

Department of Justice

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administrators or employees of the institution and such review shall be conducted without influence or interference by administrators or employees of the institution.

[Order No. 957-81, 46 FR 48186, Oct. 1, 1981, as amended by Order No. 1618-92, 57 FR 38773, Aug. 27, 1992; Order No. 1955-95, 60 FR 13902, Mar. 15, 1995]

§ 40.8 Emergency procedure.

The grievance procedure shall contain special provision for responding to grievances of an emergency nature. Emergency grievances shall be defined, at a minimum, as matters regarding which disposition according to the regular time limits would subject the inmate to a substantial risk of personal injury, or cause other serious and irreparable harm to the inmate. Emergency grievances shall be forwarded immediately, without substantive review, to the level at which corrective action can be taken. The procedure for resolving emergency grievances shall provide for expedited responses at every level of decision. The emergency procedure shall also include review by a person or entity not under the supervision or control of the institution.

§ 40.9 Reprisals.

The grievance procedure shall prohibit reprisals. "Reprisal" means any action or threat of action against anyone for the good faith use of or good faith participation in the grievance procedure. The written procedure shall include assurance that good faith use of or good faith participation in the grievance mechanism will not result in formal or informal reprisal. An inmate shall be entitled to pursue through the grievance procedure a complaint that a reprisal occurred.

§ 40.10 Records—nature; confidentiality.

(a) *Nature.* Records regarding the filing and disposition of grievances shall be collected and maintained systematically by the institution. Such records shall be preserved for at least three years following final disposition of the grievance. At a minimum, such records shall include aggregate information regarding the numbers, types and dispositions of grievances, as well as indi-

vidual records of the date of and the reasons for each disposition at each stage of the procedure.

(b) *Confidentiality.* Records regarding the participation of an individual in the grievance proceedings shall be considered confidential and shall be handled under the same procedures used to protect other confidential case records. Consistent with ensuring confidentiality, staff who are participating in the disposition of a grievance shall have access to records essential to the resolution of the grievance.

Subpart B—Procedures for Obtaining Certification of a Grievance Procedure

§ 40.11 Submissions by applicant.

(a) *Written statement.* An application for certification of a grievance procedure under the Act shall be submitted to the Office of the Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, Main Justice Building, Washington, DC 20530, and shall include a written statement describing the grievance procedure, a brief description of the institution or institutions covered by the procedure, and accompanying plans for or evidence of implementation in each institution.

(b) *Evidence of compliance with established standards.* An applicant seeking certification of a grievance procedure as being in substantial compliance with the standards promulgated herein should submit evidence of compliance with those standards, including the following information:

(1) *Instructional materials.* A copy of the instructional materials for inmates and employees regarding use of the grievance procedure together with a description of the manner in which such materials are distributed, a description of the oral explanation of the grievance procedure, including the circumstances under which it is delivered, and a description of the training, if any, provided to employees and inmates in the skills necessary to operate the grievance procedure.

(2) *Form.* A copy of the form used by inmates to initiate a grievance and to obtain review of the disposition of a grievance.

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(3) *Information regarding past compliance.* For a grievance procedure that has operated for more than one year at the time of the application, the applicant shall submit information regarding the number and types of grievances filed over the preceding year, the disposition of the grievances with sample responses from each level of decision, the remedies granted, evidence of compliance with time limits at each level of decision, and a description of the role of inmates and employees in the formulation, implementation, and operation of the grievance procedure.

(4) *Plan for collecting information.* For a grievance procedure that has operated for less than one year at the time of the application, the applicant shall submit a plan for collecting the information described in paragraph (b)(3) of this section.

(5) *Assurance of confidentiality.* A description of the steps taken to ensure the confidentiality of records of individual use of or participation in the grievance procedure.

(6) *Evaluation.* A description of the plans for periodic evaluation of the grievance procedure, including identification of the group, individuals or individual who will conduct the evaluation and identification of the person or entity not under the control of supervision of the institution who will review the evaluation, together with two copies of the most recent evaluation, if one has been performed.

(c) *Fair and effective procedures.* The Attorney General shall also certify a grievance procedure under the Act, even if the procedure is not in substantial compliance with the standards promulgated herein, if the Attorney General determines that the procedure is otherwise fair and effective for the consideration and disposition of grievances filed by inmates. If a grievance procedure is not in substantial compliance with all standards herein, the applicant shall identify the aspects in which the procedure is in substantial compliance and those in which it is not, describe the other relevant features of the procedure, and explain why the procedure is otherwise fair and effective.

[Order No. 1955-95, 60 FR 13903, Mar. 15, 1995]

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§ 40.12 Notice of intent to apply for certification.

The applicant shall post notice of its intent to request certification in prominent places in each institution to be covered by the procedure and shall provide similar written notice to the U.S. District Court(s) having jurisdiction over each institution to be covered by the procedure. The notices shall invite comments regarding the grievance procedure and direct them to the Attorney General.

§ 40.13 Review by the Attorney General.

The Attorney General shall review and respond to each application as promptly as the circumstances, including the need for independent investigation and consideration of the comments of agencies, and interested groups and persons, permit.

§ 40.14 Conditional certification.

If, in the judgment of the Attorney General, a grievance procedure that has been in existence less than one year is at the time of application in substantial compliance with the standards promulgated herein or is otherwise fair and effective, the Attorney General shall grant conditional certification for one year or until the applicant satisfies the requirements of § 40.15, whichever period is shorter.

[Order No. 1955-95, 60 FR 13903, Mar. 15, 1995]

§ 40.15 Full certification.

If, in the judgment of the Attorney General, a grievance procedure that has been in existence longer than one year at the time of application is in substantial compliance with the standards promulgated herein or is otherwise fair and effective, the Attorney General shall grant full certification. Such certification shall remain in effect unless and until the Attorney General finds reasonable cause to believe that the grievance procedure is no longer in substantial compliance with the minimum standards or is no longer fair and effective, and so notifies the applicant in writing.

[Order No. 1955-95, 60 FR 13903, Mar. 15, 1995]