

**U.S. FEDERAL LABOR
RELATIONS AUTHORITY**



No FEAR Act Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2025

U.S. Federal Labor Relations Authority

**Annual Report Required by Section 203 of the
Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination
and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act)**

Fiscal Year 2025

Item 1. *Number of cases in federal court pending or resolved arising under each of the respective provisions of the federal Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws as defined in 5 CFR § 724.102 separated by the provision(s) of law involved:*

Total cases: **0**

Total cases broken down by provision(s) of law involved: **Not applicable.**

Item 2. *In the aggregate, for cases covered by Item 1 and separated by provisions(s) of law involved--*

(i): Status or disposition: **Not applicable.**

(ii): Amount of money required to be reimbursed to the Judgment Fund: **Not applicable.**

(iii): Amount of reimbursement to the Judgment Fund for attorney's fees where separately designated: **Not applicable.**

Item 3. *In connection with the cases covered by Item 1 and separated by the provision(s) of law involved, the total number of employees disciplined (i.e., reprimanded, suspended without pay, reduced in grade or pay, or removed) and the specific nature of the discipline taken:*

Total number of employees disciplined: **Not applicable.**

Item 4. *The final year-end data about discrimination complaints posted in accordance with section 301 of the No FEAR Act:*

See Attachment (Attach.) 1.

Item 5. The number of employees disciplined for conduct inconsistent with federal Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws or for conduct that constitutes another prohibited personnel practice revealed in connection with agency investigations of these laws and the specific nature of the disciplinary actions taken:

Total: 0

Item 6. A detailed description of the agency's policy for taking disciplinary action against employees for conduct that is inconsistent with federal Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws or for conduct that constitutes another prohibited personnel practice revealed in connection with agency investigations of these laws:

The Federal Labor Relations Authority's (FLRA) prohibits employment discrimination that is based on activity and personal characteristics protected under applicable federal Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws.

FLRA Policy Number 3701, Equal Employment Opportunity (Attach. 2), establishes the FLRA's policy: to provide equal employment opportunity (EEO) for all persons, and to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information.

The FLRA's No FEAR Act Notice (Attach. 3) – which is posted on both the FLRA's intranet and internet sites – reaffirms that the FLRA prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information. That Notice also specifies that retaliation against employees who engage in whistleblower activity is prohibited, and that conduct inconsistent with federal Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Finally, the FLRA's discipline and adverse action policy ensures that individuals engaging in misconduct must first be given notice of performance problems and informal measures – such as counseling, training, and close supervision – should be employed in an effort to correct the misconduct. Where, however, informal efforts to resolve conduct problems are unsuccessful, or if misconduct is sufficiently serious, it is the FLRA's policy to impose discipline that is appropriate to the circumstances. This policy is set forth in FLRA Policy 3010, Employee Discipline and Adverse Actions (Attach. 4), which addresses discipline and adverse actions generally. The policy also covers discipline actions against employees for conduct that is inconsistent with federal Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws or conduct that constitutes another prohibited personnel practice.

Item 7. *An analysis of the information provided in Items 1 through 6 to include an examination of trends, causal analysis, practical knowledge gained through experience, and any actions planned or taken to improve complaint or civil rights programs of the agency with the goal of eliminating discrimination and retaliation in the workplace:*

During fiscal year (FY) 2025, as well as during the previous five FYs, there were no court cases involving allegations that arose under federal Antidiscrimination Laws or Whistleblower Protection Laws. (Attach. 1).

As noted above, the FLRA provides notice to employees regarding their rights under applicable federal Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws. In addition to the No FEAR Act Notice currently posted on its intranet and internet sites (Attach. 3), the FLRA posts and disseminates its policy that informs all employees of the prohibition on employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or retaliation and provides information on the procedures for instituting an EEO complaint (Attach. 2).

As consistent with OPM regulations implementing the requirements of § 201 of the No FEAR Act, particularly 5 C.F.R. § 724.203, the FLRA provides mandatory biennial No FEAR Act training for all employees, including supervisors and managers. The FLRA also provides such training to all new employees hired during the FY within ninety days of hire, as required under § 724.203.

Item 8. *Any adjustment needed or made to the budget of the agency to comply with its Judgment Fund reimbursement obligations:*

None.

Item 9. *The agency's written plan developed in accordance with the No FEAR Act to train its employees:*

See Attach. 5.

