

issuer (or the issuer's officer, director, employee, or agent, as the case may be) in any investigation or judicial or administrative proceeding relating to such evidence of a material violation.

(8) An attorney who receives what he or she reasonably believes is an appropriate and timely response to a report he or she has made pursuant to paragraph (b)(1), (b)(3), or (b)(4) of this section need do nothing more under this section with respect to his or her report.

(9) An attorney who does not reasonably believe that the issuer has made an appropriate response within a reasonable time to the report or reports made pursuant to paragraph (b)(1), (b)(3), or (b)(4) of this section shall explain his or her reasons therefore to the chief legal officer (or the equivalent thereof), the chief executive officer (or the equivalent thereof), and directors to whom the attorney reported the evidence of a material violation pursuant to paragraph (b)(1), (b)(3), or (b)(4) of this section.

(10) An attorney formerly employed or retained by an issuer who has reported evidence of a material violation under this part and reasonably believes that he or she has been discharged for so doing may notify the issuer's board of directors or any committee thereof that he or she believes that he or she has been discharged for reporting evidence of a material violation under this section. (c) Alternative reporting procedures for attorneys retained or employed by an issuer that has established a qualified legal compliance committee.

(1) If an attorney, appearing and practicing before the Commission in the representation of an issuer, becomes aware of evidence of a material violation by the issuer or by any officer, director, employee, or agent of the issuer, the attorney may, as an alternative to the reporting requirements of paragraph (b) of this section, report such evidence to a qualified legal compliance committee, if the issuer has previously formed such a committee. An attorney who reports evidence of a material violation to such a qualified legal compliance committee has satisfied his or her obligation to report such evidence and is not required to assess the issuer's response to the reported evidence of a material violation.

(2) A chief legal officer (or the equivalent thereof) may refer a report of evidence of a material violation to a previously established qualified legal compliance committee in lieu of causing an inquiry to be conducted under paragraph (b)(2) of this section. The chief legal officer (or the equivalent thereof) shall inform the reporting attorney that the report has been referred to a qualified legal compliance committee. Thereafter, pursuant to the requirements under ' 205.2(k), the qualified legal compliance committee shall be responsible for responding to the evidence of a material violation reported to it under this paragraph (c).

(d) Issuer confidences.

(1) Any report under this section (or the contemporaneous record thereof) or any response thereto (or the contemporaneous record thereof) may be used by an attorney in connection with any investigation, proceeding, or litigation in which the attorney's compliance with this part is in issue.

(2) An attorney appearing and practicing before the Commission in the representation of an issuer may reveal to the Commission, without the issuer's consent, confidential information related to the representation to the extent the attorney reasonably believes necessary: **(i)** To prevent the issuer from committing a material violation that is likely to cause

substantial injury to the financial interest or property of the issuer or investors; **(ii)** To prevent the issuer, in a Commission investigation or administrative proceeding from committing perjury, proscribed in 18 U.S.C. 1621; suborning perjury, proscribed in "18 U.S.C. 1622; or committing any act proscribed in 18 U.S.C. 1001 that is likely to perpetrate a fraud upon the Commission; or **(iii)** To rectify the consequences of a material violation by the issuer that caused, or may cause, substantial injury to the financial interest or property of the issuer or investors in the furtherance of which the attorney's services were used.

§ 205.4 Responsibilities of supervisory attorneys.

(a) An attorney supervising or directing another attorney who is appearing and practicing before the Commission in the representation of an issuer is a supervisory attorney. An issuer's chief legal officer (or the equivalent thereof) is a supervisory attorney under this section.

(b) A supervisory attorney shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that a subordinate attorney, as defined in ' 205.5(a), that he or she supervises or directs conforms to this part. To the extent a subordinate attorney appears and practices before the Commission in the representation of an issuer, that subordinate attorney's supervisory attorneys also appear and practice before the Commission.

(c) A supervisory attorney is responsible for complying with the reporting requirements in ' 205.3 when a subordinate attorney has reported to the supervisory attorney evidence of a material violation.

(d) A supervisory attorney who has received a report of evidence of a material violation from a subordinate attorney under ' 205.3 may report such evidence to the issuer's qualified legal compliance committee if the issuer has duly formed such a committee.

§ 205.5 Responsibilities of a subordinate attorney.

(a) An attorney who appears and practices before the Commission in the representation of an issuer on a matter under the supervision or direction of another attorney (other than under the direct supervision or direction of the issuer's chief legal officer (or the equivalent thereof)) is a subordinate attorney.

(b) A subordinate attorney shall comply with this part notwithstanding that the subordinate attorney acted at the direction of or under the supervision of another person.

(c) A subordinate attorney complies with ' 205.3 if the subordinate attorney reports to his or her supervising attorney under ' 205.3(b) evidence of a material violation of which the subordinate attorney has become aware in appearing and practicing before the Commission.

(d) A subordinate attorney may take the steps permitted or required by ' 205.3(b) or (c) if the subordinate attorney reasonably believes that a supervisory attorney to whom he or she has reported evidence of a material violation under ' 205.3(b) has failed to comply with ' 205.3.

§ 205.6 Sanctions and discipline.

(a) A violation of this part by any attorney appearing and practicing before the Commission in the representation of an issuer shall subject

such attorney to the civil penalties and remedies for a violation of the federal securities laws available to the Commission in an action brought by the Commission there-under.

(b) An attorney appearing and practicing before the Commission who violates any provision of this part is subject to the disciplinary authority of the Commission, regardless of whether the attorney may also be subject to discipline for the same conduct in a jurisdiction where the attorney is admitted or practices. An administrative disciplinary proceeding initiated by the Commission for violation of this part may result in an attorney being censured, or being temporarily or permanently denied the privilege of appearing or practicing before the Commission.

(c) An attorney who complies in good faith with the provisions of this part shall not be subject to discipline or otherwise liable under inconsistent standards imposed by any state or other United States jurisdiction where the attorney is admitted or practices.

(d) An attorney practicing outside the United States shall not be required to comply with the requirements of this part to the extent that such compliance is prohibited by applicable foreign law.

' 205.7 No private right of action.

(a) Nothing in this part is intended to, or does, create a private right of action against any attorney, law firm, or issuer based upon compliance or noncompliance with its provisions.

(b) Authority to enforce compliance with this part is vested exclusively in the Commission.

Securities and Exchange Commission*

Audit Committee Rules/Complaint Process

Final Rule

17 CFR 240.10A-3(b)(iv)(F)(3)

Each audit committee must establish procedures for:

(i) The receipt, retention, and treatment of complaints received by the listed issuer regarding accounting, internal accounting controls, or auditing matters; and

(ii) The confidential, anonymous submission by employees of the listed issuer of concerns regarding questionable accounting or auditing matters.

SECTION 3 ENVIRONMENTAL WHISTLEBLOWERS

**Clean Air Act,
Employee Protection Provision
42 U.S.C. § 7622**

(a) *Discharge or discrimination prohibited.* No employer may discharge any employee or otherwise discriminate against any employee with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because the employee (or any person acting pursuant to a request of the employee)—

(1) commenced, caused to be commenced, or is about to commence or cause to be commenced a proceeding under this chapter or a proceeding for the administration or enforcement of any requirement imposed under this chapter or under any applicable implementation plan,

(2) testified or is about to testify in any such proceeding, or

(3) assisted or participated or is about to assist or participate in any manner in such a proceeding or in any other action to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

(b) *Complaint charging unlawful discharge or discrimination; investigation; order*

(1) Any employee who believes that he has been discharged or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of subsection (a) of this section may, within thirty days after such violation occurs, file (or have any person file on his behalf) a complaint with the Secretary of Labor (hereinafter in this subsection referred to as the "Secretary") alleging such discharge or discrimination. Upon receipt of such a complaint, the Secretary shall notify the person named in the complaint of the filing of the complaint.

(2)(A) Upon receipt of a complaint filed under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall conduct an investigation of the violation alleged in the complaint. Within thirty days of the receipt of such complaint, the Secretary shall complete such investigation and shall notify in writing the complainant (and any person acting in his behalf) and the person alleged to have committed such violation of the results of the investigation conducted pursuant to this subparagraph. Within ninety days of the receipt of such complaint the Secretary shall, unless the proceeding on the complaint is terminated by the Secretary on the basis of a settlement entered into by the Secretary and the person alleged to have committed such violation, issue an order either providing the relief prescribed by subparagraph (B) or denying the complaint. An order of the Secretary shall be made on the record after notice and opportunity for public hearing. The Secretary may not enter into a settlement terminating a proceeding on a complaint without the participation and consent of the complainant.

(B) If, in response to a complaint filed under paragraph (1), the Secretary determines that a violation of subsection (a) of this section has occurred, the Secretary shall order the person who committed such violation to **(i)** take affirmative action to abate the violation, and **(ii)** reinstate the

complainant to his former position together with the compensation (including back pay), terms, conditions, and privileges of his employment, and the Secretary may order such person to provide compensatory damages to the complainant. If an order is issued under this paragraph, the Secretary, at the request of the complainant, shall assess against the person against whom the order is issued a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including attorneys' and expert witness fees) reasonably incurred, as determined by the Secretary, by the complainant for, or in connection with, the bringing of the complaint upon which the order was issued.

(c) Review.

(1) Any person adversely affected or aggrieved by an order issued under subsection (b) of this section may obtain review of the order in the United States court of appeals for the circuit in which the violation, with respect to which the order was issued, allegedly occurred. The petition for review must be filed within sixty days from the issuance of the Secretary's order. Review shall conform to chapter 7 of title 5. The commencement of proceedings under this subparagraph shall not, unless ordered by the court, operate as a stay of the Secretary's order.

(2) An order of the Secretary with respect to which review could have been obtained under paragraph (1) shall not be subject to judicial review in any criminal or other civil proceeding.

(d) Enforcement of order by Secretary. Whenever a person has failed to comply with an order issued under subsection (b)(2) of this section, the Secretary may file a civil action in the United States district court for the district in which the violation was found to occur to enforce such order. In actions brought under this subsection, the district courts shall have jurisdiction to grant all appropriate relief including, but not limited to, injunctive relief, compensatory, and exemplary damages.

(e) Enforcement of order by person on whose behalf order was issued.

(1) Any person on whose behalf an order was issued under paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of this section may commence a civil action against the person to whom such order was issued to require compliance with such order. The appropriate United States district court shall have jurisdiction, without regard to the amount in controversy or the citizenship of the parties, to enforce such order.

(2) The court, in issuing any final order under this subsection, may award costs of litigation (including reasonable attorney and expert witness fees) to any party whenever the court determines such award is appropriate.

(f) Mandamus. Any nondiscretionary duty imposed by this section shall be enforceable in a mandamus proceeding brought under section 1361 of title 28.

(g) Deliberate violation by employee. Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply with respect to any employee who, acting without direction from his employer (or the employer's agent), deliberately causes a violation of any requirement of this chapter.

**Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (“Superfund”), Employee Protection Provision
42 U.S.C. § 9610**

(a) *Activities of employee subject to protection.* No person shall fire or in any other way discriminate against, or cause to be fired or discriminated against, any employee or any authorized representative of employees by reason of the fact that such employee or representative has provided information to a State or to the Federal Government, filed, instituted, or caused to be filed or instituted any proceeding under this chapter, or has testified or is about to testify in any proceeding resulting from the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this chapter.

