

## § 365.151

or activities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with handicaps. The agency is not required to make or request the GSA to make structural changes in existing facilities where other methods are effective in achieving compliance with this section. The agency, in making or requesting space reassignments or alterations to existing buildings, shall ensure that accessibility requirements, to the extent compelled by the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151-4157), and any regulations implementing it are met. In choosing among available methods for meeting the requirements of this section, the agency shall give priority to those methods that offer programs and activities to qualified individuals with handicaps in the most integrated setting appropriate.

(c) *Time period for compliance.* The agency shall comply with the obligations established under this section by February 27, 1989, except that where structural changes in facilities are undertaken, the agency will make such changes or, where applicable, request the GSA to make such changes by December 27, 1991, but in any event as expeditiously as possible.

(d) *Transition plan.* In the event that structural changes to facilities will be undertaken to achieve program accessibility, the agency shall develop or, where applicable, request the GSA to develop, by June 27, 1989, a transition plan setting forth the steps necessary to complete such changes. The agency shall provide an opportunity to interested persons, including individuals with handicaps or 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 agency'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 compli-

## 20 CFR Ch. II (4-1-12 Edition)

ance 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.

### § 365.151 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 agency 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 101-19.600 to 101-19.607, apply to buildings covered by this section.

### §§ 365.152-365.159 [Reserved]

### § 365.160 Communications.

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

(1) The agency 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 agency.

(i) In determining what type of auxiliary aid is necessary, the agency shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individual with handicaps.

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

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

(b) The agency shall take appropriate steps to provide individuals with handicaps with information as to the existence and location of accessible services, activities, and facilities and information regarding their section 504

## Railroad Retirement Board

## § 365.170

rights under the agency's programs or activities.

(c) This section does not require the agency 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 agency personnel believe that the proposed action would fundamentally alter the program or activity or would result in undue financial and administrative burdens, the agency has the burden of proving that compliance with § 365.160 would result in such alteration or burdens. The decision that compliance would result in such alteration or burdens must be made by the Chief Executive Officer after considering all agency 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 agency 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.

### §§ 365.161–365.169 [Reserved]

### § 365.170 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 agency;

(b) The agency shall process complaints alleging violations of section 504 with respect to employment according to the procedures established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 29 CFR part 1613 pursuant to section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791).

(c) Except with respect to complaints arising under § 365.170(b), responsibility for implementation and operation of this section shall be vested in the Chief Executive Officer.

(d) The Chief Executive Officer shall accept and investigate all complete

complaints for which he or she has jurisdiction. All complete complaints must be filed within 90 days of the alleged act of discrimination. The Chief Executive Officer may extend this time period for good cause.

(e) If the Chief Executive Officer receives a complaint over which the agency does not have jurisdiction, he or she shall promptly notify the complainant and shall make reasonable efforts to refer the complaint to the appropriate government entity.

(f) The Chief Executive Officer shall notify the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board upon receipt of any complaint alleging that a building or facility used by the agency 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.

(g) Within 120 days of the receipt of a complete complaint under § 365.170(d) for which the agency has jurisdiction, the Chief Executive Officer 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.

(h) Appeals of the findings of fact and conclusions of law or remedies must be filed by the complainant within 45 days of receipt from the Chief Executive Officer of the letter required by § 365.170(g). The Chief Executive Officer may extend this time for good cause.

(i) Timely appeals shall be accepted and processed by the Board.

(j) The Board shall notify the complainant of the results of the appeal within 60 days of the receipt of the request. If the Board determines that it needs additional information from the complainant, it shall have 30 days from the date it receives the additional information to make its determination on the appeal.

(k) The time limits cited in paragraphs (g) and (j) of this section may be extended with the permission of the Assistant Attorney General.

(l) The agency may delegate its authority for conducting complaint investigations to other Federal agencies