Attachment 1

**Federal Labor Relations Authority
No FEAR Act Data
(as of 9-30-25)**

Complaint Activity	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data					2025 through 9-30-25
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Number of Complaints Filed	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of Complainants	0	0	0	0	0	0
Repeat Filers	0	0	0	0	0	0

Complaints by Basis	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data					2025 through 9-30-25
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
<i>Note: Complaints can be filed alleging multiple bases. The sum of the bases may not equal total complaints filed.</i>						
Race	0	0	0	0	0	0
Color	0	0	0	0	0	0
Religion	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reprisal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sex	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Origin	0	0	0	0	0	0
Equal Pay Act	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0
Genetic information	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual orientation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-EEO	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Federal Labor Relations Authority
No FEAR Act Data
(as of 9-30-25)**

Complaints by Issue	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data					2025 through 9-30-25
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
<i>Note: Complaints can be filed alleging multiple issues. The sum of the issues may not equal total complaints filed.</i>						
Appointment/Hire	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assignment of Duties	0	0	0	0	0	0
Awards	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conversion to Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disciplinary Action						
Demotion	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reprimand	0	0	0	0	0	0
Removal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suspension	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Duty Hours	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evaluation Appraisal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Examination/Test	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harassment						
Non-Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Examination	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pay (Including Overtime)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Promotion/Non-Selection	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reassignment						
Denied	0	0	0	0	0	0
Directed	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reasonable Accommodation	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reinstatement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retirement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Termination	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terms/Conditions of Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Time and Attendance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Federal Labor Relations Authority
No FEAR Act Data
(as of 9-30-25)**

Processing Time	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data					2025 through 9-30-25
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Complaints pending during fiscal year						
Average number of days in investigation stage	109	0	0	0	0	0
Average number of days in final action stage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Complaint pending during fiscal year where hearing was requested						
Average number of days in investigation stage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average number of days in final action stage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Complaint pending during fiscal year where hearing was not requested						
Average number of days in investigation stage	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average number of days in final action stage	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Federal Labor Relations Authority
No FEAR Act Data
(as of 9-30-25)**

Complaints Dismissed by Agency	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data					2025 through 9-30-25
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Total Complaints Dismissed by Agency	0	0	0	0	0	0
Average days pending prior to dismissal	0	0	0	0	0	0

Withdrawals by Complainants	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data					2025 through 9-30-25
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Complaints Withdrawn by Complainants	0	0	0	0	0	0

Total Final Actions Finding Discrimination	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data										2025 through 9-30-25	
	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024			
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Number Findings	0		0		0		0		0		0	
Without Hearing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
With Hearing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Federal Labor Relations Authority
No FEAR Act Data
(as of 9-30-25)**

Findings of Discrimination Rendered by Basis	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data											
	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025 through 9-30-25	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>Note: Complaints can be filed alleging multiple bases. The sum of the bases may not equal total complaints and findings.</i>												
Total Number Findings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Race	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Color	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Religion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reprisal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Origin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Equal Pay Act	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Age	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Genetic Information	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual orientation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-EEO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Federal Labor Relations Authority
No FEAR Act Data
(as of 9-30-25)**

Findings of Discrimination Rendered by Basis	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data												
	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025 through 9-30-25		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Findings After Hearing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Race	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Color	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Religion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reprisal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Sex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
National Origin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Equal Pay Act	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Age	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Genetic Information	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Sexual orientation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Non-EEO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Findings of Discrimination Rendered by Basis	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data												
	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025 through 9-30-25		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Findings Without Hearing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Race	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Color	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Religion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reprisal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Sex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
National Origin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Equal Pay Act	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Age	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Genetic Information	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Sexual orientation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Non-EEO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

**Federal Labor Relations Authority
No FEAR Act Data
(as of 9-30-25)**

Findings of Discrimination Rendered by Issue	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data											
	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025 through 9-30-25	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Number Findings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appointment/Hire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assignment of Duties	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Awards	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conversion to Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disciplinary Action	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Demotion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reprimand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suspension	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Removal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Duty Hours	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evaluation Appraisal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Examination/Test	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Examination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pay (Including Overtime)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Promotion/Non-Selection	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reassignment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Denied	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Directed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reasonable Accommodation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reinstatement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retirement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Termination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terms / Conditions of Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Time and Attendance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Federal Labor Relations Authority
No FEAR Act Data
(as of 9-30-25)**

Findings of Discrimination Rendered by Issue	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data											
	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025 through 9-30-25	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Findings After Hearing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appointment/Hire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assignment of Duties	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Awards	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conversion to Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disciplinary Action	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Demotion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reprimand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suspension	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Removal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Duty Hours	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evaluation Appraisal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Examination/Test	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Examination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pay (Including Overtime)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Promotion/Non-Selection	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reassignment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Denied	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Directed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reasonable Accommodation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reinstatement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retirement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Termination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terms / Conditions of Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Time and Attendance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Federal Labor Relations Authority
No FEAR Act Data
(as of 9-30-25)**

