

passe proceedings, during the time the employee otherwise would be in a duty status. The number of employees for whom official time is authorized under this paragraph shall not exceed the number of individuals designated as representing the Department for such purposes.

(2) Any activities performed by any employee relating to the internal business of the labor organization, including the solicitation of membership, elections of labor organization officials, and collection of dues, shall be performed during the time the employee is in a nonduty status.

(3) Except as provided in paragraph (1), the Board shall determine whether any employee participating for, or on behalf of, a labor organization in any phase of proceedings before the Board shall be authorized official time for such purpose during the time the employee would otherwise be in a duty status.

(4) Except as provided in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3), any employee representing an exclusive representative, or engaged in any other matter covered by this subchapter, shall be granted official time in any amount the Department and the exclusive representative agree to be reasonable, necessary, and in the public interest.

(Pub. L. 96-465, title I, §1018, Oct. 17, 1980, 94 Stat. 2141.)

#### SUBCHAPTER XI—GRIEVANCES

##### § 4131. Definitions and applicability

(a)(1) Except as provided in subsection (b), for purposes of this subchapter, the term “grievance” means any act, omission, or condition subject to the control of the Secretary which is alleged to deprive a member of the Service who is a citizen of the United States (other than a United States citizen employed under section 3951 of this title who is not a family member) of a right or benefit authorized by law or regulation or which is otherwise a source of concern or dissatisfaction to the member, including—

(A) separation of the member allegedly contrary to laws or regulations, or predicated upon alleged inaccuracy, omission, error, or falsely prejudicial character of information in any part of the official personnel record of the member;

(B) other alleged violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of applicable laws, regulations, or published policy affecting the terms and conditions of the employment or career status of the member;

(C) allegedly wrongful disciplinary action against the member;

(D) dissatisfaction with respect to the working environment of the member;

(E) alleged inaccuracy, omission, error, or falsely prejudicial character of information in the official personnel record of the member which is or could be prejudicial to the member;

(F) action alleged to be in the nature of reprisal or other interference with freedom of action in connection with participation by the member in procedures under this subchapter;

(G) alleged denial of an allowance, premium pay, or other financial benefit to which the member claims entitlement under applicable laws or regulations; and

(H) any discrimination prohibited by—

(i) section 2000e-16 of title 42,

(ii) section 206(d) of title 29,

(iii) section 791 of title 29,

(iv) sections 631 and 633a of title 29, or

(v) any rule, regulation, or policy directive prescribed under any provision of law described in clauses (i) through (iv).

(2) The scope of grievances described in paragraph (1) may be modified by written agreement between the Department and the labor organization accorded recognition as the exclusive representative under subchapter X (hereinafter in this subchapter referred to as the “exclusive representative”).

(b) For purposes of this subchapter, the term “grievance” does not include—

(1) an individual assignment of a member under subchapter V, other than an assignment alleged to be contrary to law or regulation;

(2) the judgment of a selection board established under section 4002 of this title, a tenure board established under section 3946(b) of this title, or any other equivalent body established by laws or regulations which similarly evaluates the performance of members of the Service on a comparative basis;

(3) the expiration of a limited appointment, the termination of a limited appointment under section 4011 of this title, or the denial of a limited career extension or of a renewal of a limited career extension under section 4007(b) of this title; or

(4) any complaint or appeal where a specific statutory hearing procedure exists, except as provided in section 4139(a)(2) of this title.

Nothing in this subsection shall exclude any act, omission, or condition alleged to violate any law, rule, regulation, or policy directive referred to in subsection (a)(1)(H) from such term.

(c) This subchapter applies only with respect to the Department of State, Broadcasting<sup>1</sup> Board of Governors, the Agency for International Development, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Commerce.

(Pub. L. 96-465, title I, §1101, Oct. 17, 1980, 94 Stat. 2142; Pub. L. 97-241, title III, §303(b), Aug. 24, 1982, 96 Stat. 291; Pub. L. 102-138, title I, §153(a), Oct. 28, 1991, 105 Stat. 673; Pub. L. 103-236, title I, §§180(a)(10), 181(a)(4)(A), Apr. 30, 1994, 108 Stat. 416, 417; Pub. L. 105-277, div. G, subdiv. A, title XIII, §1335(k)(4), title XIV, §1422(b)(4)(D), Oct. 21, 1998, 112 Stat. 2681-789, 2681-793.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### AMENDMENTS

1998—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 105-277, §1422(b)(4)(D), substituted “Agency for International Development” for “United States International Development Cooperation Agency”.

Pub. L. 105-277, §1335(k)(4), substituted “Broadcasting Board of Governors,” for “the United States Information Agency.”

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be “the Broadcasting”.

1994—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 103-236, §180(a)(10), inserted “(other than a United States citizen employed under section 3951 of this title who is not a family member)” after “citizen of the United States” in introductory provisions.

