



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 workforce 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 fail to take) a personnel action against an employee for making protected disclosures. Ex: Supervisor Joe directs the geographic reassignment of Employee Jack because Jack reported safety violations to the agency's Inspector General. *5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(8)*

Protected Whistleblowing is defined as disclosing information that the discloser reasonable 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 research if censorship meeting one of the above listed categories.

Take, fail to take, or threaten (to take or fail to take) a personnel action against an employee for engaging in protected activity. Ex: Supervisor Jack terminates Employee John after learning that John reported a gross waste of funds to the Office of Inspector General; or for refusing to obey an order that would require John to violate agency regulations. *5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(9)*

Protected Activity includes;

1. Exercise of appeal, complaint, or grievance rights;
2. Testimony or other assistance to a person exercising 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 law, rule, or regulation.

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

OSC is an 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 System Protection Board, where appropriate. 5 U.S.C. section 1212 and section 2302(b)(8) and (b)(9). You can learn more retaliation by reviewing the information and videos in the "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, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. 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.

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 merit of a complaint or whether the allegation meets the statutory definitions.

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

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