

Your Rights as an Employee of a Government Corporation

Enforced by the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC)



Prohibited Personnel Practices

Prohibited personnel practices (PPPs) are employment-related activities that are banned in the federal workplace because they violate the merit system. Under 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(8), (b)(9)(A)(i), (b)(9)(B)-(D) an employee of a government corporation authorized to take, direct others to take, recommend or approve any personnel action may not:

Take, fail to take, or threaten (to take or withhold) a personnel action against an employee for making protected disclosures.

Ex: Supervisor Stephen rates Employee Alex as fully successful for the performance year after Alex raises concerns about leadership failing to provide proper respiratory equipment to employees working with hazardous materials. **5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(8)**

Protected Disclosure is defined as a communication from an employee that the employee reasonably believes evidences:

1. A violation of law, rule, or regulation;
2. Gross mismanagement;
3. A gross waste of funds;
4. An abuse of authority;
5. A substantial and specific danger to public health or safety; or
6. Censorship related to scientific integrity or research if censorship meets one of the above listed categories.

Take, fail to take, or threaten (to take or withhold) a personnel action against an employee for engaging in protected activity.

Ex: Supervisor Helen reassigns Employee Adam in retaliation for meeting with an Office of Inspector General investigator during an active investigation; or for providing testimony in another employee's union grievance. **5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(9)**

Protected Activity includes;

1. Exercise of appeal, complaint, or grievance rights to remedy a violation of 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(8);
2. Testimony or other assistance to a person exercising such appeal, complaint, or grievance rights;
3. Cooperation with or disclosures to the Special Counsel or Inspector General, or any component responsible for internal investigation or review; or
4. Refusal to obey an order that would require a violation of a law, rule, or regulation.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU BELIEVE THAT RETALIATION HAS OCCURRED?

OSC is a federal investigative and prosecutorial agency. Current and former federal employees, including probationary employees, and applicants for federal employment can submit a complaint electronically to OSC at <https://osc.gov>. OSC will review the allegations to determine jurisdiction and investigate allegations of retaliation. In complaints where OSC finds a violation, OSC has the authority to seek corrective and/or disciplinary action and/or file complaints with the Merit Systems Protection Board, where appropriate. 5 U.S.C. §§ 1212, 2302(b)(8), 2302(b)(9). Learn more about retaliation by reviewing the information and videos in the "Whistleblower Retaliation" and "Other Retaliation" tabs found [here](#).

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU WANT TO REPORT GOVERNMENT WRONGDOING?

Current and former federal employees and applicants can confidentially report information evidencing 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 or safety, or censorship related to scientific integrity or research to OSC. OSC has the authority to require the head of the agency concerned to investigate the matter. While OSC does not have independent investigative authority in these cases, Congress has given OSC an important oversight role in reviewing government investigations of potential wrongdoing.

Updated and detailed information on OSC and its procedures can be found on OSC's website at <https://osc.gov>.

For more information on filing a complaint or making a disclosure: 202-804-7000, 800-872-9855, or submit a question at info@osc.gov.

Please note that OSC may not provide advice regarding the merit of a complaint or whether the allegation meets the statutory definitions.

For information about training and the 2302c Certification Program please contact OSC's Outreach Unit via email at certification@osc.gov.