
This content is from the eCFR and is authoritative but unofficial.

Title 49 —Transportation

Subtitle A —Office of the Secretary of Transportation

Part 28 Enforcement of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Conducted by the Department of Transportation

§ 28.101 Purpose.

§ 28.102 Application.

§ 28.103 Definitions.

§§ 28.104-28.109 [Reserved]

§ 28.110 Self-evaluation.

§ 28.111 Notice.

§§ 28.112-28.129 [Reserved]

§ 28.130 General prohibition against discrimination.

§ 28.131 Illegal use of drugs.

§§ 28.132-28.139 [Reserved]

§ 28.140 Employment.

§§ 28.141-28.148 [Reserved]

§ 28.149 Program accessibility: Discrimination prohibited.

§ 28.150 Program accessibility: Existing facilities.

§ 28.151 Program accessibility: New construction and alterations.

§§ 28.152-28.159 [Reserved]

§ 28.160 Communications.

§§ 28.161-28.169 [Reserved]

§ 28.170 Compliance procedures.

§§ 28.171-28.999 [Reserved]

PART 28—ENFORCEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF HANDICAP IN PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Authority: 29 U.S.C. 794

Source: 56 FR 37296, Aug. 6, 1991, unless otherwise noted.

§ 28.101 Purpose.

The purpose of this part is to carry out section 119 of the Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments of 1978, which amended section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of handicap in programs or activities conducted by Executive agencies, including this Department, or the United States Postal Service. 49 CFR part 27 implements section 504 in the Department's financial assistance programs.

§ 28.102 Application.

This part applies to all programs or activities conducted by the Department except for programs and activities conducted outside the United States that do not involve individuals with handicaps in the United States.

§ 28.103 Definitions.

For purposes of this part, the term—

Assistant Attorney General means the Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, United States Department of Justice.

Auxiliary aids means services or devices that enable persons with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills to have an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, programs or activities conducted by the Department. For example, auxiliary aids useful for persons with impaired vision include readers, Brailled materials, audio recordings, and other similar services and devices. Auxiliary aids useful for persons with impaired hearing include telephone handset amplifiers, telephones compatible with hearing aids, telecommunication devices for deaf persons (TDD's), interpreters, notetakers, written materials, and other similar services and devices.

Complete complaint means a written statement that contains the complainant's name and address and describes the Department's alleged discriminatory actions in sufficient detail to inform the Department of the nature and date of the alleged violation of section 504. It shall be signed by the complainant or by someone authorized to do so on his or her behalf. Complaints filed on behalf of classes or third parties shall describe or identify (by name, if possible) the alleged victims of discrimination.

Current illegal use of drugs means illegal use of drugs that occurred recently enough to justify a reasonable belief that a person's drug use is current or that continuing use is a real and ongoing problem.

Drug means a controlled substance, as defined in schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812).

Department or DOT means the U.S. Department of Transportation, including the Office of the Secretary and all operating administrations.

Departmental Element (or "DOT element") means any one of the following organizations within the Department:

- (a) Office of the Secretary (OST).
- (b) United States Coast Guard (USCG).
- (c) Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).
- (d) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
- (e) Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

- (f) National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
- (g) Federal Transit Administration (FTA).
- (h) Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA).
- (i) Maritime Administration (MARAD).
- (j) St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC).

Facility means all or any portion of buildings, structures, equipment, roads, walks, parking lots, rolling stock or other conveyances, or other real or personal property.

Illegal use of drugs means the use of one or more drugs, the possession or distribution of which is unlawful under the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) The term "illegal use of drugs" does not include the use of a drug taken under supervision by a licensed health care professional, or other uses authorized by the Controlled Substances Act or other provisions of Federal law.

Individual with handicaps means any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

As used in this definition, the phrase:

(1) ***Physical or mental impairment*** —

- (i) Includes any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: Neurological; muscular; skeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genitourinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine;
- (ii) Includes any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities; and
- (iii) Includes, but is not limited to, such diseases or conditions as orthopedic, visual, speech, and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, mental retardation, emotional illness, drug addiction, and alcoholism.