(b) *Administrative grievance procedure in cases of alleged violations.* Any employee or a representative of employees who believes that he has been fired or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of subsection (a) of this section may, within thirty days after such alleged violation occurs, apply to the Secretary of Labor for a review of such firing or alleged discrimination. A copy of the application shall be sent to such person, who shall be the respondent. Upon receipt of such application, the Secretary of Labor shall cause such investigation to be made as he deems appropriate. Such investigation shall provide an opportunity for a public hearing at the request of any party to such review to enable the parties to present information relating to such alleged violation. The parties shall be given written notice of the time and place of the hearing at least five days prior to the hearing. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5. Upon receiving the report of such investigation, the Secretary of Labor shall make findings of fact. If he finds that such violation did occur, he shall issue a decision, incorporating an order therein and his findings, requiring the party committing such violation to take such affirmative action to abate the violation as the Secretary of Labor deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, the rehiring or reinstatement of the employee or representative of employees to his former position with compensation. If he finds that there was no such violation, he shall issue an order denying the application. Such order issued by the Secretary of Labor under this subparagraph shall be subject to judicial review in the same manner as orders and decisions are subject to judicial review under this chapter.

(c) *Assessment of costs and expenses against violator subsequent to issuance of order of abatement.* Whenever an order is issued under this section to abate such violation, at the request of the applicant a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including the attorney’s fees) determined by the Secretary of Labor to have been reasonably incurred by the applicant for, or in connection with, the institution and prosecution of such proceedings, shall be assessed against the person committing such violation.

(d) *Defenses.* This section shall have no application to any employee who acting without discretion from his employer (or his agent) deliberately violates any requirement of this chapter.

(e) *Presidential evaluations of potential loss of shifts of employment resulting from administration or enforcement of provisions;*

investigations; procedures applicable, etc. The President shall conduct continuing evaluations of potential loss of shifts of employment which may result from the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this chapter, including, where appropriate, investigating threatened plant closures or reductions in employment allegedly resulting from such administration or enforcement. Any employee who is discharged, or laid off, threatened with discharge or layoff, or otherwise discriminated against by any person because of the alleged results of such administration or enforcement, or any representative of such employee, may request the President to conduct a full investigation of the matter and, at the request of any party, shall hold public hearings, require the parties, including the employer involved, to present information relating to the actual or potential effect of such administration or enforcement on employment and any alleged discharge, layoff, or other discrimination, and the detailed reasons or justification there[of]. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5. Upon receiving the report of such investigation, the President shall make findings of fact as to the effect of such administration or enforcement on employment and on the alleged discharge, layoff, or discrimination and shall make such recommendations as he deems appropriate. Such report, findings, and recommendations shall be available to the public. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require or authorize the President or any State to modify or withdraw any action, standard, limitation, or any other requirement of this chapter.

**Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002,
Protection of employees providing pipeline safety information,
49. U.S.C. § 60129**

(a) DISCRIMINATION AGAINST EMPLOYEE-

(1) IN GENERAL- No employer may discharge any employee or otherwise discriminate against any employee with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because the employee (or any person acting pursuant to a request of the employee)--

(A) provided, caused to be provided, or is about to provide or cause to be provided, to the employer or the Federal Government information relating to any violation or alleged violation of any order, regulation, or standard under this chapter or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety;

(B) refused to engage in any practice made unlawful by this chapter or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety, if the employee has identified the alleged illegality to the employer;

(C) provided, caused to be provided, or is about to provide or cause to be provided, testimony before Congress or at any Federal or State proceeding regarding any provision (or proposed provision) of this chapter or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety;

(D) commenced, caused to be commenced, or is about to commence or cause to be commenced a proceeding under this chapter or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety, or a proceeding for the

administration or enforcement of any requirement imposed under this chapter or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety;

(E) provided, caused to be provided, or is about to provide or cause to be provided, testimony in any proceeding described in subparagraph (D); or

(F) assisted or participated or is about to assist or participate in any manner in such a proceeding or in any other manner in such a proceeding or in any other action to carry out the purposes of this chapter or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety.

(2) EMPLOYER DEFINED- In this section, the term 'employer' means--

(A) a person owning or operating a pipeline facility; or

(B) a contractor or subcontractor of such a person.

(b) DEPARTMENT OF LABOR COMPLAINT PROCEDURE-

(1) FILING AND NOTIFICATION- A person who believes that he or she has been discharged or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of subsection (a) may, not later than 180 days after the date on which such violation occurs, file (or have any person file on his or her behalf) a complaint with the Secretary of Labor alleging such discharge or discrimination. Upon receipt of such a complaint, the Secretary of Labor shall notify, in writing, the person or persons named in the complaint and the Secretary of Transportation of the filing of the complaint, of the allegations contained in the complaint, of the substance of evidence supporting the complaint, and of the opportunities that will be afforded to such person or persons under paragraph (2).

(2) INVESTIGATION; PRELIMINARY ORDER-

(A) IN GENERAL- Not later than 60 days after the date of receipt of a complaint filed under paragraph (1) and after affording the person or persons named in the complaint an opportunity to submit to the Secretary of Labor a written response to the complaint and an opportunity to meet with a representative of the Secretary of Labor to present statements from witnesses, the Secretary of Labor shall conduct an investigation and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that the complaint has merit and notify in writing the complainant and the person or persons alleged to have committed a violation of subsection (a) of the Secretary of Labor's findings. If the Secretary of Labor concludes that there is reasonable cause to believe that a violation of subsection (a) has occurred, the Secretary of Labor shall include with the Secretary of Labor's findings with a preliminary order providing the relief prescribed by paragraph (3)(B). Not later than 60 days after the date of notification of findings under this subparagraph, any person alleged to have committed a violation or the complainant may file objections to the findings or preliminary order, or both, and request a hearing on the record. The filing of such objections shall not operate to stay any reinstatement remedy contained in the preliminary order. Such hearings shall be conducted expeditiously. If a hearing is not requested in such 60-day period, the preliminary order shall be deemed a final order that is not subject to judicial review.

(B) REQUIREMENTS-

(i) REQUIRED SHOWING BY COMPLAINANT- The Secretary of Labor shall dismiss a complaint filed under this subsection and shall not conduct an investigation otherwise required under subparagraph

(A) unless the complainant makes a prima facie showing that any behavior described in subsection (a) was a contributing factor in the unfavorable personnel action alleged in the complaint.

(ii) SHOWING BY EMPLOYER- Notwithstanding a finding by the Secretary of Labor that the complainant has made the showing required under clause (i), no investigation otherwise required under subparagraph **(A)** shall be conducted if the employer demonstrates, by clear and convincing evidence, that the employer would have taken the same unfavorable personnel action in the absence of that behavior.

(iii) CRITERIA FOR DETERMINATION BY SECRETARY- The Secretary of Labor may determine that a violation of subsection (a) has occurred only if the complainant demonstrates that any behavior described in subsection (a) was a contributing factor in the unfavorable personnel action alleged in the complaint.

(iv) PROHIBITION- Relief may not be ordered under subparagraph **(A)** if the employer demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that the employer would have taken the same unfavorable personnel action in the absence of that behavior.

(3) FINAL ORDER-

(A) DEADLINE FOR ISSUANCE; SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS- Not later than 90 days after the date of conclusion of a hearing under paragraph (2), the Secretary of Labor shall issue a final order providing the relief prescribed by this paragraph or denying the complaint. At any time before issuance of a final order, a proceeding under this subsection may be terminated on the basis of a settlement agreement entered into by the Secretary of Labor, the complainant, and the person or persons alleged to have committed the violation.

(B) REMEDY- If, in response to a complaint filed under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Labor determines that a violation of subsection (a) has occurred, the Secretary of Labor shall order the person or persons who committed such violation to--**(i)** take affirmative action to abate the violation; **(ii)** reinstate the complainant to his or her former position together with the compensation (including back pay) and restore the terms, conditions, and privileges associated with his or her employment; and **(iii)** provide compensatory damages to the complainant. If such an order is issued under this paragraph, the Secretary of Labor, at the request of the complainant, shall assess against the person or persons against whom the order is issued a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including attorney's and expert witness fees) reasonably incurred, as determined by the Secretary of Labor, by the complainant for, or in connection with, the bringing the complaint upon which the order was issued.

(C) FRIVOLOUS COMPLAINTS- If the Secretary of Labor finds that a complaint under paragraph (1) is frivolous or has been brought in bad faith, the Secretary of Labor may award to the prevailing employer a reasonable attorney's fee not exceeding \$1,000.

(4) REVIEW-

(A) APPEAL TO COURT OF APPEALS- Any person adversely affected or aggrieved by an order issued under paragraph (3) may obtain review of the order in the United States Court of Appeals for the circuit

in which the violation, with respect to which the order was issued, allegedly occurred or the circuit in which the complainant resided on the date of such violation. The petition for review must be filed not later than 60 days after the date of issuance of the final order of the Secretary of Labor. Review shall conform to chapter 7 of title 5, United States Code. The commencement of proceedings under this subparagraph shall not, unless ordered by the court, operate as a stay of the order.

(B) LIMITATION ON COLLATERAL ATTACK- An order of the Secretary of Labor with respect to which review could have been obtained under subparagraph (A) shall not be subject to judicial review in any criminal or other civil proceeding.

(5) ENFORCEMENT OF ORDER BY SECRETARY OF LABOR- Whenever any person has failed to comply with an order issued under paragraph (3), the Secretary of Labor may file a civil action in the United States district court for the district in which the violation was found to occur to enforce such order. In actions brought under this paragraph, the district courts shall have jurisdiction to grant all appropriate relief, including, but not to be limited to, injunctive relief and compensatory damages.

(6) ENFORCEMENT OF ORDER BY PARTIES.

(A) COMMENCEMENT OF ACTION- A person on whose behalf an order was issued under paragraph (3) may commence a civil action against the person or persons to whom such order was issued to require compliance with such order. The appropriate United States district court shall have jurisdiction, without regard to the amount in controversy or the citizenship of the parties, to enforce such order.

(B) ATTORNEY FEES- The court, in issuing any final order under this paragraph, may award costs of litigation (including reasonable attorney and expert witness fees) to any party whenever the court determines such award of costs is appropriate.

(C) MANDAMUS- Any nondiscretionary duty imposed by this section shall be enforceable in a mandamus proceeding brought under section 1361 of title 28, United States Code.

(D) NONAPPLICABILITY TO DELIBERATE VIOLATIONS- Subsection (a) shall not apply with respect to an action of an employee of an employer who, acting without direction from the employer (or such employer's agent), deliberately causes a violation of any requirement relating to pipeline safety under this chapter or any other law of the United States.

(b) CIVIL PENALTY- Section 60122(a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

(3) A person violating section 60129, or an order issued thereunder, is liable to the Government for a civil penalty of not more than \$1,000 for each violation. The penalties provided by paragraph (1) do not apply to a violation of section 60129 or an order issued thereunder.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT- The analysis for chapter 601 is amended by adding at the end the following: 60129. Protection of employees providing pipeline safety information.

**Safe Drinking Water Act,
Employee Protection Provision
42 U.S.C. § 300j-9(i)**

(i) Discrimination prohibition: filing of complaint; investigation; orders of Secretary; notice and hearing; settlements; attorneys' fees; judicial review; filing of petition; procedural requirements; stay of orders; exclusiveness of remedy; civil actions for enforcement of orders; appropriate relief; mandamus proceedings; prohibition inapplicable to undirected but deliberate violations—

(1) No employer may discharge any employee or otherwise discriminate against any employee with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because the employee (or any person acting pursuant to a request of the employee) has—

(A) commenced, caused to be commenced, or is about to commence or cause to be commenced a proceeding under this subchapter or a proceeding for the administration or enforcement of drinking water regulations or underground injection control programs of a State,

(B) testified or is about to testify in any such proceeding, or

(C) assisted or participated or is about to assist or participate in any manner in such a proceeding or in any other action to carry out the purposes of this subchapter.

(2)(A) Any employee who believes that he has been discharged or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of paragraph (1) may, within 30 days after such violation occurs, file (or have any person file on his behalf) a complaint with the Secretary of Labor (hereinafter in this subsection referred to as the "Secretary") alleging such discharge or discrimination. Upon receipt of such a complaint, the Secretary shall notify the person named in the complaint of the filing of the complaint.

