

termines that the administrative costs and burdens of implementing subsection (a) of this section with respect to a particular case or class of cases justifies such a waiver.

(c) Information

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each State workers compensation authority shall, upon request of the Secretary, provide to the Secretary on a quarterly basis information concerning workers compensation benefits received by any covered DOE contractor employee entitled to compensation or benefits under this part, which shall include the name, Social Security number, and nature and amount of workers compensation benefits for each such employee for which the request was made.

(Pub. L. 106-398, §1 [div. C, title XXXVI, §3682], as added Pub. L. 108-375, div. C, title XXXI, §3161, Oct. 28, 2004, 118 Stat. 2184.)

§ 7385s-12. Maximum aggregate compensation

For each individual whose illness or death serves as the basis for compensation or benefits under this part, the total amount of compensation (other than medical benefits) paid under this part, to all persons, in the aggregate, on the basis of that illness or death shall not exceed \$250,000.

(Pub. L. 106-398, §1 [div. C, title XXXVI, §3683], as added Pub. L. 108-375, div. C, title XXXI, §3161, Oct. 28, 2004, 118 Stat. 2184.)

§ 7385s-13. Funding of administrative costs

There is authorized and hereby appropriated to the Secretary for fiscal year 2005 and thereafter such sums as may be necessary to carry out this part.

(Pub. L. 106-398, §1 [div. C, title XXXVI, §3684], as added Pub. L. 108-375, div. C, title XXXI, §3161, Oct. 28, 2004, 118 Stat. 2184.)

§ 7385s-14. Payment of compensation and benefits from compensation fund

The compensation and benefits provided under this subchapter, when authorized or approved by the President, shall be paid from the compensation fund established under section 7384e of this title.

(Pub. L. 106-398, §1 [div. C, title XXXVI, §3685], as added Pub. L. 108-375, div. C, title XXXI, §3161, Oct. 28, 2004, 118 Stat. 2185.)

§ 7385s-15. Office of Ombudsman

(a) Establishment

There is established in the Department of Labor an office to be known as the “Office of the Ombudsman” (in this section referred to as the “Office”).

(b) Head

The head of the Office shall be the Ombudsman. The individual serving as Ombudsman shall be either of the following:

- (1) An officer or employee of the Department of Labor designated by the Secretary for purposes of this section from among officers and employees of the Department who have experi-

ence and expertise necessary to carry out the duties of the Office specified in subsection (c) of this section.

- (2) An individual employed by the Secretary from the private sector from among individuals in the private sector who have experience and expertise necessary to carry out the duties of the Office specified in subsection (c) of this section.

(c) Duties

The duties of the Office shall be as follows:

- (1) To provide information on the benefits available under this part and part B and on the requirements and procedures applicable to the provision of such benefits.

- (2) To make recommendations to the Secretary regarding the location of centers (to be known as “resource centers”) for the acceptance and development of claims for benefits under this part and part B.

- (3) To carry out such other duties with respect to this part and part B as the Secretary shall specify for purposes of this section.

(d) Independent Office

The Secretary shall take appropriate actions to ensure the independence of the Office within the Department of Labor, including independence from other officers and employees of the Department engaged in activities relating to the administration of the provisions of this part and part B.

(e) Annual report

- (1) Not later than July 30 each year, the Ombudsman shall submit to Congress a report on activities under this part and part B.

- (2) Each report under paragraph (1) shall set forth the following:

- (A) The number and types of complaints, grievances, and requests for assistance received by the Ombudsman under this part and part B during the preceding year.

- (B) An assessment of the most common difficulties encountered by claimants and potential claimants under this part and part B during the preceding year.

- (3) The first report under paragraph (1) shall be the report submitted in 2006.

- (4) Not later than 180 days after the submission to Congress of the annual report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to Congress in writing, and post on the public Internet website of the Department of Labor, a response to the report that—

- (A) includes a statement of whether the Secretary agrees or disagrees with the specific issues raised by the Ombudsman in the report;

- (B) if the Secretary agrees with the Ombudsman on those issues, describes the actions to be taken to correct those issues; and

- (C) if the Secretary does not agree with the Ombudsman on those issues, describes the reasons the Secretary does not agree.

(f) Outreach

The Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall each undertake outreach to advise the public of the existence and duties of the Office.