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the date on which the ALJ issues an initial decision, except during the pendency of any review under §22.42 or during the pendency of any action to collect penalties and assessments under §22.43.

d) The Attorney General has exclusive authority to compromise or settle a case under this part during the pendency of any review under §22.42 or of any action to recover penalties and assessments under 31 U.S.C. 3806.

(e) The investigating official may recommend settlement terms to the reviewing official, the authority head, or the Attorney General, as appropriate. The reviewing official may recommend settlement terms to the authority head, or the Attorney General, as appropriate.

(f) Any compromise or settlement must be in writing.

§ 22.47 Limitations.

(a) The notice of hearing (under §22.12) with respect to a claim or statement must be served in the manner specified in §22.8 within 6 years after the date on which such claim or statement is made.

(b) If the defendant fails to file a timely answer, service of a notice under §22.10(b) shall be deemed a notice of hearing for purposes of this section.

(c) The statute of limitations may be extended by agreement of the parties.

PART 24—PROCEDURES FOR THE HANDLING OF DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS UNDER FEDERAL EMPLOYEE PROTECTION STATUTES

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SOURCE: 63 FR 6621, Feb. 9, 1998, unless otherwise noted.

§ 24.2 Obligations and prohibited acts.

(a) No employer subject to the provisions of any of the Federal statutes listed in §24.1(a), or to the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (AEA), 42 U.S.C. 2011 et seq., may discharge any employee or otherwise discriminate against any employee with respect to the employee’s compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because the employee, or any person acting pursuant to the employee’s request, engaged in any of the activities specified in this section.

(b) Any employer is deemed to have violated the particular federal law and the regulations in this part if such employer intimidates, threatens, restrains, coerces, blacklists, discharges, or in any other manner discriminates against any employee because the employee has:
§ 24.3 Complaint.

(a) Who may file. An employee who believes that he or she has been discriminated against by an employer in violation of any of the statutes listed in § 24.1(a) may file, or have another person file on his or her behalf, a complaint alleging such discrimination.

(b) Time of filing. (1) Except as provided in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, any complaint shall be filed within 30 days after the occurrence of the alleged violation. For the purpose of determining timeliness of filing, a complaint filed by mail shall be deemed filed as of the date of mailing. (2) Under the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, any complaint shall be filed within 180 days after the occurrence of the alleged violation.

(c) Form of complaint. No particular form of complaint is required, except that a complaint must be in writing and should include a full statement of the acts and omissions, with pertinent dates, which are believed to constitute the violation.

(d) Place of filing. A complaint may be filed in person or by mail at the nearest local office of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, listed in most telephone directories under U.S. Government, Department of Labor. A complaint may also be filed with the Office of the Assistant Secretary, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or the Department of Labor's Website at http://www.osha.gov.
§ 24.4 Investigations.

(a) Upon receipt of a complaint under this part, the Assistant Secretary shall notify the person named in the complaint, and the appropriate office of the Federal agency charged with the administration of the affected program of its filing.

(b) The Assistant Secretary shall, on a priority basis, investigate and gather data concerning such case, and as part of the investigation may enter and inspect such places and records (and make copies thereof), may question persons being proceeded against and other employees of the charged employer, and may require the production of any documentary or other evidence deemed necessary to determine whether a violation of the law involved has been committed.

(c) Investigations under this part shall be conducted in a manner which protects the confidentiality of any person other than the complainant who provides information on a confidential basis, in accordance with part 70 of this title.

(d)(1) Within 30 days of receipt of a complaint, the Assistant Secretary shall complete the investigation, determine whether the alleged violation has occurred, and give notice of the determination. The notice of determination shall contain a statement of reasons for the findings and conclusions therein and, if the Assistant Secretary determines that the alleged violation has occurred, shall include an appropriate order to abate the violation. Notice of the determination shall be given by certified mail to the complainant, the respondent, and their representatives (if any). At the same time, the Assistant Secretary shall file with the Chief Administrative Law Judge, U.S. Department of Labor, the original complaint and a copy of the notice of determination.

(2) The notice of determination shall include or be accompanied by notice to the complainant and the respondent that any party who desires review of the determination or any part thereof, including judicial review, shall file a request for a hearing with the Chief Administrative Law Judge within five business days of receipt of the determination. The complainant or respondent in turn may request a hearing within five business days of the date of a timely request for a hearing by the other party. If a request for a hearing is timely filed, the notice of determination of the Assistant Secretary shall be inoperative, and shall become operative only if the case is later dismissed. If a request for a hearing is not timely filed, the notice of determination shall become the final order of the Secretary.

