

29 CFR §1614.501 | REMEDIES AND RELIEF

(a) When an agency, or the Commission, in an individual case of discrimination, finds that an applicant or an employee has been discriminated against, the agency shall provide full relief which shall include the following elements in appropriate circumstances:

(1) Notification to all employees of the agency in the affected facility of their right to be free of unlawful discrimination and assurance that the particular types of discrimination found will not recur;

(2) Commitment that corrective, curative or preventive action will be taken, or measures adopted, to ensure that violations of the law similar to those found will not recur;

(3) An unconditional offer to each identified victim of discrimination of placement in the position the person would have occupied but for the discrimination suffered by that person, or a substantially equivalent position;

(4) Payment to each identified victim of discrimination on a make whole basis for any loss of earnings the person may have suffered as a result of the discrimination; and

(5) Commitment that the agency shall cease from engaging in the specific unlawful employment practice found in the case.

(b) *Relief for an applicant.*

(1)

(i) When an agency, or the Commission, finds that an applicant for employment has been discriminated against, the agency shall offer the applicant the position that the applicant would have occupied absent discrimination or, if justified by the circumstances, a substantially equivalent position unless clear and convincing evidence indicates that the applicant would not have been selected even absent the discrimination. The offer shall be made in writing. The individual shall have 15 days from receipt of the offer within which to accept or decline the offer. Failure to accept the offer within the 15-day period will be considered a

declination of the offer, unless the individual can show that circumstances beyond his or her control prevented a response within the time limit.

(ii) If the offer is accepted, appointment shall be retroactive to the date the applicant would have been hired. Back pay, computed in the manner prescribed by 5 CFR 550.805, shall be awarded from the date the individual would have entered on duty until the date the individual actually enters on duty unless clear and convincing evidence indicates that the applicant would not have been selected even absent discrimination. Interest on back pay shall be included in the back pay computation where sovereign immunity has been waived. The individual shall be deemed to have performed service for the agency during this period for all purposes except for meeting service requirements for completion of a required probationary or trial period.

(iii) If the offer of employment is declined, the agency shall award the individual a sum equal to the back pay he or she would have received, computed in the manner prescribed by 5 CFR 550.805, from the date he or she would have been appointed until the date the offer was declined, subject to the limitation of paragraph (b)(3) of this section. Interest on back pay shall be included in the back pay computation. The agency shall inform the applicant, in its offer of employment, of the right to this award in the event the offer is declined.

(2) When an agency, or the Commission, finds that discrimination existed at the time the applicant was considered for employment but also finds by clear and convincing evidence that the applicant would not have been hired even absent discrimination, the agency shall nevertheless take all steps necessary to eliminate the discriminatory practice and ensure it does not recur.

(3) Back pay under this paragraph (b) for complaints under title VII or the Rehabilitation Act may not extend from a date earlier than two years prior to the date on which the complaint was initially filed by the applicant.

(c) *Relief for an employee.* When an agency, or the Commission, finds that an employee of the agency was discriminated against, the agency shall provide relief, which shall include, but need not be limited to, one or more of the following actions:

(1) Nondiscriminatory placement, with back pay computed in the manner prescribed by 5 CFR 550.805, unless clear and convincing evidence contained in the record demonstrates that the personnel action would have been taken even absent the discrimination. Interest on back pay shall be included in the back pay computation where sovereign immunity has been waived. The back pay liability under title VII or the Rehabilitation Act is limited to two years prior to the date the discrimination complaint was filed.

(2) If clear and convincing evidence indicates that, although discrimination existed at the time the personnel action was taken, the personnel action would have been taken even absent discrimination, the agency shall nevertheless eliminate any discriminatory practice and ensure it does not recur.

(3) Cancellation of an unwarranted personnel action and restoration of the employee.

(4) Expunction from the agency's records of any adverse materials relating to the discriminatory employment practice.

(5) Full opportunity to participate in the employee benefit denied (e.g., training, preferential work assignments, overtime scheduling).

(d) The agency has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the complainant has failed to mitigate his or her damages.

(e) *Attorney's fees or costs* –

(1) *Awards of attorney's fees or costs.* The provisions of this paragraph relating to the award of attorney's fees or costs shall apply to allegations of discrimination prohibited by title VII and the Rehabilitation Act. In a decision or final action, the agency, administrative judge, or Commission may award

the applicant or employee reasonable attorney's fees (including expert witness fees) and other costs incurred in the processing of the complaint.

(i) A finding of discrimination raises a presumption of entitlement to an award of attorney's fees.

(ii) Any award of attorney's fees or costs shall be paid by the agency.

(iii) Attorney's fees are allowable only for the services of members of the Bar and law clerks, paralegals or law students under the supervision of members of the Bar, except that no award is allowable for the services of any employee of the Federal Government.

(iv) Attorney's fees shall be paid for services performed by an attorney after the filing of a written complaint, provided that the attorney provides reasonable notice of representation to the agency, administrative judge or Commission, except that fees are allowable for a reasonable period of time prior to the notification of representation for any services performed in reaching a determination to represent the complainant. Agencies are not required to pay attorney's fees for services performed during the pre-complaint process, except that fees are allowable when the Commission affirms on appeal an administrative judge's decision finding discrimination after an agency takes final action by not implementing an administrative judge's decision. Written submissions to the agency that are signed by the representative shall be deemed to constitute notice of representation.

(2) *Amount of awards.*

(i) When the agency, administrative judge or the Commission determines an entitlement to attorney's fees or costs, the complainant's attorney shall submit a verified statement of attorney's fees (including expert witness fees) and other costs, as appropriate, to the agency or administrative judge

within 30 days of receipt of the decision and shall submit a copy of the statement to the agency. A statement of attorney's fees and costs shall be accompanied by an affidavit executed by the attorney of record itemizing the attorney's charges for legal services. The agency may respond to a statement of attorney's fees and costs within 30 days of its receipt. The verified statement, accompanying affidavit and any agency response shall be made a part of the complaint file.

(ii)

(A) The agency or administrative judge shall issue a decision determining the amount of attorney's fees or costs due within 60 days of receipt of the statement and affidavit. The decision shall include a notice of right to appeal to the EEOC along with EEOC Form 573, Notice of Appeal/Petition and shall include the specific reasons for determining the amount of the award.

(B) The amount of attorney's fees shall be calculated using the following standards: The starting point shall be the number of hours reasonably expended multiplied by a reasonable hourly rate. There is a strong presumption that this amount represents the reasonable fee. In limited circumstances, this amount may be reduced or increased in consideration of the degree of success, quality of representation, and long delay caused by the agency.

(C) The costs that may be awarded are those authorized by 28 U.S.C. 1920 to include: Fees of the reporter for all or any of the stenographic transcript necessarily obtained for use in the case; fees and disbursements for printing and witnesses; and fees for exemplification and copies necessarily obtained for use in the case.

(iii) Witness fees shall be awarded in accordance with the provisions of 28 U.S.C. 1821, except that no award shall be made for a Federal employee who is in a duty status when made available as a witness.

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