

§ 617.11 Investigation.

(a) *Informal investigation.* (1) NSF will investigate complaints that are unresolved after mediation or are reopened because of violation of a mediation agreement.

(2) As part of the initial investigation, NSF will use informal fact finding methods, including joint or separate discussions with the complainant and recipient, to establish the facts, and, if possible, will settle the complaint on terms that are agreeable to the parties. NSF may seek the assistance of any involved State agency.

(3) NSF will put any agreement in writing and have it signed by the parties and an authorized official of NSF.

(4) A settlement shall not affect other enforcement efforts of NSF, including compliance reviews, or individual complaints that involve the recipient.

(5) A settlement is not a finding of discrimination against the recipient.

(b) *Formal investigation.* If NSF cannot resolve the complaint through informal investigation, it will begin to develop formal findings through further investigation of the complaint. If the investigation indicates a violation of the Act, NSF will try to obtain voluntary compliance. If NSF cannot obtain voluntary compliance, it will begin enforcement as described in § 617.12. If the investigation does not indicate a violation of the Act, NSF will issue a written determination in favor of the recipient.

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