(3) A request for a hearing shall be filed with the Chief Administrative Law Judge by facsimile (fax), telegram, hand delivery, or next-day delivery service. A copy of the request for a hearing shall be sent by the party requesting a hearing to the complainant or the respondent (employer), as appropriate, on the same day that the hearing is requested, by facsimile (fax), telegram, hand delivery, or next-day delivery service. A copy of the request for a hearing shall also be sent to the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health and to the Associate Solicitor, Division of Fair Labor Standards, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. 20210.

§ 24.5 Investigations under the Energy Reorganization Act.

(a) In addition to the investigation procedures set forth in §24.4, this section sets forth special procedures applicable only to investigations under the Energy Reorganization Act.

(b)(1) A complaint of alleged violation shall be dismissed unless the complainant has made a prima facie showing that protected behavior or conduct as provided in §24.2(b) was a contributing factor in the unfavorable personnel action alleged in the complaint.

(2) The complaint, supplemented as appropriate by interviews of the complainant, must allege the existence of facts and evidence to meet the required elements of a prima facie case, as follows:

(i) The employee engaged in a protected activity or conduct, as set forth in §24.2;
§24.6 Hearings.

(ii) The respondent knew that the employee engaged in the protected activity;
(iii) The employee has suffered an unfavorable personnel action; and
(iv) The circumstances were sufficient to raise the inference that the protected activity was likely a contributing factor in the unfavorable action.

(3) For purposes of determining whether to investigate, the complainant will be considered to have met the required burden if the complaint on its face, supplemented as appropriate through interviews of the complainant, alleges the existence of facts and either direct or circumstantial evidence to meet the required elements of a prima facie case, i.e., to give rise to an inference that the respondent knew that the employee engaged in protected activity, and that the protected activity was likely a reason for the personnel action. Normally the burden is satisfied, for example, if it is shown that the adverse personnel action took place shortly after the protected activity, giving rise to the inference that it was a factor in the adverse action. If these elements are not substantiated in the investigation, the investigation will cease.

(c)(1) Notwithstanding a finding that a complainant has made a prima facie showing required by this section with respect to complaints filed under the Energy Reorganization Act, an investigation of the complainant’s complaint under that Act shall be discontinued if the respondent demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that it would have taken the same unfavorable personnel action in the absence of the complainant’s protected behavior or conduct.

(2) Upon receipt of a complaint under the Energy Reorganization Act, the respondent shall be provided with a copy of the complaint (as supplemented by interviews of the complainant, if any) and advised that any evidence it may wish to submit to rebut the allegations in the complaint must be received within five business days from receipt of notification of the complaint. If the respondent fails to make a timely response or if the response does not demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the unfavorable action would have occurred absent the protected conduct, the investigation shall proceed. The investigation shall proceed whenever it is necessary or appropriate to confirm or verify the information provided by respondent.

(d) Whenever the Assistant Secretary dismisses a complaint pursuant to this section without completion of an investigation, the Assistant Secretary shall give notice of the dismissal, which shall contain a statement of reasons therefor, by certified mail to the complainant, the respondent, and their representatives. At the same time the Assistant Secretary shall file with the Chief Administrative Law Judge, U.S. Department of Labor, a copy of the complaint and a copy of the notice of dismissal. The notice of dismissal shall constitute a notice of determination within the meaning of §24.4(d), and any request for a hearing shall be filed and served in accordance with the provisions of §24.4(d) (2) and (3).

§24.6 Hearings.

(a) Notice of hearing. The administrative law judge to whom the case is assigned shall, within seven calendar days following receipt of the request for hearing, notify the parties by certified mail, directed to the last known address of the parties, of a day, time and place for hearing. All parties shall be given at least five days notice of such hearing. However, because of the time constraints upon the Secretary by the above statutes, no requests for postponement shall be granted except for compelling reasons or with the consent of all parties.

(b) Consolidated hearings. When two or more hearings are to be held, and the same or substantially similar evidence is relevant and material to the matters at issue at each such hearing, the Chief Administrative Law Judge may, upon motion by any party or on his or her own motion, order that a consolidated hearing be conducted. Where consolidated hearings are held, a single record of the proceedings shall be made and the evidence introduced in one case may be considered as introduced in the others, and a separate or joint decision shall be made, as appropriate.

(c) Place of hearing. The hearing shall, where possible, be held at a place
within 75 miles of the complainant's residence.

(d) Right to counsel. In all proceedings under this part, the parties shall have the right to be represented by counsel.

(e) Procedures, evidence and record—(1) Evidence. Formal rules of evidence shall not apply, but rules or principles designed to assure production of the most probative evidence available shall be applied. The administrative law judge may exclude evidence which is immaterial, irrelevant, or unduly repetitious.