(B)(i) Upon receipt of a complaint filed under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall conduct an investigation of the violation alleged in the complaint. Within 30 days of the receipt of such complaint, the Secretary shall complete such investigation and shall notify in writing the complainant (and any person acting in his behalf) and the person alleged to have committed such violation of the results of the investigation conducted pursuant to this subparagraph. Within 90 days of the receipt of such complaint the Secretary shall, unless the proceeding on the complaint is terminated by the Secretary on the basis of a settlement entered into by the Secretary and the person alleged to have committed such violation, issue an order either providing the relief prescribed by clause (ii) or denying the complaint. An order of the Secretary shall be made on the record after notice and opportunity for agency hearing. The Secretary may not enter into a settlement terminating a proceeding on a complaint without the participation and consent of the complainant.

(ii) If in response to a complaint filed under subparagraph (A) the Secretary determines that a violation of paragraph (1) has occurred, the Secretary shall order

(I) the person who committed such violation to take affirmative action to abate the violation,

(II) such person to reinstate the complainant to his former position together with the compensation (including back pay), terms, conditions, and privileges of his employment,

(III) compensatory damages, and

(IV) where appropriate, exemplary damages. If such an order is issued, the Secretary, at the request of the complainant, shall assess against the person against whom the order is issued a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including attorneys' fees) reasonably incurred, as determined by the Secretary, by the complainant for, or in connection with, the bringing of the complaint upon which the order was issued.

(3)(A) Any person adversely affected or aggrieved by an order issued under paragraph (2) may obtain review of the order in the United States Court of Appeals for the circuit in which the violation, with respect to which the order was issued, allegedly occurred. The petition for review must be filed within sixty days from the issuance of the Secretary's order. Review shall conform to chapter 7 of title 5. The commencement of proceedings under this subparagraph shall not, unless ordered by the court, operate as a stay of the Secretary's order.

(B) An order of the Secretary with respect to which review could have been obtained under subparagraph (A) shall not be subject to judicial review in any criminal or other civil proceeding.

(4) Whenever a person has failed to comply with an order issued under paragraph (2)(B), the Secretary shall file a civil action in the United States District Court for the district in which the violation was found to occur to enforce such order. In actions brought under this paragraph, the district courts shall have jurisdiction to grant all appropriate relief including, but not limited to, injunctive relief, compensatory, and exemplary damages.

(5) Any nondiscretionary duty imposed by this section is enforceable in mandamus proceeding brought under section 1361 of title 28.

(6) Paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to any employee who, acting without direction from his employer (or the employer's agent), deliberately causes a violation of any requirement of this subchapter.

**Solid Waste Disposal Act,
Employee Protection Provision
42 U.S.C. § 6971**

(a) *General.* No person shall fire, or in any other way discriminate against, or cause to be fired or discriminated against, any employee or any authorized representative of employees by reason of the fact that such employee or representative has filed, instituted, or caused to be filed or instituted any proceeding under this chapter or under any applicable implementation plan, or has testified or is about to testify in any proceeding resulting from the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this chapter or of any applicable implementation plan.

(b) *Remedy.* Any employee or a representative of employees who believes that he has been fired or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of subsection (a) of this section may, within thirty

days after such alleged violation occurs, apply to the Secretary of Labor for a review of such firing or alleged discrimination. A copy of the application shall be sent to such person who shall be the respondent. Upon receipt of such application, the Secretary of Labor shall cause such investigation to be made as he deems appropriate. Such investigation shall provide an opportunity for a public hearing at the request of any party to such review to enable the parties to present information relating to such alleged violation. The parties shall be given written notice of the time and place of the hearing at least five days prior to the hearing. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5. Upon receiving the report of such investigation, the Secretary of Labor shall make findings of fact. If he finds that such violation did occur, he shall issue a decision, incorporating an order therein and his findings, requiring the party committing such violation to take such affirmative action to abate the violation as the Secretary of Labor deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, the rehiring or reinstatement of the employee or representative of employees to his former position with compensation. If he finds that there was no such violation, he shall issue an order denying the application. Such order issued by the Secretary of Labor under this subparagraph shall be subject to judicial review in the same manner as orders and decisions of the Administrator or subject to judicial review under this chapter.

(c) *Costs.* Whenever an order is issued under this section to abate such violation, at the request of the applicant, a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including the attorney's fees) as determined by the Secretary of Labor, to have been reasonably incurred by the applicant for, or in connection with, the institution and prosecution of such proceedings, shall be assessed against the person committing such violation.

(d) *Exception.* This section shall have no application to any employee who, acting without direction from his employer (or his agent) deliberately violates any requirement of this chapter.

(e) *Employment shifts and loss.* The Administrator shall conduct continuing evaluations of potential loss or shifts of employment which may result from the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this chapter and applicable implementation plans, including, where appropriate, investigating threatened plant closures or reductions in employment allegedly resulting from such administration or enforcement. Any employee who is discharged, or laid off, threatened with discharge or layoff, or otherwise discriminated against by any person because of the alleged results of such administration or enforcement, or any representative of such employee, may request the Administrator to conduct a full investigation of the matter. The Administrator shall thereupon investigate the matter and, at the request of any party, shall hold public hearings on not less than five days' notice, and shall at such hearings require the parties, including the employer involved, to present information relating to the actual or potential effect of such administration or enforcement on employment and on any alleged discharge, layoff, or other discrimination and the detailed reasons or justification therefore. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be

subject to section 554 of title 5. Upon receiving the report of such investigation, the Administrator shall make findings of fact as to the effect of such administration or enforcement on employment and on the alleged discharge, layoff, or discrimination and shall make such recommendations as he deems appropriate. Such report, findings, and recommendations shall be available to the public. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require or authorize the Administrator or any State to modify or withdraw any standard, limitation, or any other requirement of this chapter or any applicable implementation plan.

(f) Occupational safety and health. In order to assist the Secretary of Labor and the Director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in carrying out their duties under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 651 et seq.), the Administrator shall—

(1) provide the following information, as such information becomes available, to the Secretary and the Director:

(A) the identity of any hazardous waste generation, treatment, storage, disposal facility or site where cleanup is planned or underway;

(B) information identifying the hazards to which persons working at a hazardous waste generation, treatment, storage, disposal facility or site or otherwise handling hazardous waste may be exposed, the nature and extent of the exposure, and methods to protect workers from such hazards; and

(C) incidents of worker injury or harm at a hazardous waste generation, treatment, storage or disposal facility or site; and

(2) notify the Secretary and the Director of the Administrator's receipt of notifications under section 6930 or reports under sections 6922, 6923, and 6924 of this title and make such notifications and reports available to the Secretary and the Director.

**Surface Mining Act,
Employee Protection Provision
30 U.S.C. § 1293**

(a) Retaliatory practices prohibited. No person shall discharge, or in any other way discriminate against, or cause to be fired or discriminated against, any employee or any authorized representative of employees by reason of the fact that such employee or representative has filed, instituted, or caused to be filed or instituted any proceeding under this chapter, or has testified or is about to testify in any proceeding resulting from the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this chapter.

(b) Review by Secretary; investigation; notice; hearing; findings of fact; judicial review. Any employee or a representative of employees who believes that he has been fired or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of subsection (a) of this section may, within thirty days after such alleged violation occurs, apply to the Secretary for a review of such firing or alleged discrimination. A copy of the application shall be sent to the person or operator who will be the respondent. Upon receipt of such application, the Secretary shall cause such investigation to be made as he deems appropriate. Such investigation shall provide an opportunity for a public hearing at the request of any party to such

review to enable the parties to present information relating to the alleged violation. The parties shall be given written notice of the time and place of the hearing at least five days prior to the hearing. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5. Upon receiving the report of such investigation the Secretary shall make findings of fact. If he finds that a violation did occur, he shall issue a decision incorporating therein his findings and an order requiring the party committing the violation to take such affirmative action to abate the violation as the Secretary deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, the rehiring or reinstatement of the employee or representative of employees to his former position with compensation. If he finds that there was no violation, he will issue a finding. Orders issued by the Secretary under this subsection shall be subject to judicial review in the same manner as orders and decisions of the Secretary are subject to judicial review under this chapter.

(c) *Costs.* Whenever an order is issued under this section to abate any violation, at the request of the applicant a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including attorneys' fees) to have been reasonably incurred by the applicant for, or in connection with, the institution and prosecution of such proceedings, shall be assessed against the persons committing the violation.

**Toxic Substances Control Act,
Employee Protection Provision
15 U.S.C. § 2622**

(a) *In general.* No employer 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 a request of the employee) has—

- (1) commenced, caused to be commenced, or is about to commence or cause to be commenced a proceeding under this chapter;
- (2) testified or is about to testify in any such proceeding; or
- (3) assisted or participated or is about to assist or participate in any manner in such a proceeding or in any other action to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

(b) *Remedy.*

(1) Any employee who believes that the employee has been discharged or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of subsection (a) of this section may, within 30 days after such alleged violation occurs, file (or have any person file on the employee's behalf) a complaint with the Secretary of Labor (hereinafter in this section referred to as the "Secretary") alleging such discharge or discrimination. Upon receipt of such a complaint, the Secretary shall notify the person named in the complaint of the filing of the complaint.

(2)(A) Upon receipt of a complaint filed under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall conduct an investigation of the violation alleged in the complaint. Within 30 days of the receipt of such complaint, the Secretary shall complete such investigation and shall notify in writing the

complainant (and any person acting on behalf of the complainant) and the person alleged to have committed such violation of the results of the investigation conducted pursuant to this paragraph. Within ninety days of the receipt of such complaint the Secretary shall, unless the proceeding on the complaint is terminated by the Secretary on the basis of a settlement entered into by the Secretary and the person alleged to have committed such violation, issue an order either providing the relief prescribed by subparagraph (B) or denying the complaint. An order of the Secretary shall be made on the record after notice and opportunity for agency hearing. The Secretary may not enter into a settlement terminating a proceeding on a complaint without the participation and consent of the complainant.

(B) If in response to a complaint filed under paragraph (1) the Secretary determines that a violation of subsection (a) of this section has occurred, the Secretary shall order

(i) the person who committed such violation to take affirmative action to abate the violation,

(ii) such person to reinstate the complainant to the complainant's former position together with the compensation (including back pay), terms, conditions, and privileges of the complainant's employment,

(iii) compensatory damages, and

(iv) where appropriate, exemplary damages. If such an order issued, the Secretary, at the request of the complainant, shall assess against the person against whom the order is issued a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including attorney's fees) reasonably incurred, as determined by the Secretary, by the complainant for, or in connection with, the bringing of the complaint upon which the order was issued.

(c) Review.

(1) Any employee or employer adversely affected or aggrieved by an order issued under subsection (b) of this section may obtain review of the order in the United States Court of Appeals for the circuit in which the violation, with respect to which the order was issued, allegedly occurred. The petition for review must be filed within sixty days from the issuance of the Secretary's order. Review shall conform to chapter 7 of title 5.

(2) An order of the Secretary, with respect to which review could have been obtained under paragraph (1), shall not be subject to judicial review in any criminal or other civil proceeding.

(d) Enforcement. Whenever a person has failed to comply with an order issued under subsection (b)(2) of this section, the Secretary shall file a civil action in the United States district court for the district in which the violation was found to occur to enforce such order. In actions brought under this subsection, the district courts shall have jurisdiction to grant all appropriate relief, including injunctive relief and compensatory and exemplary damages.

(e) Exclusion. Subsection (a) of this section shall not apply with respect to any employee who, acting without direction from the employee's employer (or any agent of the employer), deliberately causes a violation of any requirement of this chapter.

