

(3) Regulations or instructions that an agency has authority, independent of this part, to issue, such as regulations implementing an agency's gift acceptance statute, protecting categories of nonpublic information or establishing standards for use of Government vehicles. Where the content of any such regulations or instructions was included in the agency's standards of conduct regulations issued pursuant to Executive Order 11222 and the Office of Government Ethics concurs that they need not be issued as part of an agency's supplemental agency regulations, those regulations or instructions may be promulgated separately from the agency's supplemental agency regulations.

§ 2635.106 Disciplinary and corrective action.

(a) Except as provided in § 2635.107, a violation of this part or of supplemental agency regulations may be cause for appropriate corrective or disciplinary action to be taken under applicable Governmentwide regulations or agency procedures. Such action may be in addition to any action or penalty prescribed by law.

(b) It is the responsibility of the employing agency to initiate appropriate disciplinary or corrective action in individual cases. However, corrective action may be ordered or disciplinary action recommended by the Director of the Office of Government Ethics under the procedures at part 2638 of this chapter.

(c) A violation of this part or of supplemental agency regulations, as such, does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by any person against the United States, its agencies, its officers or employees, or any other person. Thus, for example, an individual who alleges that an employee has failed to adhere to laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap is required to follow applicable statutory and regulatory procedures, including those of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

§ 2635.107 Ethics advice.

(a) As required by §§ 2638.201 and 2638.202(b) of this chapter, each agency has a designated agency ethics official who, on the agency's behalf, is responsible for coordinating and managing the agency's ethics program, as well as an alternate. The designated agency ethics official has authority under § 2638.204 of this chapter to delegate certain responsibilities, including that of providing ethics counseling regarding the application of this part, to one or more deputy ethics officials.

(b) Employees who have questions about the application of this part or any supplemental agency regulations to particular situations should seek advice from an agency ethics official. Disciplinary action for violating this part or any supplemental agency regulations will not be taken against an employee who has engaged in conduct in good faith reliance upon the advice of an agency ethics official, provided that the employee, in seeking such advice, has made full disclosure of all relevant circumstances. Where the employee's conduct violates a criminal statute, reliance on the advice of an agency ethics official cannot ensure that the employee will not be prosecuted under that statute. However, good faith reliance on the advice of an agency ethics official is a factor that may be taken into account by the Department of Justice in the selection of cases for prosecution. Disclosures made by an employee to an agency ethics official are not protected by an attorney-client privilege. An agency ethics official is required by 28 U.S.C. 535 to report any information he receives relating to a violation of the criminal code, title 18 of the United States Code.

Subpart B—Gifts From Outside Sources

§ 2635.201 Overview.

This subpart contains standards that prohibit an employee from soliciting or accepting any gift from a prohibited source or given because of the employee's official position unless the item is excluded from the definition of a gift or falls within one of the exceptions set forth in this subpart.