



U.S. OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL

Prohibited Conduct for Individuals Interacting with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) is an independent Executive Branch agency with a primary mission to safeguard the merit system, including by investigating and prosecuting civil violations of the Civil Service Reform Act, the Whistleblower Protection Act, the Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act, and the Hatch Act. OSC also provides advisory opinions and guidance under the Hatch Act. And OSC ensures accountability by providing employees with an effective, safe channel to report government wrongdoing.

Every day OSC employees interact with individuals outside of OSC. While most individuals who interact with OSC do so in an appropriate manner, there have been instances of improper and abusive conduct directed at OSC employees by a small number of individuals. Because OSC is committed to promoting a safe and productive work environment for its personnel and the people it serves, OSC issues these guidelines to clarify and ensure a mutual understanding of how individuals should conduct themselves in dealings with OSC.

OSC will not tolerate violence, harassment, intimidation, or other disruptive, abusive, or vexatious language or behavior directed at its personnel. Accordingly, when interacting with OSC personnel, we expect that you will NOT:

1. Engage in disrespectful or obstructive behavior.
2. Attempt to coerce, intimidate, deceive, offer anything of value to influence, or knowingly mislead OSC or any other individuals involved with the matter.
3. Threaten harm to others (physical or otherwise) or use intimidating language, gestures, or actions towards OSC employees.
4. Knowingly provide false or misleading information.
5. Unreasonably delay OSC's processing or evaluation of a matter.
6. Engage in actions or behavior that would impede OSC's fair and orderly investigation or evaluation of a matter.
7. Attempt to communicate with OSC employees about OSC matters outside of official OSC contact information.

8. Refuse to comply with OSC rules and regulations.
9. Engage in actions, behavior, or conduct that is discriminatory or harassing.
10. Record conversations with OSC employees without OSC's consent.

Steps OSC May Take if Individuals Engage in Prohibited Conduct:

1. Ban the offending individual from entering OSC's offices.
2. Cease in-person or telephonic communications with the individual.
3. Terminate OSC's work on an individual's complaint, case, or matter if the conduct impedes OSC's ability to carry out its work.
4. Report any threats of harm to others (physical or otherwise) to the appropriate authorities.
5. Report to the appropriate authorities any attempts to coerce, intimidate, or deceive OSC or any other individuals involved in the matter.

OSC will strive to provide appropriate prior warnings to the offending individual and any representative, allow a response to the proposed sanction when feasible, and document in the file the reasons for any resulting sanction.