ability to protect residents from contact with abusers

(a) Neither the agency nor any other governmental entity responsible for collective bargaining on the agency's behalf shall enter into or renew any collective bargaining agreement or other agreement that limits the agency's ability to remove alleged staff sexual abusers from contact with residents pending the outcome of an investigation or of a determination of whether and to what extent discipline is warranted.

(b) Nothing in this standard shall restrict the entering into or renewal of agreements that govern:

(1) The conduct of the disciplinary process, as long as such agreements are not inconsistent with the provisions of §§ 115.272 and 115.276; or

(2) Whether a no-contact assignment that is imposed pending the outcome of an investigation shall be expunged from or retained in the staff member's personnel file following a determination that the allegation of sexual abuse is not substantiated.

§ 115.267 Agency protection against retaliation.

(a) The agency shall establish a policy to protect all residents and staff who report sexual abuse or sexual harassment or cooperate with sexual abuse or sexual harassment investigations from retaliation by other residents or staff and shall designate which staff members or departments are charged with monitoring retaliation.

(b) The agency shall employ multiple protection measures, such as housing changes or transfers for resident victims or abusers, removal of alleged staff or resident abusers from contact with victims, and emotional support services for residents or staff who fear retaliation for reporting sexual abuse or sexual harassment or for cooperating with investigations.

(c) For at least 90 days following a report of sexual abuse, the agency shall monitor the conduct and treatment of residents or staff who reported the sexual abuse and of residents who were re-

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ported to have suffered sexual abuse to see if there are changes that may suggest possible retaliation by residents or staff, and shall act promptly to remedy any such retaliation. Items the agency should monitor include any resident disciplinary reports, housing, or program changes, or negative performance reviews or reassignments of staff. The agency shall continue such monitoring beyond 90 days if the initial monitoring indicates a continuing need.

(d) In the case of residents, such monitoring shall also include periodic status checks.

(e) If any other individual who cooperates with an investigation expresses a fear of retaliation, the agency shall take appropriate measures to protect that individual against retaliation.

(f) An agency's obligation to monitor shall terminate if the agency determines that the allegation is unfounded.

§ 115.268 [Reserved]

INVESTIGATIONS

§ 115.271 Criminal and administrative agency investigations.

(a) When the agency conducts its own investigations into allegations of sexual abuse and sexual harassment, it shall do so promptly, thoroughly, and objectively for all allegations, including third-party and anonymous reports.

(b) Where sexual abuse is alleged, the agency shall use investigators who have received special training in sexual abuse investigations pursuant to § 115.234.

(c) Investigators shall gather and preserve direct and circumstantial evidence, including any available physical and DNA evidence and any available electronic monitoring data; shall interview alleged victims, suspected perpetrators, and witnesses; and shall review prior complaints and reports of sexual abuse involving the suspected perpetrator.

(d) When the quality of evidence appears to support criminal prosecution, the agency shall conduct compelled interviews only after consulting with prosecutors as to whether compelled interviews may be an obstacle for subsequent criminal prosecution.