(2) ***Major life activities*** includes functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

(3) ***Has a record of such an impairment*** means has a history of, or has been misclassified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

(4) ***Is regarded as having an impairment*** means—

- (i) Has a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit major life activities but is treated by the Department as constituting such a limitation;
- (ii) Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities only as a result of the attitudes of others toward such impairment; or
- (iii) Has none of the impairments defined in paragraph (1) of this definition but is treated by the Department as having such an impairment.

Qualified individual with handicaps means—

- (1) With respect to education services provided by the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy or the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, an individual with handicaps who meets the essential eligibility requirements for participation in and receipt of such services, including the physical standards applicable to the U.S. Naval Reserve or the U.S. Coast Guard.
- (2) With respect to any other Department program or activity under which a person is required to perform services or to achieve a level of accomplishment, an individual with handicaps who meets the essential eligibility requirements and who can achieve the purpose of the program or activity without modifications in the program or activity that the Department can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in its nature. The essential eligibility requirements include the ability to participate without endangering the safety of the individual or others.
- (3) With respect to any other program or activity, an individual with handicaps who meets the essential eligibility requirements for participation in, or receipt of benefits from, that program or activity and
- (4) **Qualified handicapped person** as that term is defined for purposes of employment in 29 CFR 1613.702(f), which is made applicable to this part by § 28.140.

Section 504 means section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. 93-112, 87 Stat. 394 (29 U.S.C. 794)), as amended by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1974 (Pub. L. 93-516, 88 Stat. 1617), the Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments of 1978 (Pub. L. 95-602, 92 Stat. 2955); the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 (Pub. L. 99-506, 100 Stat. 1810); the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (Pub. L. 100-259, 102 Stat. 28), and Handicapped Program Technical Amendments Act of 1988 (Pub. L. 100-630, 102 Stat. 3312). As used in this part, section 504 applies only to programs or activities conducted by Executive agencies and not to federally assisted programs.

[56 FR 37296, Aug. 6, 1991, as amended at 61 FR 32354, June 24, 1996]

§§ 28.104-28.109 [Reserved]

§ 28.110 Self-evaluation.

- (a) The Department shall, by one year of the effective date of this part, evaluate its current policies and practices, and effects thereof, that do not or may not meet the requirements of this part, and, to the extent modification of any such policies and practices is required, the Department shall proceed to make the necessary modifications.
- (b) The Department shall provide an opportunity to interested persons, including individuals with handicaps, agency employees with handicaps, and organizations representing individuals with handicaps, to participate in the self-evaluation process by submitting comments (both oral and written).
- (c) The Department shall, until at least three years following completion of the evaluation required under paragraph (a) of this section, or until such time as all modifications identified by the self-evaluation to be necessary to comply with section 504 have been completed, whichever occurs later, maintain on file and make available for public inspection—
 - (1) A description of areas examined, regulations and nonregulatory criteria reviewed, and any problems identified; and
 - (2) A description of any modifications made.

§ 28.111 Notice.

The Department shall make available to employees, applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons such information regarding the provisions of this part and its applicability to the programs or activities conducted by the Department, and make such information available to them in such manner as the Department finds necessary to apprise such persons of the protections against discrimination assured them by section 504 and this regulation.

§§ 28.112-28.129 [Reserved]**§ 28.130 General prohibition against discrimination.**