(2) Record of hearing. All hearings shall be open to the public and shall be mechanically or stenographically reported. All evidence upon which the administrative law judge relies for decision shall be contained in the transcript of testimony, either directly or by appropriate reference. All exhibits and other pertinent documents or records, either in whole or in material part, introduced as evidence, shall be marked for identification and incorporated into the record.

(3) Oral argument; briefs. Any party, upon request, may be allowed a reasonable time for presentation of oral argument and to file a prehearing brief or other written statement of fact or law. A copy of any such prehearing brief or other written statement shall be filed with the Chief Administrative Law Judge or the administrative law judge assigned to the case before or during the proceeding at which evidence is submitted to the administrative law judge and shall be served upon each party. Post-hearing briefs will not be permitted except at the request of the administrative law judge. When permitted, any such brief shall be limited to the issue or issues specified by the administrative law judge and shall be due within the time prescribed by the administrative law judge.

(4) Dismissal for cause. (i) The administrative law judge may, at the request of any party, or on his or her own motion, issue a recommended decision and order dismissing a claim:

(A) Upon the failure of the complainant or his or her representative to attend a hearing without good cause; or

(B) Upon the failure of the complainant to comply with a lawful order of the administrative law judge.

(ii) In any case where a dismissal of a claim, defense, or party is sought, the administrative law judge shall issue an order to show cause why the dismissal should not be granted and afford all parties a reasonable time to respond to such order. After the time for response has expired, the administrative law judge shall take such action as is appropriate to rule on the dismissal, which may include a recommended order dismissing the claim, defense or party.

(f)(1) At the Assistant Secretary's discretion, the Assistant Secretary may participate as a party or participate as amicus curiae at any time in the proceedings. This right to participate shall include, but is not limited to, the right to petition for review of a recommended decision of an administrative law judge, including a decision based on a settlement agreement between complainant and respondent, to dismiss a complaint or to issue an order encompassing the terms of the settlement.

(2) Copies of pleadings in all cases, whether or not the Assistant Secretary is participating in the proceeding, shall be sent to the Assistant Secretary, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and to the Associate Solicitor, Division of Fair Labor Standards, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. 20210.

(g)(1) A Federal agency which is interested in a proceeding may participate as amicus curiae at any time in the proceedings, at the agency's discretion.

(2) At the request of a Federal agency which is interested in a proceeding, copies of all pleadings in a case shall be served on the Federal agency, whether or not the agency is participating in the proceeding.

§ 24.7 Recommended decision and order.

(a) Unless the parties jointly request or agree to an extension of time, the administrative law judge shall issue a recommended decision within 20 days after the termination of the proceeding at which evidence was submitted. The recommended decision shall contain appropriate findings, conclusions, and a recommended order, and be served upon all parties to the proceeding.
§ 24.8 Review by the Administrative Review Board.

(a) Any party desiring to seek review, including judicial review, of a recommended decision of the administrative law judge shall file a petition for review with the Administrative Review Board ("the Board"), which has been delegated the authority to act for the Secretary and issue final decisions under this part. To be effective, such a petition must be received within ten business days of the date of the recommended decision of the administrative law judge, and shall be served on all parties and on the Chief Administrative Law Judge. If a timely petition for review is filed, the recommended decision of the administrative law judge shall be inoperative unless and until the Board issues an order adopting the recommended decision, except that for cases arising under the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, a preliminary order of relief shall be effective while review is conducted by the Board.

(b) Copies of the petition for review and all briefs shall be served on the Assistant Secretary, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and on the Associate Solicitor, Division of Fair Labor Standards, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. 20210.

(c) The final decision shall be issued within 90 days of the receipt of the complaint and shall be served upon all parties and the Chief Administrative Law Judge by mail to the last known address.

(d)(1) If the Board concludes that the party charged has violated the law, the final order shall order the party
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charged to take appropriate affirmative action to abate the violation, including reinstatement of the complainant to that person's former or substantially equivalent position, if desired, together with the compensation (including back pay), terms, conditions, and privileges of that employment, and, when appropriate, compensatory damages. In cases arising under the Safe Drinking Water Act or the Toxic Substances Control Act, exemplary damages may also be awarded when appropriate.

(2) If such a final order is issued, the Board, at the request of the complainant, shall assess against the respondent a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including attorney and expert witness fees) reasonably incurred by the complainant, as determined by the Board, for, or in connection with, the bringing of the complaint upon which the order was issued.

(e) If the Board determines that the party charged has not violated the law, an order shall be issued denying the complaint.