**Water Pollution Control Act,
Employee Protection Provision
33 U.S.C. § 1367**

(a) *Discrimination against persons filing, instituting, or testifying in proceedings under this chapter prohibited.* No person shall fire, or in any other way discriminate against, or cause to be fired or discriminated against, any employee or any authorized representative of employees by reason of the fact that such employee or representative has filed, instituted, or caused to be filed or instituted any proceeding under this chapter, or has testified or is about to testify in any proceeding resulting from the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this chapter.

(b) *Application for review; investigation; hearing; review.* Any employee or a representative of employees who believes that he has been fired or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of subsection (a) of this section may, within thirty days after such alleged violation occurs, apply to the Secretary of Labor for a review of such firing or alleged discrimination. A copy of the application shall be sent to such person who shall be the respondent. Upon receipt of such application, the Secretary of Labor shall cause such investigation to be made as he deems appropriate. Such investigation shall provide an opportunity for a public hearing at the request of any party to such review to enable the parties to present information relating to such alleged violation. The parties shall be given written notice of the time and place of the hearing at least five days prior to the hearing. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5. Upon receiving the report of such investigation, the Secretary of Labor shall make findings of fact. If he finds that such violation did occur, he shall issue a decision, incorporating an order therein and his findings, requiring the party committing such violation to take such affirmative action to abate the violation as the Secretary of Labor deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, the rehiring or reinstatement of the employee or representative of employees to his former position with compensation. If he finds that there was no such violation, he shall issue an order denying the application. Such order issued by the Secretary of Labor under this subparagraph shall be subject to judicial review in the same manner as orders and decisions of the Administrator are subject to judicial review under this chapter.

(c) *Costs and expenses.* Whenever an order is issued under this section to abate such violation, at the request of the applicant, a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including the attorney's fees), as determined by the Secretary of Labor, to have been reasonably incurred by the applicant for, or in connection with, the institution and prosecution of such proceedings, shall be assessed against the person committing such violation.

(d) *Deliberate violations by employee acting without direction from his employer or his agent.* This section shall have no application to any employee who, acting without direction from his employer (or his agent) deliberately violates any prohibition of effluent limitation or other limitation under section 1311 or 1312 of this title, standards of

performance under section 1316 of this title, effluent standard, prohibition or pretreatment standard under section 1317 of this title, or any other prohibition or limitation established under this chapter.

(e) *Investigations of employment reductions.* The Administrator shall conduct continuing evaluations of potential loss or shifts of employment which may result from the issuance of any effluent limitation or order under this chapter, including, where appropriate, investigating threatened plant closures or reductions in employment allegedly resulting from such limitation or order. Any employee who is discharged or laid-off, threatened with discharge or lay-off, or otherwise discriminated against by any person because of the alleged results of any effluent limitation or order issued under this chapter, or any representative of such employee, may request the Administrator to conduct a full investigation of the matter. The Administrator shall thereupon investigate the matter and, at the request of any party, shall hold public hearings on not less than five days notice, and shall at such hearings require the parties, including the employer involved, to present information relating to the actual or potential effect of such limitation or order on employment and on any alleged discharge, lay-off, or other discrimination and the detailed reasons or justification therefore. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5. Upon receiving the report of such investigation, the Administrator shall make findings of fact as to the effect of such effluent limitation or order on employment and on the alleged discharge, lay-off, or discrimination and shall make such recommendations as he deems appropriate. Such report, findings, and recommendations shall be available to the public. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require or authorize the Administrator to modify or withdraw any effluent limitation or order issued under this chapter.

Office of the Secretary of Labor
Part 24—Procedures for the
Handling of Discrimination
Complaints under Federal
Employee Protection Laws
29 CFR Part 24

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| 24.1 | Purpose and scope. |
| 24.2 | Obligations and prohibited acts. |
| 24.3 | Complaint. |
| 24.4 | Investigations. |
| 24.5 | Investigations under the Energy Reorganization Act. |
| 24.6 | Hearings. |
| 24.7 | Recommended decision and order. |
| 24.8 | Review by the Administrative Review Board. |
| 24.9 | Exception. |

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

AUTHORITY: 15 U.S.C. 2622; 33 U.S.C. 1367; 42 U.S.C. 300j–9(i), 5851, 6971, 7622, 9610.

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

§ 24.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) This part implements the several employee protection provisions for which the Secretary of Labor has been given responsibility pursuant to the following Federal statutes: Safe Drinking Water Act, 42 U.S.C. 300j–9(i); Water Pollution Control Act, 33 U.S.C. 1367; Toxic Substances Control Act, 15 U.S.C. 2622; Solid Waste Disposal Act, 42 U.S.C. 6971; Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. 7622; Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, 42 U.S.C. 5851; and Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, 42 U.S.C. 9610.

(b) Procedures are established by this part pursuant to the Federal statutory provisions listed in paragraph (a) of this section, for the expeditious handling of complaints by employees, or persons acting on their behalf, of discriminatory action by employers.

(c) Throughout this part, “Secretary” or “Secretary of Labor” shall mean the Secretary of Labor, U.S. Department of Labor, or his or her designee. “Assistant Secretary” shall mean the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health, U.S. Department of Labor, or his or her designee.

§ 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:

(1) Commenced or caused to be commenced, or is about to commence or cause to be commenced, a proceeding under one of the Federal statutes listed in § 24.1(a) or a proceeding for the administration or enforcement of any requirement imposed under such Federal statute;

(2) Testified or is about to testify in any such proceeding; or

(3) Assisted or participated, or is about to assist or participate, in any manner in such a proceeding or in any other action to carry out the purposes of such Federal statute.

(c) Under the Energy Reorganization Act, and by interpretation of the Secretary under any of the other statutes listed in § 24.1(a), any employer is deemed to have violated the particular federal law and these regulations if such employer intimidates, threatens, restrains, coerces, blacklists, discharges, or in any other manner discriminates against any employee because the employee has:

- (1) Notified the employer of an alleged violation of such Federal statute or the AEA of 1954;
 - (2) Refused to engage in any practice made unlawful by such Federal statute or the AEA of 1954, if the employee has identified the alleged illegality to the employer; or
 - (3) Testified before Congress or at any Federal or State proceeding regarding any provision (or proposed provision) of such Federal statute or the AEA of 1954.
- (d)(1)** Every employer subject to the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended, shall prominently post and keep posted in any place of employment to which the employee protection provisions of the Act apply a fully legible copy of the notice prepared by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, printed as appendix A to this part, or a notice approved by the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health that contains substantially the same provisions and explains the employee protection provisions of the Act and the regulations in this part. Copies of the notice prepared by DOL may be obtained from the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health, Washington, D.C. 20210, from local offices of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or from the Department of Labor's Website at <http://www.osha.gov>.
- (2) Where the notice required by paragraph (d)(1) of this section has not been posted, the requirement in § 24.3(b)(2) that a complaint be filed with the Assistant Secretary within 180 days of an alleged violation shall be inoperative unless the respondent establishes that the complainant had notice of the material provisions of the notice. If it is established that the notice was posted at the employee's place of employment after the alleged discriminatory action occurred or that the complainant later obtained actual notice, the 180 days shall ordinarily run from that date.

§ 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, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. 20210.
(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1215-0183.)

§ 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;

(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 therefore, 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 own 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 steno graphically 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 or 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 pre-hearing brief or other written statement of fact or law. A copy of any such pre-hearing 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.

(b) In cases under the Energy Reorganization Act, a determination that a violation has occurred may only be made if the complainant has demonstrated that protected behavior or conduct was a contributing factor in the unfavorable personnel action alleged in the complaint.

Relief may not be ordered if the respondent demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that it would have taken the same unfavorable personnel action in the absence of such behavior. The proceeding before the administrative law judge shall be a proceeding on the merits of the complaint. Neither the Assistant Secretary's determination to dismiss a complaint pursuant to § 24.5 without completing an investigation nor the Assistant Secretary's determination not to dismiss a complaint is subject to review by the administrative law judge, and a complaint may not be remanded for the completion of an investigation on the basis that such a determination to dismiss was made in error.

(c)(1) Upon the conclusion of the hearing and the issuance of a recommended decision that the complaint has merit, and that a violation of the Act has occurred, the administrative law judge shall issue a recommended order that the respondent take appropriate affirmative action to abate the violation, including reinstatement of the complainant to his or her former 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) In cases brought under the Energy Reorganization Act, when an administrative law judge issues a recommended order that the complaint has merit and containing the relief prescribed in paragraph (c)(1) of this section, the administrative law judge shall also issue a preliminary order providing all of the relief specified in paragraph (c)(1) of this section with the exception of compensatory damages. This preliminary order shall constitute the preliminary order of the Secretary and shall be effective immediately, whether or not a petition for review is filed with the Administrative Review Board. Any award of compensatory damages shall not be effective until the final decision is issued by the Administrative Review Board.

(d) The recommended decision of the administrative law judge shall become the final order of the Secretary unless, pursuant to § 24.8, a petition for review is timely filed with the Administrative Review Board.

§ 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 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).

Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Department of the Interior –Protection of Employees Part 865 30 C.F.R. 865

865.1 Scope.

865.11 Protected activity.

865.12 Procedures for filing an application for review of discrimination.

865.13 Investigation and conference procedures.

865.14 Request for hearing.

865.15 Formal adjudicatory proceedings.

AUTHORITY: Secs. 201, 501, 502 and 703, Pub. L. 95–87, 91 Stat. 445 (30 U.S.C. 1201.)

SOURCE: 42 FR 62712, Dec. 13, 1977, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 44 FR 15312, Mar. 13, 1979.

§ 865.1 Scope.

This part establishes procedures regarding—

(a) The reporting of acts of discriminatory discharge or other acts of discrimination under the Act caused by any person. Forms of discrimination include, but are not limited to: Firing, suspension, transfer or demotion, denial or reduction of wages and benefits, coercion by

promises of benefits or threats of reprisal, and interference with the exercise of any rights afforded under the Act:

- (b) The investigation of applications for review and holding of informal conferences about the alleged discrimination; and
- (c) The request for formal hearings with the Office of Hearings and Appeals.

§ 865.11 Protected activity.

(a) No person shall discharge or in any other way discriminate against or cause to be fired or discriminated against any employee or any authorized representative of employees because that employee or representative has—

(1) Filed, instituted or caused to be filed or instituted any proceedings under the Act by—

(i) Reporting alleged violations or dangers to the Secretary, the State Regulatory Authority, or the employer or his representative.

(ii) Requesting an inspection or investigation; or

(iii) Taking any other action which may result in a proceeding under the Act.

(2) Made statements, testified, or is about to do so—

(i) In any informal or formal adjudicatory proceeding;

(ii) In any informal conference proceeding;

(iii) In any rulemaking proceeding;

(iv) In any investigation, inspection or other proceeding under the Act;

(v) In any judicial proceeding under the Act.

(3) Has exercised on his own behalf or on behalf of others any right granted by the Act.

(b) Each employer conducting operations which are regulated under this Act, shall within 30 days from the effective day of these regulations, provide a copy of this part to all current employees and to all new employees at the time of their hiring.

§ 865.12 Procedures for filing an application for review of discrimination.

(a) Who may file. Any employee, or any authorized representative of employees, who believes that he has been discriminated against by any person in violation of § 865.11(a) of this part may file an application for review. For the purpose of these regulations, an application for review means the presentation of a written report of discrimination stating the reasons why the person believes he has been discriminated against and the facts surrounding the alleged discrimination.

(b) Where to file. The employee or representative may file the application for review at any location of the Office and each office shall maintain a log of all filing.

(c) Time for filing. The employee or representative shall file an application for review within 30 days after the alleged discrimination occurs. An application is considered filed—

(1) On the date delivered if delivered a person to the Office, or

(2) On the date mailed to the Office.