- (a) No qualified individual with handicaps shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by the Department.
- (b)
 - (1) The Department, in providing any aid, benefit, or service, may not, directly or through contractual, licensing, or other arrangement, on the basis of handicap—
 - (i) Deny a qualified individual with handicaps the opportunity to participate in or benefit from the aid, benefit, or service;
 - (ii) Afford a qualified individual with handicaps an opportunity to participate in or benefit from the aid, benefit, or service that is not equal to that afforded others;
 - (iii) Provide a qualified individual with handicaps with an aid, benefit, or service that is not as effective in affording equal opportunity to obtain the same result, to gain the same benefit, or to reach the same level of achievement as that provided to others;
 - (iv) Provide different or separate aid, benefits, or services to individuals with handicaps or to any class of individuals with handicaps than is provided to others unless such action is necessary to provide qualified individuals with handicaps with aid, benefits, or services that are as effective as those provided to others;
 - (v) Deny a qualified individual with handicaps the opportunity to participate as a member of planning or advisory boards; or
 - (vi) Otherwise limit a qualified individual with handicaps in the enjoyment of any right, privilege, advantage, or opportunity enjoyed by others receiving the aid, benefit, or service.
 - (2) The Department may not deny a qualified individual with handicaps the opportunity to participate in programs or activities that are not separate or different, despite the existence of permissibly separate or different programs or activities.
 - (3) The Department may not, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, utilize criteria or methods of administration the purpose or effect of which would—
 - (i) Subject qualified individuals with handicaps to discrimination on the basis of handicap; or
 - (ii) Defeat or substantially impair accomplishment of the objectives of a program or activity with respect to individuals with handicaps.

- (4) The Department may not, in determining the site or location of a facility, make selections the purpose or effect of which would—
 - (i) Exclude individuals with handicaps from, deny them the benefits of, or otherwise subject them to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by the Department; or
 - (ii) Defeat or substantially impair the accomplishment of the objectives of a program or activity with respect to individuals with handicaps.
- (5) The Department, in the selection of procurement contractors, may not use criteria that subject qualified individuals with handicaps to discrimination on the basis of handicap.
- (6) The Department may not administer a licensing or certification program in a manner that subjects qualified individuals with handicaps to discrimination on the basis of handicap, nor may the Department establish requirements for the programs or activities of licensees or certified entities that subject qualified individuals with handicaps to discrimination on the basis of handicap. However, the programs or activities of entities that are licensed or certified by the Department are not, themselves, covered by this part. The Department may limit the programs or activities of a licensee or certificate holder, who is a qualified individual with handicaps, to the extent necessary to ensure the safety of that person or the safety of others.
- (c) The exclusion of individuals without handicaps from the benefits of a program limited by Federal statute or Executive Order to individuals with handicaps or the exclusion of a specific class of individuals with handicaps from a program limited by Federal statute or Executive Order to a different class of individuals with handicaps is not prohibited by this part.
- (d) The Department shall administer programs and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with handicaps.

§ 28.131 Illegal use of drugs.

- (a) **General.**
 - (1) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, this part does not prohibit discrimination against an individual based on that individual's current illegal use of drugs.
 - (2) The agency shall not discriminate on the basis of illegal use of drugs against an individual who is not engaging in current illegal use of drugs and who—
 - (i) Has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program or has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully;
 - (ii) Is participating in a supervised rehabilitation program; or
 - (iii) Is erroneously regarded as engaging in such use.
- (b) **Health and rehabilitation services.** The agency shall not deny health services or services provided under titles I, II, and III of the Rehabilitation Act to an individual on the basis of that individual's current illegal use of drugs, if the individual is otherwise entitled to such services.
- (c) **Drug testing.**
 - (1) This part does not prohibit the agency from adopting or administering reasonable policies or procedures, including but not limited to drug testing, designed to ensure that an individual who formerly engaged in the illegal use of drugs is not engaging in current illegal use of drugs.

- (2) Nothing in paragraph (c) of this section shall be construed to encourage, prohibit, restrict, or authorize the conduct of testing for the illegal use of drugs.

§§ 28.132-28.139 [Reserved]

§ 28.140 Employment.

- (a) No qualified individual with handicaps shall, on the basis of handicap, be subjected to discrimination in employment under any program or activity conducted by the Department.
- (b) The definitions, requirements, and procedures of section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791), as established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 29 CFR part 1613, shall apply to employment in federally conducted programs or activities. The provisions of this section do not apply to military personnel of the U.S. Coast Guard.

§§ 28.141-28.148 [Reserved]

§ 28.149 Program accessibility: Discrimination prohibited.

Except as otherwise provided in § 28.150, no qualified individual with handicaps shall, because the Department's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with handicaps, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by the Department.

§ 28.150 Program accessibility: Existing facilities.

