

## Department of Justice

## § 42.730

(other than age) upon which the recipient's action is based bears a direct and substantial relationship to the normal operation of or achievement of a statutory objective of the program or activity.

### § 42.714 Special benefits.

If a recipient operating a program or activity provides special benefits to the elderly or to children, such use of age distinctions shall be presumed to be necessary to the normal operation of the program or activity, notwithstanding the provisions of § 42.712.

### § 42.715 Burden of proof regarding exceptions.

The burden of proving that an age distinction or other action falls within the exceptions described in § 42.712 and § 42.713 is on the recipient. This allocation of the burden of proof applies in proceedings by the Department to enforce the Act.

### §§ 42.716–42.719 [Reserved]

#### DUTIES OF RECIPIENTS

### § 42.720 General responsibility.

Regarding any program or activity subject to this subpart, the recipient has primary responsibility to ensure compliance with the Act and this subpart. The recipient also has responsibility to maintain records, provide information, and to afford access to its records to the Department to the extent required to determine whether it is in compliance with the Act.

### § 42.721 Notice to subrecipients.

Any recipient that receives federal financial assistance from the Department and extends such assistance to subrecipients shall give its subrecipients written notice of their obligations under this subpart.

### § 42.722 Recipient assessment of age distinctions.

(a) As part of a compliance review under § 42.730 or complaint investigation under § 42.731, the Department may require a recipient employing the equivalent of 15 or more employees to complete a written self-evaluation, in a manner specified by the responsible

Department official, of any age distinction imposed in its program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the Department to assess the recipient's compliance with the Act.

(b) Whenever a recipient assessment indicates a violation of the Act and this subpart, the recipient shall take corrective action.

### § 42.723 Compliance information.

(a) Upon request by the Department, a recipient shall make available to the Department information necessary to determine whether the recipient is complying with this subpart.

(b) Each recipient shall permit reasonable access by the Department to the recipient's facilities, books, records and other sources of information concerning the recipient's compliance with this subpart.

### § 42.724 Remedial and affirmative action.

(a) If the Department finds that, in violation of this subpart, a recipient has discriminated on the basis of age, the recipient shall take remedial action that the Department considers necessary to overcome the effects of the discrimination.

(b) Even in the absence of a finding of discrimination, a recipient, in administering a program or activity, may take steps to overcome the effects of conditions that resulted in limited participation on the basis of age.

### § 42.725 Assurance of compliance.

Each recipient of federal financial assistance from the Department shall sign a written assurance as specified by the Department that it will comply with this subpart in its federally assisted programs or activities.

### §§ 42.726–42.729 [Reserved]

#### COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES

### § 42.730 Compliance reviews.

The Department may conduct a pre-award or post-award compliance review of an applicant or a recipient to determine compliance with this subpart. When a compliance review indicates

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probably noncompliance, the Department shall inform the applicant or recipient and shall promptly begin enforcement as described in § 42.733.

### § 42.731 Complaints.

(a) *General.* This section provides for the filing, by aggrieved persons, of complaints alleging violation of this subpart. Although the complaint process is limited to aggrieved persons, any person who has information regarding a possible violation of this subpart may provide it to the Department.

(b) *Receipt of complaints.* (1) Any aggrieved person, individually or as a member of a class, may file with the Department a written complaint alleging a violation of this subpart. A complaint may be filed by a representative of an aggrieved person. A complaint must be filed within 180 days of the date the complaint first knew of the alleged violation. However, this time limit may, for good cause shown, be extended by the Department.

(2) The Department shall promptly review each such complaint for sufficiency. A complaint will be deemed sufficient if it—

(i) Describes an action that may constitute a violation of this subpart; and

(ii) Contains information necessary for further processing (i.e., identifies the parties involved, states the date when the complainant first learned of the alleged violation, and is signed by the complainant).

(3) When a complaint is deemed sufficient, the Department shall promptly refer it to the FMCS for mediation.

(4) When a complaint is deemed insufficient, the Department shall advise the complainant of the reasons for that determination. A complainant shall be freely permitted to add information necessary for further processing.

(c) *Representation of parties.* During each stage of the complaint process, the complainant and the recipient may be represented by an attorney or other representative.

(d) *Assistance from the Department.* Any complainant or recipient may request from the Department information regarding the complaint process.

(e) *Mediation.* (1) When a complaint is referred for mediation, the complainant and the recipient shall participate

in the mediation process to the extent necessary either to reach an agreement or to enable the mediator to determine that no agreement can be reached. No determination that an agreement is not possible shall be made until the mediator has conferred at least once, jointly or separately, with each of the parties.

(2) If the complainant and the recipient reach an agreement, they shall reduce the agreement to writing and sign it. The mediator shall send a copy of the agreement to the Department.

(3) If, after 60 days after the Department's receipt of a complaint, no agreement is reached or if, within that 60-day period, the mediator determines that no agreement can be reached, the mediator shall return the complaint to the Department.

(4) The mediator shall protect the confidentiality of information obtained during the mediation process. No mediator shall testify in any adjudicative proceeding, produce any document, or otherwise disclose any information obtained during the mediation process without prior approval of the Director of the FMCS.

(f) *Department investigations.* The Department shall promptly investigate any complaint that is unresolved after mediation or is reopened because of violation of a mediation agreement. An investigation should include a review of the pertinent actions or practices of the recipient and the circumstances under which the alleged discrimination occurred. During an investigation the Department shall take appropriate steps to obtain informal resolution of the complaint.

(g) *Resolution of matters.* (1) Where, prior to any finding by the Department of probable noncompliance with this subpart, discussions between the Department and the parties result in settlement of a complaint, the Department shall prepare an agreement to be signed by the parties and an authorized official of the Department. A settlement shall not affect the operation of any other enforcement efforts of the Department, including compliance reviews or investigation of other complaints involving the recipient.