(d) Running of the time of filing. The time for filing begins when the employee knows or has reason to know of the alleged discriminatory

activity.

§ 865.13 Investigation and conference procedures.

(a) Within 7 days after receipt of any application for review, the Office shall mail a copy of the application for review to the person alleged to have caused the discrimination, shall file the application for review with the Office of Hearings and Appeals and shall notify the employee and the alleged discriminating person that the Office will investigate the complaint. The alleged discriminating person may file a response to the application for review within 10 days after he receives the copy of the application for review. The response shall specifically admit, deny or explain each of the facts alleged in the application unless the alleged discriminating person is without knowledge in which case he shall so state.

(b) The Office shall initiate an investigation of the alleged discrimination with 30 days after receipt of the application for review. The Office shall complete the investigation with 60 days of the date of the receipt of the application for review. If circumstances surrounding the investigation prevent completion within the 60-day period, the Office shall notify the person who filed the application for review and the alleged discriminating person of the delay, the reason for the delay, and the expected completion date for the investigation.

(c) Within 7 days after completion of the investigation the Office shall invite the parties to an informal conference to discuss the findings and preliminary conclusions of the investigation. The purpose of the informal conference is to attempt to conciliate the matter. If a complaint is resolved at an informal conference, the terms of the agreement will be recorded in a written document that will be signed by the alleged discriminating person, the employee and the representative of the Office. If the Office concludes on the basis of a subsequent investigation that any party to the agreement has failed in any material respect to comply with the terms of any agreement reached during an informal conference, the Office shall take appropriate action to obtain compliance with the agreement.

(d) Following the investigation and any informal conference held, the Office shall complete a report of investigation which shall include a summary of the results of the conference. Copies of this report shall be available to the parties in the case.

§ 865.14 Request for hearing.

(a) If the Office determines that a violation of this part has probably occurred and was not resolved at an informal conference, the Director shall request a hearing on the employee's behalf before the Office of Hearings and Appeals within 10 days of the scheduled informal hearing. the parties shall be notified of the determination. If the Director declines to request a hearing the employee shall be notified within 10 days of the scheduled informal conference and informed of his right to request a hearing on his own behalf.

(b) The employee may request a hearing with the Office of Hearings and Appeals after 60 days have elapsed from the filing of his application.

§ 865.15 Formal adjudicatory proceedings.

- (a) Formal adjudication of a complaint filed under this part shall be conducted in the Office of Hearings and Appeals under 43 CFR part 4.
- (b) A hearing shall be held as promptly as possible consistent with the opportunity for discovery provided for under 43 CFR part 4.
- (c) Upon a finding of violation of § 865.11 of this part, the Secretary shall order the appropriate affirmative relief including, but not limited to, the rehiring or reinstatement of the employee or representative of employees to his former position with compensation. At the request of the employee a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses including attorneys' fees which have been reasonably incurred by the employee for, or in connection with, the institution and prosecution of the proceedings shall be assessed against the person committing the violation.
- (d) On or after 10 days after filing an application for review under this part the Secretary or the employee may seek temporary relief in the Office of Hearings and Appeals under 43 CFR part 4.

Pipeline Safety**DOL Rules and Procedures****Final Rule****69 Federal Register 67 (April 8, 2005)****(Pg. 17889-17898)****DEPARTMENT OF LABOR****Procedures for the Handling of Discrimination Complaints under Section 6 of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002****Occupational Safety and Health Administration****29 CFR Part 1981****PART 1981--PROCEDURES FOR THE HANDLING OF DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS UNDER SECTION 6 OF THE PIPELINE SAFETY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2002****Subpart A--Complaints, Investigations, Findings, and Preliminary Orders**

1981.100 Purpose and scope.

1981.101 Definitions.

1981.102 Obligations and prohibited acts.

1981.103 Filing of discrimination complaint.

1981.104 Investigation.

1981.105 Issuance of findings and preliminary orders.

Subpart B--Litigation

1981.106 Objections to the findings and the preliminary order and request for a hearing.

1981.107 Hearings.

1981.108 Role of Federal agencies.

1981.109 Decision and orders of the administrative law judge.

1981.110 Decision and orders of the Administrative Review Board.

Subpart C--Miscellaneous Provisions

1981.111 Withdrawal of complaints, objections, and findings; settlement.
1981.112 Judicial review.
1981.113 Judicial enforcement.
1981.114 Special circumstances; waiver of rules. Authority: 49 U.S.C. 60129; Secretary of Labor's Order 5-2002, 67 FR 65008 (October 22, 2002). Subpart A--Complaints, Investigations, Findings and Preliminary Orders

§ 1981.100 Purpose and scope.

(a) This part implements procedures under section 6 of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002, 49 U.S.C. 60129 ("the Pipeline Safety Act"), which provides for employee protection from discrimination by a person owning or operating a pipeline facility or a contractor or subcontractor of such person because the employee has engaged in protected activity pertaining to a violation or alleged violation of any order, regulation, or standard under chapter 601, subtitle VIII of title 49 of the United States Code or any other provision of Federal law relating to pipeline safety.

(b) This part establishes procedures pursuant to the Pipeline Safety Act for the expeditious handling of discrimination complaints made by employees, or by persons acting on their behalf. These rules, together with those rules codified at 29 CFR part 18, set forth the procedures for submission of complaints under the Pipeline Safety Act, investigations, issuance of findings and preliminary orders, objections to findings and orders, litigation before administrative law judges, post-hearing administrative review, and withdrawals and settlements.

§ 1981.101 Definitions.

Act or Pipeline Safety Act means section 6 of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002, Public Law 107-355, December 17, 2002, 49 U.S.C. 60129. Assistant Secretary means the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health or the person or persons to whom he or she delegates authority under the Act. Complainant means the employee who filed a complaint under the Act or on whose behalf a complaint was filed. Employee means an individual presently or formerly working for a person owning or operating a pipeline facility or a contractor or subcontractor of such a person, an individual applying to work for a person owning or operating a pipeline facility or a contractor or subcontractor of such a person, or an individual whose employment could be affected by a person owning or operating a pipeline facility or a contractor or subcontractor of such a person. Employer means a person owning or operating a pipeline facility or a contractor or subcontractor of such a person. Gas pipeline facility includes a pipeline, a right of way, a facility, a building, or equipment used in transporting gas or treating gas during its transportation. Hazardous liquid pipeline facility includes a pipeline, a right of way, a facility, a building, or equipment used or intended to be used in transporting hazardous liquid. Named person means the person alleged to have violated the Act. OSHA means the Occupational Safety and Health Administration of the United States Department of Labor. Person means a corporation, company, association, firm, partnership, joint stock company, an individual, a State, a

municipality, and a trustee, receiver, assignee, or personal representative of a person. Pipeline facility means a gas pipeline facility and a hazardous liquid pipeline facility. Secretary means the Secretary of Labor or persons to whom authority under the Act has been delegated.

§ 1981.102 Obligations and prohibited acts.

(a) No employer 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 paragraphs (b)(1) through (5) of this section.

(b) It is a violation of the Act for any employer to intimidate, threaten, restrain, coerce, blacklist, discharge or in any other manner discriminate against any employee because the employee has:

(1) Provided, caused to be provided, or is about to provide or cause to be provided to the employer or the Federal Government, information relating to any violation or alleged violation of any order, regulation, or standard under chapter 601, subtitle VIII of title 49 of the United States Code or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety;

(2) Refused to engage in any practice made unlawful by chapter 601, in subtitle VIII of title 49 of the United States Code or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety, if the employee has identified the alleged illegality to the employer;

(3) Provided, caused to be provided, or is about to provide or cause to be provided, testimony before Congress or at any Federal or State proceeding regarding any provision (or proposed provision) of chapter 601, subtitle VIII of title 49 of the United States Code or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety, or testimony in any proceeding under chapter 601, subtitle VIII of title 49 of the United States Code or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety, or a proceeding for the administration or enforcement of any requirement imposed under chapter 601, subtitle VIII of title 49 of the United States Code or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety;

(4) Commenced, caused to be commenced, or is about to commence or cause to be commenced a proceeding under chapter 601, subtitle VIII of title 49 of the United States Code or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety, or a proceeding for the administration or enforcement of any requirement imposed under chapter 601, subtitle VIII of title 49 of the United States Code or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety; or

(5) Assisted or participated or is about to assist or participate in any manner in such a proceeding or in any other action to carry out the purposes of chapter 601, subtitle VIII of title 49 of the United States Code or any other Federal law relating to pipeline safety.

(c) This part shall have no application to any employee of an employer who, acting without direction from the employer (or such employer's agent), deliberately causes a violation of any requirement relating to pipeline safety under chapter 601, subtitle VIII of title 49 of the United States Code or any other Federal law.

§ 1981.103 Filing of discrimination complaint.

(a) Who may file. An employee who believes that he or she has been discriminated against by an employer in violation of the Act may file, or have filed by any person on the employee's behalf, a complaint alleging such discrimination.

(b) Nature of filing. 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 violations.

(c) Place of filing. The complaint should be filed with the OSHA Area Director responsible for enforcement activities in the geographical area where the employee resides or was employed, but may be filed with any OSHA officer or employee. Addresses and telephone numbers for these officials are set forth in local directories and at the following Internet address: <http://www.osha.gov>.

(d) Time for filing. Within 180 days after an alleged violation of the Act occurs (i.e., when the discriminatory decision has been both made and communicated to the complainant), an employee who believes that he or she has been discriminated against in violation of the Act may file, or have filed by any person on the employee's behalf, a complaint alleging such discrimination. The date of the postmark, facsimile transmittal, or e-mail communication will be considered to be the date of filing; if the complaint is filed in person, by hand-delivery or other means, the complaint is filed upon receipt.

(e) Relationship to section 11(c) complaints. A complaint filed under the Pipeline Safety Act that alleges facts which would constitute a violation of section 11(c) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, 29 U.S.C. 660(c), will be deemed to be a complaint filed under both the Pipeline Safety Act and section 11(c). Similarly, a complaint filed under section 11(c) that alleges facts that would constitute a violation of the Pipeline Safety Act will be deemed to be a complaint filed under both the Pipeline Safety Act and section 11(c). Normal procedures and timeliness requirements for investigations under the respective laws and regulations will be followed.

§ 1981.104 Investigation.

(a) Upon receipt of a complaint in the investigating office, the Assistant Secretary will notify the named person of the filing of the complaint, of the allegations contained in the complaint, and of the substance of the evidence supporting the complaint (redacted to protect the identity of any confidential informants). The Assistant Secretary will also notify the named person of his or her rights under paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section and paragraph (e) of Sec. 1981.110. A copy of the notice to the named person will also be provided to the Department of Transportation.