- (a) **General.** The Department shall operate each program or activity so that the program or activity, when viewed in its entirety, is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with handicaps. This paragraph does not—
- (1) Necessarily require the Department to make each of its existing facilities accessible to and usable by individuals with handicaps;
- (2) [Reserved]
- (3) Require the Department to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a program or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. In those circumstances where personnel of a DOT element believe that the proposed action would fundamentally alter the program or activity or would result in undue financial and administrative burdens, the DOT element has the burden of proving that compliance with § 28.150(a) would result in such alteration or burdens. The decision that compliance would result in such alteration or burdens must be made by the Secretary or his or her designee, after considering all resources available for use in the funding and operation of the program or activity, and must be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion. If an action would result in such an alteration or such burdens, the Department shall take any other action that would not result in such an alteration or such burdens but would nevertheless ensure that individuals with handicaps receive the benefits and services of the program or activity.
- (b) **Methods.** The Department may comply with the requirements of this section through such means as redesign of equipment, reassignment of services to accessible buildings, assignment of aides to beneficiaries, home visits, delivery of services at alternate accessible sites, alteration of existing facilities and construction of new facilities, use of accessible rolling stock, or any other methods that result in making its programs or activities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with handicaps. The

Department is not required to make structural changes in existing facilities where other methods are effective in achieving compliance with this section. The Department, in making alterations to existing buildings, shall meet accessibility requirements to the extent compelled by the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151-4157), and any regulations implementing it. In choosing among available methods for meeting the requirements of this section, the Department shall give priority to those methods that offer programs and activities to qualified individuals with handicaps in the most integrated setting appropriate.

- (c) **Time period for compliance.** The Department shall comply with the obligations established under this section within sixty days of the effective date of this part except that where structural changes in facilities are undertaken, such changes shall be made within three years of the effective date of this part, but in any event as expeditiously as possible. Provided that, where major restructuring of fixed facilities to accommodate technological changes is planned to occur within five years from the effective date of this part, changes needed to comply with this section are not required to be made until the planned restructuring takes place. However, alternative means for participation by individuals with handicaps in DOT programs and activities in the most integrated setting possible during this interim waiting period shall be available.
- (d) **Transition plan.** In the event that structural changes to facilities will be undertaken to achieve program accessibility, the Department shall develop, within six months of the effective date of this part, a transition plan setting forth the steps necessary to complete such changes. The agency shall provide an opportunity to interested persons, including individuals with handicaps, agency employees with handicaps, or organizations representing individuals with handicaps, to participate in the development of the transition plan by submitting comments (both oral and written). A copy of the transition plan shall be made available for public inspection. The plan shall, at a minimum—
 - (1) Identify physical obstacles in the Department's facilities that limit the accessibility of its programs or activities to individuals with handicaps;
 - (2) Describe in detail the methods that will be used to make the facilities accessible;
 - (3) Specify the schedule for taking the steps necessary to achieve compliance with this section and, if the time period of the transition plan is longer than one year, identify steps that will be taken during each year of the transition period; and
 - (4) Indicate the official responsible for implementation of the plan.

§ 28.151 Program accessibility: New construction and alterations.

Each building or part of a building that is constructed or altered by, on behalf of, or for the use of the Department shall be designed, constructed, or altered so as to be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with handicaps. The definitions, requirements and standards of the Architectural Barriers Act (42 U.S.C. 4151-4157), as established in 41 CFR 101-19.600-607, apply to buildings covered by this section, except for military facilities of the Coast Guard, which are covered by 32 CFR part 56.

§§ 28.152-28.159 [Reserved]

§ 28.160 Communications.

- (a) The Department shall take appropriate steps to ensure effective communication with applicants, participants, personnel of other Federal entities, and members of the public.

