

notice to the MACOM and activity EEO officer.

(k) The notice of decision to reject or cancel must inform the class agent of all of the following:

(1) The right to proceed with an individual complaint of discrimination.

(2) The right to appeal the Army decision to the EEOC Office of Review and Appeals.

(3) The right to file a civil action. In age discrimination complaints, the agent must appeal a rejection or cancellation to the EEOC before he or she may file a civil action.

(l) The complaint examiner's recommendation to accept, reject, or cancel the complaint becomes the Army decision unless it is accepted, modified, or rejected by the Secretary of the Army or his or her designee within 10 calendar days after its receipt.

(m) Acceptance of a class complaint by the Secretary of the Army or his or her designee for purposes of administrative processing under this regulation is not an admission of class status within the meaning of Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure for purposes of litigation within a Federal District Court.

§ 588.37 Notification and opting out.

(a) Upon notification of acceptance of a class complaint, the activity EEO officer will immediately make reasonable efforts to notify all class members of the existence of a class complaint. The notice will advise class members of their right to remove themselves from the class by notifying the Army within 30 calendar days after the notice is issued. The EEO officer will determine the reasonable means such as delivery, mailing distribution, or posting, for notifying the class members.

(b) The notice will contain the following:

(1) The name of the agency or organizational segment, its location, and the date the class complaint was accepted by the Army.

(2) A description of the issues accepted in the class complaint.

(3) An explanation that class members may remove themselves from the class by notifying the activity EEO officer within 30 calendar days after the issuance of the notice.

(4) An explanation of the binding nature of the final decision on the formal class complaint.

§ 588.38 Avoiding delay.

A class complaint must be processed promptly. All parties will proceed with the complaint without delay so that the time limits imposed by the complaints examiner will be met and the complaint will be processed within 180 calendar days after filing.

§ 588.39 Developing evidence.

(a) The complaints examiner gives the labor counselor and the class agent and his or her representative, if any, 60 calendar days to prepare their cases and develop the evidence based on EEOC regulations. The complaints examiner may extend this time if requested by either party.

(b) During the time allowed to develop the evidence, the complaints examiner may, at his or her discretion, direct that an investigator trained or certified by the EEOC, investigate facts relevant to the class complaint or to any portion of it. In this event, the labor counselor will immediately notify the EEO officer who will request, in writing, within 3 days of receipt of the examiner's directive, the assignment of an investigator by the appropriate USACARA Regional Office citing applicable funds for travel and per diem.

(c) Both parties will give the examiner all materials that they wish examined and other material the examiner may request.

§ 588.40 Resolution of the complaint.

(a) The complaints examiner gives the class agent, or his or her representative, and the labor counselor a copy of all materials obtained. Also, the examiner provides an opportunity for the class agent to discuss these materials with the labor counselor and to try to resolve the complaint.

(b) Though an opportunity to resolve the complaint is specifically provided at this stage, both parties may agree to resolution at any time after the complaint has been accepted.

(c) If the complaint is resolved, the terms of the resolution will be put in writing and signed by the class agent

and the Activity Commander, after coordination with the EEO officer, the labor counselor, and the CPO. A written resolution may include a finding on the issue of discrimination and an award of attorney fees and/or costs. It must also include any corrective action agreed on. The corrective action must be consistent with the law, executive orders, negotiated agreements, and Federal regulations, rules, and instructions. A copy of the signed resolution will be given to the class agent.

(d) Notice of the resolution will be given to all class members in the same way as the notification of the acceptance of the class complaint. This notice will state the terms of the corrective action, if any, to be granted by the Army. A resolution binds all members of the class, except those who have properly removed themselves.

(e) If the Army does not carry out, or rescind, any action specified by the resolution, for reasons not due to acts or conduct of the class agent, the representative, or class members, it will reinstate the complaint for processing at the class agent's written request. The complaint should be reinstated at the point where processing stopped. The agent may appeal to the EEOC Office of Review and Appeals the Army's failure to reinstate the complaint.

§ 588.41 Procedures for the hearing.

(a) At the end of the period allowed to prepare the case, the complaints examiner will set a date for a hearing. Witnesses and representatives at the hearing are authorized as provided for a subpart H. Only persons directly connected to the complaint (as determined by the examiner) may attend the hearing.

(b) The complaints examiner will conduct the hearing and give an opportunity to the parties to introduce evidence and to cross-examine witnesses. Testimony will be under oath or affirmation. Rules of evidence are not applied strictly, but the complaints examiner may exclude irrelevant or unduly repetitious evidence. The examiner may also exclude any person from the hearing for conduct that obstructs the hearing.

(c) The hearing is recorded verbatim and the transcript is made a part of the

record. The complaints examiner sends to EEOCCRA the record of the hearing, the report of findings, and a recommended decision on the complaint. This decision includes corrective action where appropriate. The examiner notifies the class agent of the date the report of findings and recommendations was sent to the EEOCCRA.

§ 588.42 Final Army decision.

(a) Within 30 calendar days after the Army receives the examiner's report, the Secretary of the Army or his or her designee must issue a written decision to accept, reject, or modify the findings and recommendations of the examiner.

(b) The decision is sent to the class agent and to his or her representative, with a copy of the transcript of the hearing and of the findings and recommendations of the examiner.

(c) If the Army decision is to reject or modify the findings and recommendations of the complaints examiner, the decision must state, in detail, the specific reasons for the Army action.

(d) If the Army has not issued a decision within 30 calendar days after receiving the examiner's report, the findings and recommendations of the examiner will become the final Army decision. This decision and the record of the hearing must then be sent by EEOCCRA to the class agent or his or her representative. A copy of the final Army decision will be sent to the MACOM, the Activity Commander, and to the activity EEO officer.

(e) Within 10 calendar days of the transmittal of the final Army decision to the class agent, the EEO officer will notify all members of the class of the final Army decision by the same means used to notify the class of the existence of the class complaint. (See § 508.31(a))

(f) The final Army decision will direct any remedial action authorized by law determined to be necessary or desirable to resolve the issue of discrimination and to promote the policy of equal employment opportunity. When discrimination is found, the notice of decision will—

(1) Advise the class agent and his or her representative, if any, the attorney fees and/or costs may be awarded. The