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

(1) The complaint, supplemented as appropriate by interviews of the complainant, must allege the existence of facts and evidence to make a prima facie showing as follows:

- (i) The employee engaged in a protected activity or conduct;
 - (ii) The named person knew or suspected, actually or constructively, that the employee engaged in the protected activity;
 - (iii) The employee suffered an unfavorable personnel action; and
 - (iv) The circumstances were sufficient to raise the inference that the protected activity was a contributing factor in the unfavorable action.
- (2) 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 showing, i.e., to give rise to an inference that the named person knew or suspected that the employee engaged in protected activity and that the protected activity was a contributing factor in the unfavorable personnel action. Normally the burden is satisfied, for example, if the complaint shows 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 the required showing has not been made, the complainant will be so advised and the investigation will not commence.
- (c) Notwithstanding a finding that a complainant has made a prima facie showing, as required by this section, an investigation of the complaint shall not be conducted if the named person, pursuant to the procedures provided in this paragraph, 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. Within 20 days of receipt of the notice of the filing of the complaint, the named person may submit to the Assistant Secretary a written statement and any affidavits or documents substantiating his or her position. Within the same 20 days, the named person may request a meeting with the Assistant Secretary to present his or her position.
- (d) If the named person fails to demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that it would have taken the same unfavorable personnel action in the absence of the behavior protected by the Act, the Assistant Secretary will conduct an investigation. Investigations will be conducted in a manner that protects the confidentiality of any person who provides information on a confidential basis, other than the complainant, in accordance with part 70 of title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations.
- (e) Prior to the issuance of findings and a preliminary order as provided for in Sec. 1981.105, if the Assistant Secretary has reasonable cause, on the basis of information gathered under the procedures of this part, to believe that the named person has violated the Act and that preliminary reinstatement is warranted, the Assistant Secretary will again contact the named person to give notice of the substance of the relevant evidence supporting the complainant's allegations as developed during the course of the investigation. This evidence includes any witness statements, which will be redacted to protect the identity of confidential informants where statements were given in confidence; if the statements cannot be redacted without revealing the identity of confidential informants, summaries of their contents will be provided. The named person will be given the opportunity to submit a written response, to meet with the investigators to present statements from witnesses in support of his or her

position, and to present legal and factual arguments. The named person will present this evidence within 10 business days of the Assistant Secretary's notification pursuant to this paragraph, or as soon afterwards as the Assistant Secretary and the named person can agree, if the interests of justice so require.

§ 1981.105 Issuance of findings and preliminary orders.

(a) After considering all the relevant information collected during the investigation, the Assistant Secretary shall issue, within 60 days of filing of the complaint, written findings as to whether or not there is reasonable cause to believe that the named person has discriminated against the complainant in violation of the Act.

(1) If the Assistant Secretary concludes that there is reasonable cause to believe that a violation has occurred, he or she shall accompany the findings with a preliminary order providing relief to the complainant. The preliminary order shall include, where appropriate, a requirement that the named person abate the violation; reinstatement of the complainant to his or her former position, together with the compensation (including back pay), terms, conditions and privileges of the complainant's employment; and payment of compensatory damages. Where the named person establishes that the complainant is a security risk (whether or not the information is obtained after the complainant's discharge), a preliminary order of reinstatement would not be appropriate. At the complainant's request the order shall also assess against the named person the complainant's costs and expenses (including attorneys and expert witness fees) reasonably incurred in connection with the filing of the complaint.

(2) If the Assistant Secretary concludes that a violation has not occurred, the Assistant Secretary will notify the parties of that finding.

(b) The findings and the preliminary order will be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to all parties of record. The letter accompanying the findings and order will inform the parties of their right to file objections and to request a hearing, and of the right of the named person to request attorney's fees from the administrative law judge, regardless of whether the named person has filed objections, if the named person alleges that the complaint was frivolous or brought in bad faith. The letter also will give the address of the Chief Administrative Law Judge. At the same time, the Assistant Secretary will file with the Chief Administrative Law Judge, U.S. Department of Labor, a copy of the original complaint and a copy of the findings and order.

(c) The findings and the preliminary order will be effective 60 days after receipt by the named person pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section, unless an objection and a request for a hearing has been filed as provided at Sec. 1981.106. However, the portion of any preliminary order requiring reinstatement will be effective immediately upon receipt of the findings and preliminary order.

Subpart B--Litigation

§ 1981.106 Objections to the findings and the preliminary order And request for a hearing.

(a) Any party who desires review, including judicial review, of the findings and preliminary order, or a named person alleging that the complaint was frivolous or brought in bad faith who seeks an award of attorney's fees, must file any objections and/or a request for a hearing on the record within 60 days of receipt of the findings and preliminary order pursuant to paragraph (b) of Sec. 1981.105. The objection or request for attorney's fees and request for a hearing must be in writing and state whether the objection is to the findings, the preliminary order, and/or whether there should be an award of attorney's fees. The date of the postmark, facsimile transmittal, or e-mail communication will be considered to be the date of filing; if the objection is filed in person, by hand-delivery or other means, the objection is filed upon receipt. Objections must be filed with the Chief Administrative Law Judge, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20001 and copies of the objections must be mailed at the same time to the other parties of record, the OSHA official who issued the findings and order, and the Associate Solicitor, Division of Fair Labor Standards, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210.(b)(1) If a timely objection is filed, all provisions of the preliminary order will be stayed, except for the portion requiring preliminary reinstatement, which shall not be automatically stayed. The portion of the preliminary order requiring reinstatement will be effective immediately upon the named person's receipt of the findings and preliminary order, regardless of any objections to the order. The named person may file a motion with the Office of Administrative Law Judges for stay of the Assistant Secretary's preliminary order.

(2) If no timely objection is filed with respect to either the findings or the preliminary order, the findings or preliminary order, as the case may be, shall become the final decision of the Secretary, not subject to judicial review.

§ 1981.107 Hearings.

(a) Except as provided in this part, proceedings will be conducted in accordance with the rules of practice and procedure for administrative hearings before the Office of Administrative Law Judges codified at subpart A, part 18 of title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) Upon receipt of an objection and request for hearing, the Chief Administrative Law Judge will promptly assign the case to a judge who will notify the parties, by certified mail, of the day, time, and place of hearing. The hearing is to commence expeditiously, except upon a showing of good cause or unless otherwise agreed to by the parties. Hearings will be conducted de novo, on the record. Administrative law judges have broad discretion to limit discovery in order to expedite the hearing.

(c) If both the complainant and the named person object to the findings and/or order, the objections will be consolidated and a single hearing will be conducted.

(d) Formal rules of evidence will not apply, but rules or principles designed to assure production of the most probative evidence will be applied. The administrative law judge may exclude evidence that is immaterial, irrelevant, or unduly repetitious.

§ 1981.108 Role of Federal agencies.

(a)(1) The complainant and the named person will be parties in every proceeding. At the Assistant Secretary's discretion, the Assistant Secretary may participate as a party or as amicus curiae at any time at any stage of the proceedings. This right to participate includes, but is not limited to, the right to petition for review of a decision of an administrative law judge, including a decision approving or rejecting a settlement agreement between the complainant and the named person.

(2) Copies of pleadings in all cases, whether or not the Assistant Secretary is participating in the proceeding, must 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, DC 20210.

(b) The Secretary of Transportation may participate as amicus curiae at any time in the proceedings, at the Secretary of Transportation's discretion. At the request of the Secretary of Transportation, copies of all pleadings in a case must be sent to the Secretary of Transportation, whether or not the Secretary of Transportation is participating in the proceeding.

§ 1981.109 Decision and orders of the administrative law judge.

(a) The decision of the administrative law judge will contain appropriate findings, conclusions, and an order pertaining to the remedies provided in paragraph (b) of this section, as appropriate. A determination that a violation has occurred may only be made if the complainant has demonstrated that protected behavior or conduct was a contributing factor in the unfavorable personnel action alleged in the complaint. Relief may not be ordered if the named person demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that it would have taken the same unfavorable personnel action in the absence of any protected behavior. Neither the Assistant Secretary's determination to dismiss a complaint without completing an investigation pursuant to Sec. 1981.104(b) nor the Assistant Secretary's determination to proceed with an investigation is subject to review by the administrative law judge, and a complaint may not be remanded for the completion of an investigation or for additional findings on the basis that a determination to dismiss was made in error. Rather, if there otherwise is jurisdiction, the administrative law judge will hear the case on the merits.

(b) If the administrative law judge concludes that the party charged has violated the law, the order shall direct the party charged to take appropriate affirmative action to abate the violation, including, where appropriate, reinstatement of the complainant to that person's former position, together with the compensation (including back pay), terms, conditions, and privileges of that employment, and compensatory damages. At the request of the complainant, the administrative law judge shall assess against the named person all costs and expenses (including

attorney and expert witness fees) reasonably incurred. If, upon the request of the named person, the administrative law judge determines that a complaint was frivolous or was brought in bad faith, the judge may award to the named person a reasonable attorney's fee, not exceeding \$1,000.

(c) The decision will be served upon all parties to the proceeding. Any administrative law judge's decision requiring reinstatement or lifting an order of reinstatement by the Assistant Secretary will be effective immediately upon receipt of the decision by the named person, and will not be stayed by the filing of a timely petition for review with the Administrative Review Board. All other portions of the judge's order will be effective 10 business days after the date of the decision unless a timely petition for review has been filed with the Administrative Review Board.

§ 1981.110 Decision and orders of the Administrative Review Board.

(a) Any party desiring to seek review, including judicial review, of a decision of the administrative law judge, or a named person alleging that the complaint was frivolous or brought in bad faith who seeks an award of attorney's fees, must file a written 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. The decision of the administrative law judge will become the final order of the Secretary unless, pursuant to this section, a petition for review is timely filed with the Board. The petition for review must specifically identify the findings, conclusions or orders to which exception is taken. Any exception not specifically urged ordinarily will be deemed to have been waived by the parties. To be effective, a petition must be filed within 10 business days of the date of the decision of the administrative law judge. The date of the postmark, facsimile transmittal, or e-mail communication will be considered to be the date of filing; if the petition is filed in person, by hand-delivery or other means, the petition is considered filed upon receipt. The petition must be served on all parties and on the Chief Administrative Law Judge at the time it is filed with the Board. Copies of the petition for review and all briefs must 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, DC 20210.

(b) If a timely petition for review is filed pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section, the decision of the administrative law judge will become the final order of the Secretary unless the Board, within 30 days of the filing of the petition, issues an order notifying the parties that the case has been accepted for review. If a case is accepted for review, the decision of the administrative law judge will be inoperative unless and until the Board issues an order adopting the decision, except that a preliminary order of reinstatement will be effective while review is conducted by the Board, unless the Board grants a motion to stay the order. The Board will specify the terms under which any briefs are to be filed. The Board will review the factual determinations of the administrative law judge under the substantial evidence standard.

(c) The final decision of the Board shall be issued within 90 days of the conclusion of the hearing, which will be deemed to be the conclusion of all proceedings before the administrative law judge--i.e., 10 business days after the date of the decision of the administrative law judge unless a motion for reconsideration has been filed with the administrative law judge in the interim. The decision will be served upon all parties and the Chief Administrative Law Judge by mail to the last known address. The final decision will also 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, DC 20210, even if the Assistant Secretary is not a party.

(d) If the Board concludes that the party charged has violated the law, the final order will order the party charged to take appropriate affirmative action to abate the violation, including, where appropriate, reinstatement of the complainant to that person's former position, together with the compensation (including back pay), terms, conditions, and privileges of that employment, and compensatory damages. At the request of the complainant, the Board shall assess against the named person all costs and expenses (including attorney's and expert witness fees) reasonably incurred.

(e) If the Board determines that the named person has not violated the law, an order will be issued denying the complaint. If, upon the request of the named person, the Board determines that a complaint was frivolous or was brought in bad faith, the Board may award to the named person a reasonable attorney's fee, not exceeding \$1,000.

Subpart C--Miscellaneous Provisions

§ 1981.111 Withdrawal of complaints, objections, and findings; settlement.

(a) At any time prior to the filing of objections to the findings or preliminary order, a complainant may withdraw his or her complaint under the Act by filing a written withdrawal with the Assistant Secretary. The Assistant Secretary will then determine whether to approve the withdrawal. The Assistant Secretary will notify the named person of the approval of any withdrawal. If the complaint is withdrawn because of settlement, the settlement will be approved in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section.

(b) The Assistant Secretary may withdraw his or her findings or a preliminary order at any time before the expiration of the 60-day objection period described in Sec. 1981.106, provided that no objection has yet been filed, and substitute new findings or preliminary order. The date of the receipt of the substituted findings or order will begin a new 60-day objection period.