- (1) The Department shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids where necessary to afford an individual with handicaps an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a program or activity conducted by the Department.
 - (i) In determining what type of auxiliary aid is necessary, the Department shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individual with handicaps.
 - (ii) The Department need not provide individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices of a personal nature to applicants or participants in programs.
- (2) Where the Department communicates with applicants and beneficiaries by telephone, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDDs) or equally effective telecommunication systems, shall be used to communicate with persons with impaired hearing.
- (b) The Department shall ensure that interested persons, including persons with impaired vision or hearing, can obtain information as to the existence and location of accessible services, activities, and facilities.
- (c) The Department shall provide signs at each primary entrance to each of its inaccessible facilities, directing users to a location at which they can obtain information as to the location of accessible facilities. The international symbol for accessibility shall be used at each primary entrance of an accessible facility.
- (d) This section does not require the Department to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a program or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. In those circumstances where personnel of a DOT element believe that the proposed action would fundamentally alter the program or activity or would result in an undue financial and administrative burden, the DOT element has the burden of proving that compliance with § 28.160 would result in such alteration or burden. The decision that compliance would result in such alteration or burden must be made by the Secretary or his or her designee, after considering all resources available for use in the funding and operation of the program or activity, and must be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion. If an action required to comply with this section would result in such an alteration or such burdens, the Department shall take any other action that would not result in such an alteration or such a burden but would nevertheless ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, individuals with handicaps receive the benefits and services of the program or activity.

§§ 28.161-28.169 [Reserved]

§ 28.170 Compliance procedures.

- (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, paragraphs (c)-(k) of this section apply to all allegations of discrimination on the basis of handicap in programs of activities conducted by the Department;
- (b)
 - (1) The Department shall process complaints alleging violations of section 504 with respect to employment according to the procedures established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 29 CFR part 1613 pursuant to section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791).
 - (2) The Department shall process complaints alleging violations of section 504 with respect to requirements of any Department safety regulation, concerning an individual's qualifications to perform a function or to receive a certificate or license, according to the procedures for a petition for

an individual waiver or request for review of a standard for possible amendment or recession. The Departmental element shall inform the complainant, in writing, of the decision on the request. The complainant may request reconsideration by the Departmental element of the decision. The decision on the petition or request shall constitute the Department's final action in the matter.

- (c) Responsibility for implementation and operation of this section shall be vested in the Director, Departmental Office of Civil Rights.
- (d)
 - (1) The Department shall accept and investigate all complete complaints for which it has jurisdiction. All complete complaints must be filed within 180 days of the alleged act of discrimination. The Department may extend this time period for good cause.
 - (2) If the subject matter of a complete complaint concerns a decision by a Departmental element, under a safety regulation, concerning an individual's qualifications to perform a function or to receive a certificate or license, and the complainant has available within the Departmental element a formal review or appeal mechanism concerning that decision, the Department shall not take action on the complaint until the Departmental element's review or appeal process has been completed.
- (e) If the Department receives a complaint over which it does not have jurisdiction, it shall promptly notify the complainant and shall make reasonable efforts to refer the complaint to the appropriate Government entity.
- (f) The Department shall notify the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board upon receipt of any complaint alleging that a building or facility that is subject to the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151-4157), is not readily accessible to and usable by individuals with handicaps.
- (g) Within 180 days of the receipt of a complete complaint for which it has jurisdiction, the Department shall notify the complainant of the results of the investigation in a letter containing—
 - (1) Findings of fact and conclusions of law;
 - (2) A description of a remedy for each violation found; and
 - (3) A notice of the right to appeal.
- (h) Appeals of the findings of fact and conclusions of law or remedies must be filed by the complainant within 90 days of receipt from the Department of the letter required by § 28.170(g). The Department may extend this time for good cause.
- (i) Timely appeals shall be accepted and processed by the Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy. The appeal will not be heard by the same person who made the initial determination on the request. The decision on the appeal shall constitute the Department's final action in the matter.
- (j) The Department shall notify the complainant of the results of the appeal within 60 days of the receipt of the request. If the Department determines that it needs additional information from the complainant, it shall have 60 days from the date it receives the additional information to make its determination on the appeal.
- (k) The time limits cited in paragraphs (g) and (j) of this section may be extended with the permission of the Assistant Attorney General.

- (l) The Department may delegate its authority for conducting complaint investigations to other Federal agencies, except that the authority for making the final determination may not be delegated to another agency.

[56 FR 37296, Aug. 6, 1991, as amended at 59 FR 10061, Mar. 3, 1994]

§§ 28.171-28.999 [Reserved]