§ 24.9 Exception.

This part shall have no application to any employee alleging activity prohibited by this part who, acting without direction from his or her employer (or the employer's agent), deliberately causes a violation of any requirement of a Federal statute listed in §24.1(a).

APPENDIX A TO PART 24—YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE ENERGY REORGANIZATION ACT

YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE ERA

THE ENERGY REORGANIZATION ACT (ERA), MAKES IT ILLEGAL FOR AN EMPLOYER COVERED BY THE ACT—INCLUDING A LICENSEE OF THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION (NRC) OR AN AGREEMENT STATE, AN APPLICANT FOR A LICENSE, A CONTRACTOR OR SUBCONTRACTOR OF A LICENSEE OR APPLICANT AND A CONTRACTOR OR SUBCONTRACTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE) UNDER THE ATOMIC ENERGY ACT (AEA) — TO DISCHARGE OR OTHERWISE DISCRIMINATE AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE IN TERMS OF COMPENSATION, CONDITIONS OR PRIVILEGES OF EMPLOYMENT BECAUSE THE EMPLOYEE OR ANY PERSON ACTING AT AN EMPLOYEE’S REQUEST PERFORMS A PROTECTED ACTIVITY.

RIGHT TO RAISE A SAFETY CONCERN: YOU ARE ENGAGED IN PROTECTED ACTIVITY WHEN YOU:
(1) NOTIFY YOUR EMPLOYER OF AN ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THE ERA OR THE AEA;
(2) REFUSE TO ENGAGE IN ANY PRACTICE MADE UNLAWFUL BY THE ERA OR THE AEA, IF YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED THE ALLEGED ILLEGALITY TO THE EMPLOYER;
(3) TESTIFY BEFORE CONGRESS OR AT ANY FEDERAL OR STATE PROCEEDING REGARDING ANY PROVISION OR PROPOSED PROVISION OF THE ERA OR THE AEA;
(4) COMMENCE OR CAUSE TO BE COMMENCED A PROCEEDING UNDER THE ERA, OR A PROCEEDING FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OR ENFORCEMENT OF ANY REQUIREMENT IMPOSED UNDER THE ERA;
(5) TESTIFY OR ARE ABOUT TO TESTIFY IN ANY SUCH PROCEEDING OR;
(6) ASSIST OR PARTICIPATE IN SUCH A PROCEEDING OR IN ANY OTHER ACTION TO CARRY OUT THE PURPOSES OF THE ERA OR THE AEA.

UNLAWFUL ACTS BY EMPLOYERS: IT IS UNLAWFUL FOR AN EMPLOYER TO INTIMIDATE, THREATEN, RESTRAIN, COerce, BLACKLIST, DISCHARGE OR IN ANY OTHER MANNER DISCRIMINATE AGAINST ANY EMPLOYEE BECAUSE THE EMPLOYEE HAS ENGAGED IN PROTECTED ACTIVITY.


ENFORCEMENT: OSHA WILL REVIEW THE COMPLAINT TO ENSURE THAT IT MAKES AN INITIAL SHOWING OF DISCRIMINATION. IF NOT, OR IF THE EMPLOYER PROVIDES CLEAR AND CONVINCING EVIDENCE THAT THERE WAS NO DISCRIMINATION, THERE WILL BE NO INVESTIGATION. IF THE REQUIRED SHOWING IS MADE, OSHA WILL NOTIFY THE EMPLOYER AND CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER A VIOLATION HAS OCCURRED. EITHER THE EMPLOYEE OR THE EMPLOYER MAY REQUEST A HEARING BEFORE AN ALJ.

RELIEF: IF DISCRIMINATION IS FOUND, THE EMPLOYER WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE RELIEF, INCLUDING REINSTATEMENT (EVEN FOR THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE ALJ DECISION AND APPEAL), BACK WAGES OR COMPENSATION FOR INJURY SUFFERED FROM THE DISCRIMINATION, AND ATTORNEY’S FEES AND COSTS.

CAUTION: THE PRECEDING PROTECTIONS AND REMEDIES ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO EMPLOYEES WHO ENGAGE IN DELIBERATE VIOLATIONS OF THE ERA OR THE AEA.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: CONTACT THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION, U.S. GOVERNMENT, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (LISTED IN TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES), OR SEE THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR’S WEBSITE AT: WWW.OSHA.GOV

EMPLOYERS ARE REQUIRED TO DISPLAY THIS POSTER WHERE EMPLOYEES CAN READILY SEE IT.

PART 25—RULES FOR THE NOMINATION OF ARBITRATORS UNDER SECTION 11 OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 10988

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