(c) At any time before the findings or order become final, a party may withdraw his or her objections to the findings or order by filing a written withdrawal with the administrative law judge or, if the case is on review, with the Board. The judge or the Board, as the case may be, will determine whether to approve the withdrawal. If the objections are withdrawn because of settlement, the settlement will be approved in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section.

(d)(1) Investigative settlements. At any time after the filing of a complaint, and before the findings and/or order are objected to or become a final order by operation of law, the case may be settled if the Assistant Secretary, the complainant and the named person agree to a settlement.

(2) Adjudicatory settlements. At any time after the filing of objections to the Assistant Secretary's findings and/or order, the case may be settled if the participating parties agree to a settlement and the settlement is approved by the administrative law judge if the case is before the judge, or by the Board if a timely petition for review has been filed with the Board. A copy of the settlement will be filed with the administrative law judge or the Board, as the case may be.

(e) Any settlement approved by the Assistant Secretary, the administrative law judge, or the Board will constitute the final order of the Secretary and may be enforced pursuant to Sec. 1981.113.

§ 1981.112 Judicial review.

(a) Within 60 days after the issuance of a final order by the Board (Secretary) under Sec. 1981.110, any person adversely affected or aggrieved by the order may file a petition for review of the order in the United States Court of Appeals for the circuit in which the violation allegedly occurred or the circuit in which the complainant resided on the date of the violation. A final order of the Board is not subject to judicial review in any criminal or other civil proceeding.

(b) If a timely petition for review is filed, the record of a case, including the record of proceedings before the administrative law judge, will be transmitted by the Board to the appropriate court pursuant to the rules of the court.

§ 1981.113 Judicial enforcement.

Whenever any person has failed to comply with a preliminary order of reinstatement or a final order or the terms of a settlement agreement, the Secretary or a person on whose behalf the order was issued may file a civil action seeking enforcement of the order in the United States district court for the district in which the violation was found to have occurred.

§ 1981.114 Special circumstances; waiver of rules.

In special circumstances not contemplated by the provisions of this part, or for good cause shown, the administrative law judge or the Board on review may, upon application, after three days notice to all parties, waive any rule or issue any orders that justice or the administration of the Act requires.

SECTION 4 NUCLEAR WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

**Atomic Energy Act/
Energy Reorganization Act,
Employee Protection Provision
50 U.S.C. § 2702**

(a) Program required. The Secretary of Energy shall establish a program to ensure that covered individuals may not be discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against as a reprisal for making protected disclosures.

(b) Covered individuals. For purposes of this section, a covered individual is an individual who is an employee of the Department of Energy, or of a contractor of the Department, who is engaged in the defense activities of the Department.

(c) Protected disclosures. For purposes of this section, a protected disclosure is a disclosure—

(1) made by a covered individual who takes appropriate steps to protect the security of the information in accordance with guidance provided under this section;

(2) made to a person or entity specified in subsection (d); and

(3) of classified or other information that the covered individual reasonably believes to provide direct and specific evidence of any of the following:

(A) A violation of law or Federal regulation.

(B) Gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, or abuse of authority.

(C) A false statement to Congress on an issue of material fact.

(d) Persons and entities to which disclosures may be made. A person or entity specified in this subsection is any of the following:

(1) A member of a committee of Congress having primary responsibility for oversight of the department, agency, or element of the Government to which the disclosed information relates.

(2) An employee of Congress who is a staff member of such a committee and has an appropriate security clearance for access to information of the type disclosed.

(3) The Inspector General of the Department of Energy.

(4) The Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(5) Any other element of the Government designated by the Secretary as authorized to receive information of the type disclosed.

(e) Official capacity of persons to whom information is disclosed. A member of, or an employee of Congress who is a staff member of, a committee of Congress specified in subsection (d) who receives a

protected disclosure under this section does so in that member or employee's official capacity as such a member or employee.

(f) Assistance and guidance. The Secretary, acting through the Inspector General of the Department of Energy, shall provide assistance and guidance to each covered individual who seeks to make a protected disclosure under this section. Such assistance and guidance shall include the following:

- (1)** Identifying the persons or entities under subsection (d) to which that disclosure may be made.
- (2)** Advising that individual regarding the steps to be taken to protect the security of the information to be disclosed.
- (3)** Taking appropriate actions to protect the identity of that individual throughout that disclosure.
- (4)** Taking appropriate actions to coordinate that disclosure with any other Federal agency or agencies that originated the information.

(g) Regulations. The Secretary shall prescribe regulations to ensure the security of any information disclosed under this section.

(h) Notification to covered individuals. The Secretary shall notify each covered individual of the following:

- (1)** The rights of that individual under this section.
- (2)** The assistance and guidance provided under this section.
- (3)** That the individual has a responsibility to obtain that assistance and guidance before seeking to make a protected disclosure.

(i) Complaint by covered individuals. If a covered individual believes that that individual has been discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against as a reprisal for making a protected disclosure under this section, the individual may submit a complaint relating to such matter to the Director of the Office of Hearings and Appeals of the Department of Energy.

(j) Investigation by office of hearings and appeals.

(1) For each complaint submitted under subsection (i), the Director of the Office of Hearings and Appeals shall--

(A) determine whether or not the complaint is frivolous; and
(B) if the Director determines the complaint is not frivolous, conduct an investigation of the complaint.

(2) The Director shall submit a report on each investigation undertaken under paragraph (1)(B) to--

- (A)** the individual who submitted the complaint on which the investigation is based;
- (B)** the contractor concerned, if any; and
- (C)** the Secretary of Energy.

(k) Remedial action.

(1) Whenever the Secretary determines that a covered individual has been discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against as a

reprisal for making a protected disclosure under this section, the Secretary shall—

(A) in the case of a Department employee, take appropriate actions to abate the action; or

(B) in the case of a contractor employee, order the contractor concerned to take appropriate actions to abate the action.

(2) (A) If a contractor fails to comply with an order issued under paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary may file an action for enforcement of the order in the appropriate United States district court.

(B) In any action brought under subparagraph (A), the court may grant appropriate relief, including injunctive relief and compensatory and exemplary damages.

(l) Relationship to other laws. The protections provided by this section are independent of, and not subject to any limitations that may be provided in, the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 (Public Law 101-512 [101-12]) or any other law that may provide protection for disclosures of information by employees of the Department of Energy or of a contractor of the Department.

(m) Annual report.

(1) Not later than 30 days after the commencement of each fiscal year, the Director shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report on the investigations undertaken under subsection (j)(1)(B) during the preceding fiscal year, including a summary of the results of each such investigation.

(2) A report under paragraph (1) may not identify or otherwise provide any information about an individual submitting a complaint under this section without the consent of the individual.

(n) Implementation report. Not later than December 5, 1999, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report describing the implementation of the program required by this section.

(See Section 15)

Department of Energy
Defense Activities Whistleblower
Protection Program
42 U.S.C. § 7239

(a) Program required

The Secretary of Energy shall establish a program to ensure that covered individuals may not be discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against as a reprisal for making protected disclosures.

(b) Covered individuals

For purposes of this section, a covered individual is an individual who is an employee of the Department of Energy, or of a contractor of the Department, who is engaged in the defense activities of the Department.

(c) Protected disclosures

For purposes of this section, a protected disclosure is a disclosure--
(1) made by a covered individual who takes appropriate steps to protect the security of the information in accordance with guidance provided under this section;

(2) made to a person or entity specified in subsection (d); and
(3) of classified or other information that the covered individual reasonably believes to provide direct and specific evidence of any of the following:

(A) A violation of law or Federal regulation.

(B) Gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, or abuse of authority.

(C) A false statement to Congress on an issue of material fact.

(d) Persons and entities to which disclosures may be made
 A person or entity specified in this subsection is any of the following:

(1) A member of a committee of Congress having primary responsibility for oversight of the department, agency, or element of the Government to which the disclosed information relates.

(2) An employee of Congress who is a staff member of such a committee and has an appropriate security clearance for access to information of the type disclosed.

(3) The Inspector General of the Department of Energy.

(4) The Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(5) Any other element of the Government designated by the Secretary as authorized to receive information of the type disclosed.

(e) Official capacity of persons to whom information is disclosed
 A member of, or an employee of Congress who is a staff member of, a committee of Congress specified in subsection (d) who receives a protected disclosure under this section does so in that member or employee's official capacity as such a member or employee.

(f) Assistance and guidance

The Secretary, acting through the Inspector General of the Department of Energy, shall provide assistance and guidance to each covered individual who seeks to make a protected disclosure under this section. Such assistance and guidance shall include the following:

(1) Identifying the persons or entities under subsection (d) to which that disclosure may be made.

(2) Advising that individual regarding the steps to be taken to protect the security of the information to be disclosed.

(3) Taking appropriate actions to protect the identity of that individual throughout that disclosure.

(4) Taking appropriate actions to coordinate that disclosure with any other Federal agency or agencies that originated the information.

(g) Regulations

The Secretary shall prescribe regulations to ensure the security of any information disclosed under this section.

(h) Notification to covered individuals

The Secretary shall notify each covered individual of the following:

(1) The rights of that individual under this section.

(2) The assistance and guidance provided under this section.

(3) That the individual has a responsibility to obtain that assistance and guidance before seeking to make a protected disclosure.

(i) Complaint by covered individuals

If a covered individual believes that that individual has been discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against as a reprisal for making a protected disclosure under this section, the individual may submit a complaint relating to such matter to the Director of the Office of Hearings and Appeals of the Department of Energy.

(j) Investigation by Office of Hearings and Appeals

(1) For each complaint submitted under subsection (i), the Director of the Office of Hearings and Appeals shall--

(A) determine whether or not the complaint is frivolous; and
(B) if the Director determines the complaint is not frivolous, conduct an investigation of the complaint.

(2) The Director shall submit a report on each investigation undertaken under paragraph (1)(B) to--

(A) the individual who submitted the complaint on which the investigation is based;

(B) the contractor concerned, if any; and

(C) the Secretary of Energy.

(k) Remedial action

(1) Whenever the Secretary determines that a covered individual has been discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against as a reprisal for making a protected disclosure under this section, the Secretary shall--

(A) in the case of a Department employee, take appropriate actions to abate the action; or

(B) in the case of a contractor employee, order the contractor concerned to take appropriate actions to abate the action.

(2)(A) If a contractor fails to comply with an order issued under paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary may file an action for enforcement of the order in the appropriate United States district court.

(B) In any action brought under subparagraph (A), the court may grant appropriate relief, including injunctive relief and compensatory and exemplary damages.

(l) Relationship to other laws

The protections provided by this section are independent of, and not subject to any limitations that may be provided in, the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 (Public Law 101-512) or any other law that may provide protection for disclosures of information by employees of the Department of Energy or of a contractor of the Department.

(m) Annual report

(1) Not later than 30 days after the commencement of each fiscal year, the Director shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report on the investigations undertaken under subsection (j)(1)(B) during the preceding fiscal year, including a summary of the results of each such investigation.

(2) A report under paragraph (1) may not identify or otherwise provide

any information about an individual submitting a complaint under this section without the consent of the individual.

(n) Implementation report

Not later than 60 days after October 5, 1999, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report describing the implementation of the program required by this section.

42 USCS § 5853

§ 5853. Limitation on legal fee reimbursement

SEC. 627 . LIMITATION ON LEGAL FEE REIMBURSEMENT.

Title II of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5841 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section :

LIMITATION ON LEGAL FEE REIMBURSEMENT

SEC. 212. The Department of Energy shall not, except as required under a contract entered into before the date of enactment of this section , reimburse any contractor or subcontractor of the Department for any legal fees or expenses incurred with respect to a complaint subsequent to--

(1) an adverse determination on the merits with respect to such complaint against the contractor or subcontractor by the Director of the Department of Energy's Office of Hearings and Appeals pursuant to part 708 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, or by a Department of Labor Administrative Law Judge pursuant to section 211 of this Act; or

(2) an adverse final judgment by any State or Federal court with respect to such complaint against the contractor or subcontractor for wrongful termination or retaliation due to the making of disclosures protected under chapter 12 of title 5, United States Code, section 211 of this Act, or any comparable State law, unless the adverse determination or final judgment is reversed upon further administrative or judicial review.

