

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460



EXTERNAL CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE OFFICE  
OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

October 30, 2019

**Return Receipt Requested**

Certified Mail#: 7015 3010 0001 1267 1753

**In Reply Refer to:**

EPA File No: 01U-20-R6

(b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Enf. Privacy

McConnell Unit

(b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Enf. Privacy

Beeville, TX 78102

**Re: Rejection and Referral of Administrative Complaint**

Dear

(b)(6) Privacy, (b)(7)(C) Enf. Privacy

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), External Civil Rights Compliance Office (ECRCO) is referring a complaint received October 29, 2019 from you, a prisoner incarcerated at the William G. McConnell Unit in Beeville, TX under the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Correctional Institutions Division. You alleged that the hazardous and unhealthy living conditions jeopardize the lives and well-being of yours and your fellow inmates. After careful review, ECRCO cannot accept your complaint for investigation because it does not meet the jurisdictional requirements described in the EPA's nondiscrimination regulation. However, your complaint is being referred to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

Pursuant to EPA's nondiscrimination regulation, ECRCO conducts a preliminary review of administrative complaints to determine acceptance, rejection, or referral to the appropriate Federal agency. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(d)(1). To be accepted for investigation, a complaint must meet the jurisdictional requirements described in the EPA's nondiscrimination regulation. First, the complaint must be in writing. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(b)(1). Second, it must describe an alleged discriminatory act that, if true, may violate the EPA's nondiscrimination regulation (i.e., an alleged discriminatory act based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability). *Id.* Third, it must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.120(b)(2). Finally, the complaint must be filed against an applicant for, or recipient of, EPA financial assistance that allegedly committed the discriminatory act. *See* 40 C.F.R. § 7.15.

Your correspondence does not meet the jurisdictional requirements of the EPA's nondiscrimination regulation. Particularly, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Correctional Institutions Division is not a recipient of EPA financial assistance. As a result, the ECRCO must reject your complaint and close this case as of the date of this letter.

As the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Civil Rights Division, Special Litigation Section, may have jurisdiction over the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Correctional Institutions Division, the complaint is being referred to DOJ for appropriate action. A copy of the letter to DOJ is enclosed with this correspondence. Please contact Steven Rosenbaum at DOJ for information regarding the referral of this complaint. Mr. Rosenbaum's contact information is: U.S. Department of Justice, Special Litigation Section, Civil Rights Division, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20530. We are also forwarding DOJ a copy of your complaint.

If you have any questions about this correspondence, please contact Dale Rhines, Deputy Director, at (202) 564-4174, by e-mail at [rhines.dale@epa.gov](mailto:rhines.dale@epa.gov) or by mail at U.S. EPA External Civil Rights Compliance Office, (Mail Code 2310A), 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460.

Sincerely,



Lilian S. Dorka  
Director  
External Civil Rights Compliance Office  
Office of General Counsel

Enclosure

cc: Angelia Talbert-Duarte  
Deputy Associate General Counsel  
Civil Rights & Finance Law Office

David Gray  
Deputy Regional Administrator  
Deputy Civil Rights Official  
EPA Region 6

Patricia Welton  
Regional Counsel  
EPA Region 6