

genitalia, except in exigent circumstances or when such viewing is incidental to routine cell checks. Such policies and procedures shall require staff of the opposite gender to announce their presence when entering an area where residents are likely to be showering, performing bodily functions, or changing clothing.

(e) The facility shall not search or physically examine a transgender or intersex resident for the sole purpose of determining the resident's genital status. If the resident's genital status is unknown, it may be determined during conversations with the resident, by reviewing medical records, or, if necessary, by learning that information as part of a broader medical examination conducted in private by a medical practitioner.

(f) The agency shall train security staff in how to conduct cross-gender pat-down searches, and searches of transgender and intersex residents, in a professional and respectful manner, and in the least intrusive manner possible, consistent with security needs.

§ 115.216 Residents with disabilities and residents who are limited English proficient.

(a) The agency shall take appropriate steps to ensure that residents with disabilities (including, for example, residents who are deaf or hard of hearing, those who are blind or have low vision, or those who have intellectual, psychiatric, or speech disabilities), have an equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from all aspects of the agency's efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to sexual abuse and sexual harassment. Such steps shall include, when necessary to ensure effective communication with residents who are deaf or hard of hearing, providing access to interpreters who can interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary. In addition, the agency shall ensure that written materials are provided in formats or through methods that ensure effective communication with residents with disabilities, including residents who have intellectual disabilities, limited reading skills, or who are blind or have low vision. An

agency is not required to take actions that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity, or in undue financial and administrative burdens, as those terms are used in regulations promulgated under title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act, 28 CFR 35.164.

(b) The agency shall take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to all aspects of the agency's efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to sexual abuse and sexual harassment to residents who are limited English proficient, including steps to provide interpreters who can interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

(c) The agency shall not rely on resident interpreters, resident readers, or other types of resident assistants except in limited circumstances where an extended delay in obtaining an effective interpreter could compromise the resident's safety, the performance of first-response duties under § 115.264, or the investigation of the resident's allegations.

§ 115.217 Hiring and promotion decisions.

(a) The agency shall not hire or promote anyone who may have contact with residents, and shall not enlist the services of any contractor who may have contact with residents, who—

(1) Has engaged in sexual abuse in a prison, jail, lockup, community confinement facility, juvenile facility, or other institution (as defined in 42 U.S.C. 1997);

(2) Has been convicted of engaging or attempting to engage in sexual activity in the community facilitated by force, overt or implied threats of force, or coercion, or if the victim did not consent or was unable to consent or refuse; or

(3) Has been civilly or administratively adjudicated to have engaged in the activity described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(b) The agency shall consider any incidents of sexual harassment in determining whether to hire or promote anyone, or to enlist the services of any

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contractor, who may have contact with residents.

(c) Before hiring new employees who may have contact with residents, the agency shall:

(1) Perform a criminal background records check; and

(2) Consistent with Federal, State, and local law, make its best efforts to contact all prior institutional employers for information on substantiated allegations of sexual abuse or any resignation during a pending investigation of an allegation of sexual abuse.

(d) The agency shall also perform a criminal background records check before enlisting the services of any contractor who may have contact with residents.

(e) The agency shall either conduct criminal background records checks at least every five years of current employees and contractors who may have contact with residents or have in place a system for otherwise capturing such information for current employees.

(f) The agency shall also ask all applicants and employees who may have contact with residents directly about previous misconduct described in paragraph (a) of this section in written applications or interviews for hiring or promotions and in any interviews or written self-evaluations conducted as part of reviews of current employees. The agency shall also impose upon employees a continuing affirmative duty to disclose any such misconduct.

(g) Material omissions regarding such misconduct, or the provision of materially false information, shall be grounds for termination.

(h) Unless prohibited by law, the agency shall provide information on substantiated allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment involving a former employee upon receiving a request from an institutional employer for whom such employee has applied to work.

§ 115.218 Upgrades to facilities and technologies.

(a) When designing or acquiring any new facility and in planning any substantial expansion or modification of existing facilities, the agency shall consider the effect of the design, acquisition, expansion, or modification upon

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the agency's ability to protect residents from sexual abuse.

(b) When installing or updating a video monitoring system, electronic surveillance system, or other monitoring technology, the agency shall consider how such technology may enhance the agency's ability to protect residents from sexual abuse.

RESPONSIVE PLANNING

§ 115.221 Evidence protocol and forensic medical examinations.

(a) To the extent the agency is responsible for investigating allegations of sexual abuse, the agency shall follow a uniform evidence protocol that maximizes the potential for obtaining usable physical evidence for administrative proceedings and criminal prosecutions.

(b) The protocol shall be developmentally appropriate for youth where applicable, and, as appropriate, shall be adapted from or otherwise based on the most recent edition of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women publication, "A National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations, Adults/Adolescents," or similarly comprehensive and authoritative protocols developed after 2011.

(c) The agency shall offer all victims of sexual abuse access to forensic medical examinations whether on-site or at an outside facility, without financial cost, where evidentiarily or medically appropriate. Such examinations shall be performed by Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFEs) or Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) where possible. If SAFEs or SANEs cannot be made available, the examination can be performed by other qualified medical practitioners. The agency shall document its efforts to provide SAFEs or SANEs.

(d) The agency shall attempt to make available to the victim a victim advocate from a rape crisis center. If a rape crisis center is not available to provide victim advocate services, the agency shall make available to provide these services a qualified staff member from a community-based organization or a qualified agency staff member. Agencies shall document efforts to secure