

Department of Veterans Affairs

§ 18.414

this subpart is not affected by any inconsistent term of any collective bargaining agreement to which it is a party.

[45 FR 63268, Sept. 24, 1980, as amended at 68 FR 51370, Aug. 26, 2003]

§ 18.412 Reasonable accommodation.

(a) A recipient shall make reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of a handicapped applicant or employee if such accommodation would enable that person to perform the essential functions of the job unless the recipient can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its program or activity.

(b) Reasonable accommodation may include:

(1) Making facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by handicapped persons; and

(2) Job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, the provision of readers or interpreters and other similar actions.

(c) In determining under paragraph (a) of this section whether an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of a recipient's program or activity, factors to be considered include:

(1) The overall size of the recipient's program or activity with respect to number of employees, number and type of facilities, and size of budget;

(2) The type of the recipient's operation, including the composition and structure of the recipient's work force; and

(3) The nature and cost of the accommodation needed.

(d) A recipient may not deny any employment opportunity to a qualified handicapped employee or applicant if the basis for denial is the need to make reasonable accommodation to the physical or mental limitations of the employee or applicant.

[45 FR 63268, Sept. 24, 1980, as amended at 51 FR 10385, Mar. 26, 1986; 68 FR 51370, Aug. 26, 2003]

§ 18.413 Employment criteria.

(a) A recipient may not use any employment test or other selection criterion that screens out or tends to

screen out handicapped persons or any class of handicapped persons unless:

(1) The test score or other selection criterion, as used by the recipient, is shown to be job-related for the position in question; and

(2) Alternative job-related tests or criteria that do not screen out or tend to screen out as many handicapped persons are not shown by the Secretary to be available.

(b) A recipient shall select and administer tests concerning employment to best ensure that when administered to an applicant or employee who has a handicap that impairs sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the applicant's or employee's job skills, aptitude, or whatever other factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflect the applicant's or employee's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except when those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

§ 18.414 Preemployment inquiries.

(a) Except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, a recipient may not conduct a preemployment medical examination or may not make preemployment inquiry of an applicant as to whether the applicant is a handicapped person or as to the nature or severity of a handicap. A recipient may, however, make preemployment inquiry into the applicant's ability to perform job-related functions.

(b) When a recipient is taking remedial action to correct the effects of past discrimination pursuant to § 18.406(a), when a recipient is taking voluntary action to overcome the effects of conditions that resulted in limited participation in its federally assisted program or activity pursuant to § 18.406(b), or when a recipient is taking affirmative action pursuant to section 503 of the Act, the recipient may invite applicants for employment to indicate whether and to what extent they are handicapped, provided that:

(1) The recipient states clearly on any written questionnaire used for this purpose or makes clear orally if no written questionnaire is used that the information requested is intended for

§ 18.421

use solely in connection with its remedial action obligations or its voluntary or affirmative action efforts; and

(2) The recipient states clearly that the information is being requested on a voluntary basis, that it will be kept confidential as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, that refusal to provide it will not subject the applicant or employee to any adverse treatment, and that it will be used only in accordance with this part.

(c) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a recipient from conditioning an offer of employment on the results of a medical examination conducted prior to the employee's entrance on duty, provided that:

(1) All entering employees are subjected to such an examination regardless of handicap, and (2) the results of such an examination are used only in accordance with the requirements of this part.

(d) Information obtained in accordance with this section as to the medical condition or history of the applicant shall be collected and maintained on separate forms that shall be accorded confidentiality as medical records, except that:

(1) Supervisors and managers may be informed regarding restrictions on the work or duties of handicapped persons and regarding necessary accommodations;

(2) First aid and safety personnel may be informed, where appropriate, if the condition might require emergency treatment;

(3) Government officials investigating compliance with the Act shall be provided relevant information upon request.

ACCESSIBILITY

§ 18.421 Discrimination prohibited.

No qualified handicapped person shall, because a recipient's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by handicapped persons, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity to which this part applies.

§ 18.422 Existing facilities.

(a) *Accessibility.* A recipient shall operate each program or activity to which this part applies so that when each part is viewed in its entirety it is readily accessible to handicapped persons. This paragraph does not require a recipient to make each of its existing facilities or every part of a facility accessible to and usable by handicapped persons.

(b) *Methods.* A recipient may comply with the requirement of paragraph (a) of this section through such measures as redesign of equipment, reassignment of classes or other services to accessible buildings, assignment of aids to beneficiaries, home visits, delivery of health, or other social services at alternate accessible sites, alteration of existing facilities and construction of new facilities in conformance with § 18.423 or any other methods that make its program or activity accessible to handicapped persons. A recipient is not required to make structural changes in existing facilities where other methods are effective in making its programs or activities readily accessible to handicapped persons. In choosing among available methods for complying with paragraph (a) of this section, a recipient shall give priority to methods that serve handicapped persons in the most integrated setting appropriate.

(c) *Small health, welfare or other social service providers, and recipients that operate other than educational programs or activities.* If a recipient with fewer than fifteen employees finds after consultation with a handicapped person seeking its services that there is no method of complying with paragraph (a) of this section other than making a significant alteration in its existing facilities, the recipient may, as an alternative, refer the qualified handicapped person to other providers whose services are accessible. Where referrals are necessary, transportation costs shall not exceed costs to and from recipients' programs or activities.

(d) *Time period.* A recipient shall comply with paragraph (a) of this section within 60 days of the effective date of this part except that when structural changes in facilities are necessary, these changes shall be made as soon as practicable, but not later than three