Subsec. (b)(3). Pub. L. 103-236, §181(a)(4), made technical amendment to reference to section 4011 of this title to reflect renumbering of corresponding section of original act.

1991—Subsec. (a)(1)(H). Pub. L. 102-138, §153(a)(1), added subpar. (H).

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 102-138, §153(a)(2), in par. (4), substituted “section 4139(a)(2)” for “section 4139(b)” and inserted at end “Nothing in this subsection shall exclude any act, omission, or condition alleged to violate any law, rule, regulation, or policy directive referred to in subsection (a)(1)(H) from such term.”

#### Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

##### CHANGE OF NAME

Broadcasting Board of Governors renamed United States Agency for Global Media pursuant to section 6204(a)(22) of this title. The renaming was effectuated by notice to congressional appropriations committees dated May 24, 2018, and became effective Aug. 22, 2018.

“United States Information Agency” substituted for “International Communication Agency” in subsec. (c), pursuant to section 303(b) of Pub. L. 97-241, set out as a note under section 1461 of this title.

##### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1998 AMENDMENT

Amendment by section 1335(k)(4) of Pub. L. 105-277 effective Oct. 1, 1999, see section 1301 of Pub. L. 105-277, set out as an Effective Date note under section 6531 of this title.

Amendment by section 1422(b)(4)(D) of Pub. L. 105-277 effective Apr. 1, 1999, see section 1401 of Pub. L. 105-277, set out as an Effective Date note under section 6561 of this title.

##### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1991 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 102-138 not applicable with respect to any grievance, within the meaning of this section, arising before Oct. 28, 1991, see section 153(f) of Pub. L. 102-138, set out as a note under section 4115 of this title.

#### § 4132. Grievances concerning former members or their survivors

Within the time limitations of section 4134 of this title, a former member of the Service or the surviving spouse (or, if none, another member of the family) of a deceased member or former member of the Service may file a grievance under this subchapter only with respect to allegations described in section 4131(a)(1)(G) of this title.

(Pub. L. 96-465, title I, §1102, Oct. 17, 1980, 94 Stat. 2143.)

#### § 4133. Freedom of action

##### (a) Nature of protection

Any individual filing a grievance under this subchapter (hereinafter in this subchapter referred to as the “grievant”), and any witness, labor organization, or other person involved in a grievance proceeding, shall be free from any restraint, interference, coercion, harassment, discrimination, or reprisal in those proceedings or by virtue of them.

##### (b) Right to representation

(1) The grievant has the right to a representative of his or her own choosing at every stage of the proceedings under this subchapter.

(2) In any case where the grievant is a member of a bargaining unit represented by an exclusive representative, but is not represented in the grievance by that exclusive representative, the exclusive representative shall have the right to appear during the grievance proceedings.

(3) The grievant, and any representative of the grievant who is a member of the Service or employee of the Department, shall be granted reasonable periods of administrative leave to prepare and present the grievance and to attend proceedings under this subchapter.

##### (c) Administrative leave for witnesses

Any witness who is a member of the Service or employee of the Department shall be granted reasonable periods of administrative leave to appear and testify at any proceedings under this subchapter.

##### (d) Records

(1) No record of—

(A) a determination by the Secretary to reject a recommendation of the Foreign Service Grievance Board,

(B) a finding by the Grievance Board against the grievant, or

(C) the fact that a grievance proceeding is pending or has been held,

shall be entered in the personnel records of the grievant (except by order of the Grievance Board as a remedy for the grievance) or those of any other individual connected with the grievance. Nothing in this subsection shall prevent a grievant from placing a rebuttal to accompany a record of disciplinary action in such grievant's personnel records nor prevent the Department from including a response to such rebuttal, including documenting those cases in which the Board has reviewed and upheld the discipline.

(2) The Department shall maintain records pertaining to grievances under appropriate safeguards to preserve confidentiality.

(3) The Foreign Service Grievance Board may enforce compliance with the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2).

##### (e) Expedition of security clearance procedures

The Department will use its best endeavors to expedite security clearance procedures whenever necessary to assure a fair and prompt resolution of a grievance.

(Pub. L. 96-465, title I, §1103, Oct. 17, 1980, 94 Stat. 2143; Pub. L. 106-113, div. B, §1000(a)(7) [div. A, title III, §329], Nov. 29, 1999, 113 Stat. 1536, 1501A-438.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### AMENDMENTS

1999—Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 106-113 inserted at end “Nothing in this subsection shall prevent a grievant from placing a rebuttal to accompany a record of disciplinary action in such grievant's personnel records nor prevent the Department from including a response to such rebuttal, including documenting those cases in which the Board has reviewed and upheld the discipline.”

#### § 4134. Time limitations

##### (a) Limitations period

A grievance is forever barred under this subchapter unless it is filed with the Department