

Policy Guidance On Executive Order 13164: Establishing Procedures To Facilitate The Provision Of Reasonable Accommodation

Introduction

On July 26, 2000, President Clinton signed [Executive Order 13164](#) (Order),⁽¹⁾ which requires each federal agency to establish effective written procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodation. The Order helps to implement the requirement of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973⁽²⁾ that agencies provide reasonable accommodation to qualified employees and applicants with disabilities. It is an important part of the government's national policy to create additional employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

An accommodation is a change involving the workplace that enables a person with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunities. Many individuals with disabilities can apply for and perform jobs without the need for an accommodation. However, where workplace barriers exist, such as physical obstacles or rules about how a job is to be performed, reasonable accommodation serves two fundamental purposes. First, reasonable accommodations remove barriers that prevent people with disabilities from applying for, or performing, jobs for which they are qualified. Second, reasonable accommodations enable agencies to expand the pool of qualified workers, thus allowing the agencies to benefit from the talents of people who might otherwise be arbitrarily barred from employment.

Effective procedures for processing reasonable accommodation requests will advance both these goals. They will enable agencies to handle requests in a prompt, fair, and efficient manner; they will assure that individuals with disabilities understand how to approach the system and know what to expect; and they will be a resource both for individuals with disabilities and for agency employees, so that all parties can understand the legal requirements of the Rehabilitation Act. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC or Commission) is responsible for issuing guidance to implement the Order. This Guidance first sets forth some background information on the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation and the standards of the Rehabilitation Act. It then addresses each of the requirements of the Order. This Guidance is to be read in conjunction with relevant EEOC regulations, *see* 29 C.F.R. part 1630, and the EEOC's "[Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship Under the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)," available on the web at www.eeoc.gov.