

Memorandum to All Employees

From: [Insert Head of Agency/Unit]

RE: Annual Notice on Whistleblower Protection Laws and Prohibited Personnel Practices

Federal agencies are required to ensure that employees are informed of their right to be free from prohibited personnel practices (PPPs), including retaliation for whistleblowing. The Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989, the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012, the Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017, and other related statutes collectively guarantee that all covered employees have the right to engage in whistleblowing and be protected from retaliation for whistleblowing.

Whistleblowing is defined as **disclosing information that the individual reasonably believes evidences**: (1) a violation of a 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 meets one of the foregoing categories.

Whistleblowing also covers **engaging in protected activity**, which is defined as: (1) filing a complaint, grievance, or appeal; (2) testifying or assisting someone else with these activities; (3) cooperating with or disclosing information to the Special Counsel, Inspector General, or any other agency component responsible for internal investigation or review; or (4) refusing to obey an order that would require a violation of a law, rule, or regulation.

Employees may make lawful disclosures of wrongdoing to anyone, including, for example, management officials, the Inspector General of an agency, and the [U.S. Office of Special Counsel](#) (OSC). For disclosures involving classified national security information or other information protected from public release by law, individuals must use confidential channels—(1) OSC, (2) the OIG of an agency, or (3) another employee of the agency designated to receive such disclosures—to be protected from personnel actions related to their disclosures. Also, certain Members of Congress are authorized to receive disclosures of classified information.

Please review the fact sheet [Your Rights as a Federal Employee](#), which provides detailed information on the fourteen prohibited personnel practices and employees' rights to file complaints with OSC. Additionally, you are encouraged to review [Your Rights When Reporting Wrongs](#), which describes avenues for making whistleblower disclosures and OSC's role in accepting complaints from federal employees.

Thank you for your dedication and contributions to the agency.