Department of Energy Acquisition Regulation; Rewrite of Regulations Governing Management and Operating Contracts

Agency: Department of Energy.

Action: Final rule.

65 Federal Register 80994 (December 22, 2000)

Subpart 903.9--Whistleblower Protection for Contractor Employees

903.901 Scope.

903.902 Definition.

903.903 Applicability.

903.970 Remedies.903.971 Contract clause.

Subpart 903.9--Whistleblower Protection for Contractor Employees

§903.901 Scope.

This subpart implements the DOE Contractor Employee Protection Program as set forth at 10 CFR part 708. Part 708 establishes criteria and procedures for the investigation, hearing, and review of allegations from

DOE contractor employees of employer reprisal resulting from employee disclosure of information to DOE, to Members of Congress, or to the contractor; employee participation in proceedings before Congress or pursuant to this subpart; or employee refusal to engage in illegal or dangerous activities, when such disclosure, participation, or refusal pertains to employer practices which the employee believes to be unsafe; to violate laws, rules, or regulations; or to involve fraud, mismanagement, waste, or abuse.

§903.902 Definition.

Contractor, as used in this subpart, has the meaning contained in 10 CFR 708.2.

§903.903 Applicability.

10 CFR part 708 is applicable to complaints of retaliation filed by employees of contractors, and subcontractors, performing work on behalf of DOE directly related to DOE-owned or leased facilities, if the complaint stems from a disclosure, participation, or refusal described in 10 CFR 708.5.

§903.970 Remedies.

(a) Contractors found to have retaliated against an employee in reprisal for such disclosure, participation or refusal are required to provide relief in accordance with decisions issued under 10 CFR part 708.

(b) 10 CFR part 708 provides that for the purposes of the Contract Disputes Act (41 U.S.C. 605 and 606), a final decision issued pursuant to 10 CFR part 708 shall not be considered to be a claim by the Government against a contractor or a decision by the contracting officer subject to appeal. However, a contractor's disagreement and refusal to comply with a final decision could result in a contracting officer's decision to disallow certain costs or to terminate the contract for default. In such case, the contractor could file a claim under the Disputes clause of the contract regarding the disallowance of cost or the termination of the contract.

§ 903.971 Contract clause.

The contracting officer shall insert the clause at 952.203-70, Whistleblower Protection for Contractor Employees, in contracts that involve work to be done on behalf of DOE directly related to activities at DOE-owned or leased sites.

**Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Employee Protection,
10 C.F.R. § 2.206**

§ 2.206 Requests for action under this subpart.

(a) Any person may file a request to institute a proceeding pursuant to Sec. 2.202 to modify, suspend, or revoke a license, or for any other action as may be proper. Requests must be addressed to the Executive Director for Operations and must be filed either by delivery to the NRC Public Document Room at 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, or by

mail or telegram addressed to the Executive Director for Operations, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001. The request must specify the action requested and set forth the facts that constitute the basis for the request. The Executive Director for Operations will refer the request to the Director of the NRC office with responsibility for the subject matter of the request for appropriate action in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) Within a reasonable time after a request pursuant to paragraph **(a)** of this section has been received, the Director of the NRC office with responsibility for the subject matter of the request shall either institute the requested proceeding in accordance with this subpart or shall institute in whole or in part, with respect to the request, and the reasons for the decision.

(c)(1) Director's decisions under this section will be filed with the Office of the Secretary. Within twenty-five (25) days after the date of the Director's decision under this section that no proceeding will be instituted or other action taken in whole or in part, the Commission may on its own motion review that decision, in whole or in part, to determine if the Director has abused his discretion. This review power does not limit in any way either the Commission's supervisory power over delegated staff actions or the Commission's power to consult with the staff on a formal or informal basis regarding institution of proceedings under this section.

(2) No petition or other request for Commission review of a Director's decision under this section will be entertained by the Commission.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Employee Protection

10 C.F.R. § 50.7

(a) Discrimination by a Commission licensee, an applicant for a Commission license, or a contractor or subcontractor of a Commission licensee or applicant against an employee for engaging in certain protected activities is prohibited. Discrimination includes discharge and other actions that relate to compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. The protected activities are established in section 211 of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended, and in general are related to the administration or enforcement of a requirement imposed under the Atomic Energy Act or the Energy Reorganization Act.

(1) The protected activities include but are not limited to:

(i) Providing the Commission or his or her employer information about alleged violations of either of the statutes named in paragraph **(a)** introductory text of this section or possible violations of requirements imposed under either of those statutes;

(ii) Refusing to engage in any practice made unlawful under either of the statutes named in paragraph **(a)** introductory text or under these requirements if the employee has identified the alleged illegality to the employer;

(iii) Requesting the Commission to institute action against his or her employer for the administration or enforcement of these requirements;

(iv) Testifying in any Commission proceeding, or before Congress, or at any Federal or State proceeding regarding any provision (or proposed

provision) of either of the statutes named in paragraph (a) introductory text.

(v) Assisting or participating in, or is about to assist or participate in, these activities.

(2) These activities are protected even if no formal proceeding is actually initiated as a result of the employee assistance or participation.

(3) This section has no application to any employee alleging discrimination prohibited by this section who, acting without direction from his or her employer (or the employer's agent), deliberately causes a violation of any requirement of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended, or the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended.

(b) Any employee who believes that he or she has been discharged or otherwise discriminated against by any person for engaging in protected activities specified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section may seek a remedy for the discharge or discrimination through an administrative proceeding in the Department of Labor. The administrative proceeding must be initiated within 180 days after an alleged violation occurs. The employee may do this by filing a complaint alleging the violation with the Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Wage and Hour Division. The Department of Labor may order reinstatement, back pay, and compensatory damages.

(c) A violation of paragraph (a), (e), or (f) of this section by a Commission licensee, an applicant for a Commission license, or a contractor or subcontractor of a Commission licensee or applicant may be grounds for--

(1) Denial, revocation, or suspension of the license.

(2) Imposition of a civil penalty on the licensee or applicant.

(3) Other enforcement action.

(d) Actions taken by an employer, or others, which adversely affect an employee may be predicated upon nondiscriminatory grounds. The prohibition applies when the adverse action occurs because the employee has engaged in protected activities. An employee's engagement in protected activities does not automatically render him or her immune from discharge or discipline for legitimate reasons or from adverse action dictated by nonprohibited considerations.

(e)(1) Each licensee and each applicant for a license shall prominently post the revision of NRC Form 3, "Notice to Employees," referenced in 10 CFR 19.11(c). This form must be posted at locations sufficient to permit employees protected by this section to observe a copy on the way to or from their place of work. Premises must be posted not later than 30 days after an application is docketed and remain posted while the application is pending before the Commission, during the term of the license, and for 30 days following license termination.

(2) Copies of NRC Form 3 may be obtained by writing to the Regional Administrator of the appropriate U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Regional Office listed in appendix D to part 20 of this chapter or by calling the NRC Information and Records Management Branch at (301) 415- 7230.

(f) No agreement affecting the compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, including an agreement to settle a complaint filed by an employee with the Department of Labor pursuant to section

211 of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as [[Page 658]] amended, may contain any provision which would prohibit, restrict, or otherwise discourage an employee from participating in protected activity as defined in paragraph (a)(1) of this section including, but not limited to, providing information to the NRC or to his or her employer on potential violations or other matters within NRC's regulatory responsibilities.

Department of Energy Part 708
DOE Contractor
Employee Protection Program
10 C.F.R. Part 708

Subpart A - General Provisions

§ 708.1 What is the purpose of this part? This part provides procedures for processing complaints by employees of DOE contractors alleging retaliation by their employers for disclosure of information concerning danger to public or worker health or safety, substantial violations of law, or gross mismanagement; for participation in Congressional proceedings; or for refusal to participate in dangerous activities.

§ 708.2 What are the definitions of terms used in this part? For purposes of this part: Contractor means a seller of goods or services who is a party to:

(1) A management and operating contract or other type of contract with DOE to perform work directly related to activities at DOE-owned or -leased facilities, or

(2) A subcontract under a contract of the type described in paragraph (1) of this definition, but only with respect to work related to activities at DOE-owned or -leased facilities. Day means a calendar day. Discovery means a process used to enable the parties to learn about each other's evidence before a hearing takes place, including oral depositions, written interrogatories, requests for admissions, inspection of property and requests for production of documents. DOE Official means any officer or employee of DOE whose duties include program management or the investigation or enforcement of any law, rule, or regulation relating to Government contractors or the subject matter of a contract. EC Director means the Director of the Office of Employee Concerns at DOE Headquarters, or any official to whom the Director delegates his or her functions under this part. Employee means a person employed by a contractor, and any person previously employed by a contractor if that person's complaint alleges that employment was terminated for conduct described in Sec. 708.5 of this subpart. Field element means a DOE field-based office that is responsible for the management, coordination, and administration of operations at a DOE facility. Head of Field Element means the manager or head of a DOE operations office or field office, or any official to whom those individuals delegate their functions under this part. Hearing Officer means an individual appointed by the OHA Director to conduct a hearing on a complaint filed under this part. Management and operating contract means an agreement under which DOE contracts for the operation, maintenance, or support of a

Government- owned or -leased research, development, special production, or testing establishment that is wholly or principally devoted to one or more of the programs of DOE. Mediation means an informal, confidential process in which a neutral third person assists the parties in reaching a mutually acceptable resolution of their dispute; the neutral third person does not render a decision. OHA Director means the Director of the Office of Hearings and Appeals, or any official to whom the Director delegates his or her functions under this part. Party means an employee, contractor, or other party named in a proceeding under this part. Retaliation means an action (including intimidation, threats, restraint, coercion or similar action) taken by a contractor against an employee with respect to employment (e.g., discharge, demotion, or other negative action with respect to the employee's compensation, terms, conditions or privileges of employment) as a result of the employee's disclosure of information, participation in proceedings, or refusal to participate in activities described in Sec. 708.5 of this subpart. You means the employee who files a complaint under this part, or the complainant.

§708.3 What employee complaints are covered?

This part applies to a complaint of retaliation filed by an employee of a contractor that performs work on behalf of DOE, directly related to activities at a DOE-owned or -leased site, if the complaint stems from a disclosure, participation, or refusal described in Sec. 708.5.

§ 708.4 What employee complaints are not covered?

If you are an employee of a contractor, you may not file a complaint against your employer under this part if:

- (a) The complaint is based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or other similar basis; or
- (b) The complaint involves misconduct that you, acting without direction from your employer, deliberately caused, or in which you knowingly participated; or (c) Except as provided in Sec. 708.15(a), the complaint is based on the same facts for which you have chosen to pursue a remedy available under:
 - (1) Department of Labor regulations at 29 CFR part 24, "Procedures for the Handling of Discrimination Complaints under Federal Employee Protection Statutes;"
 - (2) Federal Acquisition Regulations, 48 CFR part 3, "Federal Acquisition Regulation; Whistleblower Protection for Contractor Employees (Ethics);" or
 - (3) State or other applicable law, including final and binding grievance-arbitration, as described in Sec. 708.15 of subpart B; or
- (d) The complaint is based on the same facts in which you, in the course of a covered disclosure or participation, improperly disclosed Restricted Data, national security information, or any other classified or sensitive information in violation of any Executive Order, statute, or regulation. This part does not override any provision or requirement of any regulation pertaining to Restricted Data, national security information, or any other classified or sensitive information; or