



Whistleblowing

A "whistleblower" discloses information he or she reasonably believes evidences:

- A violation of any law, rule or regulation
 - Gross mismanagement
 - A gross waste of funds
 - An abuse of authority
 - A substantial and specific danger to public health
 - A substantial and specific danger to public safety
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The Office of Special Counsel (OSC) provides a secure channel through which current and former federal employees and applicants for federal employment may make confidential disclosures. OSC evaluates the disclosures to determine whether there is a substantial likelihood that one of the categories listed above has been disclosed. If such a determination is made, OSC has the authority to require the head of the agency to investigate the matter.

To make a disclosure contact:

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***Hearing and Speech Disabled: Federal Relay Service 1-800-877-8339**

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Prohibited Personnel Practices

By law, Federal employees **may not**:

- Discriminate
 - Solicit or consider employment recommendations based on factors other than personal knowledge or records of job related abilities or characteristics
 - Coerce the political activity of any person
 - Deceive or willfully obstruct any person from competing for employment
 - Influence any person to withdraw from job competition
 - Give an unauthorized preference or advantage to improve or injure the prospects of any particular person for employment
 - Engage in nepotism
 - Take or threaten to take a personnel action because of whistleblowing
 - Take or threaten to take a personnel action because of the exercise of a lawful appeal, complaint, or grievance right
 - Discriminate based on personal conduct which does not adversely affect the performance of the employee or other employees
 - Knowingly take or fail to take personnel action in the violation of veteran's preference laws
 - Violate any law, rule or regulation implementing or directly concerning merit system principles
 - Implement or enforce a nondisclosure agreement or policy lacking notification of whistleblower rights
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More information may be obtained from:

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WHISTLEBLOWER RETALIATION

—5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(8)—

THE U.S. OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL

What is whistleblower retaliation?

A federal employee authorized to take, direct others to take, recommend, or approve any personnel action may not take, fail to take, or threaten to take any personnel action against an employee because of protected whistleblowing.

EXAMPLE: A supervisor directs the geographic reassignment of an employee because the employee reported safety violations to senior agency officials.

Protected whistleblowing is defined as disclosing information that the discloser reasonably believes evidences:

1. a violation of law, rule, or regulation;
2. gross mismanagement;
3. gross waste of funds;
4. an abuse of authority; or
5. a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety.

This section also prohibits retaliation against government scientists who challenge censorship or make disclosures concerning the integrity of the scientific process if the censorship will cause one of the five types of misconduct described above.

What can you do if you believe whistleblower retaliation has occurred?

If you believe that you have been subject to retaliation for protected whistleblowing you can file a complaint with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC). OSC is an independent agency that investigates and prosecutes allegations of prohibited personnel practices (PPP) by federal employees. OSC has the authority to investigate PPPs, including allegations of whistleblower retaliation, and may seek corrective or disciplinary action when warranted.

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