Findings of Discrimination Rendered by Issue	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data											
	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025 through 9-30-25	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Findings Without Hearing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appointment/Hire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assignment of Duties	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Awards	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conversion to Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disciplinary Action	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Demotion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reprimand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suspension	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Removal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Duty Hours	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Evaluation Appraisal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Examination/Test	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical Examination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pay (Including Overtime)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Promotion/Non-Selection	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reassignment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Denied	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Directed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reasonable Accommodation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reinstatement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retirement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Termination	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terms / Conditions of Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Time and Attendance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Federal Labor Relations Authority
No FEAR Act Data
(as of 9-30-25)**

Pending Complaints Filed in Previous Fiscal Years by Status	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data					2025 through 9-30-25
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Total complaints from previous Fiscal Years	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total Complainants	1	0	0	0	0	0
Number complaints pending						
Investigation	1	0	0	0	0	0
Hearing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Final Action	0	0	0	0	0	0
Appeal with EEOC Office of Federal Operations	0	0	0	0	0	0

Complaint Investigations	Comparative Data Previous Fiscal Year Data					2025 through 9-30-25
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Pending Complaints Where Investigations Exceeds Required Time Frames	0	0	0	0	0	0

Attachment 2



FLRA Policy No. 3701.2

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Issue Date: 3/6/2025

A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. **Purpose.** This policy articulates the Federal Labor Relations Authority’s (FLRA or Agency) dedication to equal opportunity in employment and personnel practices within the Agency without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information.

2. **Cancellation.** This FLRA policy cancels and supersedes FLRA Policy No. 3701, Equal Employment Opportunity, dated August 30, 2024.

3. **Definitions.**

a. *Individual Complaint.* An individual complaint is a written complaint of discrimination filed by an employee, applicant for employment, those found to be employees for the purposes of Title VII, or former employee alleging that a specific act of discrimination or retaliation (reprisal) has taken place and has adversely affected the individual. (For procedure, see Section C - Individual Complaint Procedures, below).

b. *Mixed Case.* A mixed case complaint is a complaint of employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information related to, or stemming from, an action that is appealable to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), such as a removal, demotion, suspension for more than 14 calendar days, reduction in force, denial of within-grade increase, or furlough for less than 30 calendar days. (See 29 C.F.R. § 1614.302, and procedures at Section D – Mixed Cases, below).

c. *Class Complaint.* A class complaint is a written complaint filed on behalf of a class by the agent of the class alleging that an FLRA personnel management policy or practice discriminates against a class and the agent has been personally harmed by the policy or practice. A class complaint is appropriate where: (1) the class is so numerous that a consolidated complaint of the members of the class is impractical; (2) there are questions of fact common to the class; (3) the claims of the agent of the class are typical of those of the class; and (4) the agent or representative of the class will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the class. (See 29 C.F.R. § 1614.204(a)(2)).

i. *Class.* A group of FLRA employees, former FLRA employees, those found to be employees for the purposes of Title VII, and/or applicants for FLRA employment on whose behalf it is alleged that they have been, are being, or may be adversely affected by an FLRA personnel management policy or practice on the basis of their common race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, and/or genetic information.

ii. *Agent.* A class member who acts for the class during the processing of the class complaint.

d. *An Individual with Disability.* An individual who: (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment. (See 29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(g)(1)(i)-(iii)). This term shall not include an individual who is currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs or excessive use of alcohol. Thus, such individuals are not entitled to reasonable accommodation. By contrast, individuals who are no longer using drugs illegally; or engaging in excessive use of alcohol and who (1) are participating in a rehabilitation program or (2) have successfully completed a rehabilitation program are protected under the ADA and, by extension, the Rehabilitation Act. An example of reasonable accommodations that may be granted to individuals who have been rehabilitated or are undergoing rehabilitation would be measures that permit them to engage in self-help programs. An individual with a disability may include an individual who is erroneously regarded as engaging in illegal drug use or excessive use of alcohol. (29 C.F.R. § 1630.3; see also FLRA Policy 3891.1, Reasonable Accommodation Procedures for Individuals with Disabilities).

e. *Physical or Mental Impairment.* (1) Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory (including speech organs); cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genitourinary; immune; circulatory; hemic; lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or (2) any mental or psychological disorder, such as an intellectual disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. (29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(h)(1)-(2)).

f. *Has a Record of Such an Impairment.* Means that an individual has a history of, or has been classified (or misclassified) as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. (29 C.F.R. § 1630.2 (k)).

g. *Is Regarded as Having Such an Impairment.* Means having a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit major life activities, but being treated by an employer as constituting such a limitation; having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities only as a result of the attitude of an employer toward such an impairment; or having none of the impairments defined above, but being treated by an employer as having such a limitation. An individual meets the requirement of "being regarded as having such an impairment" if the individual establishes that he or she has been subjected to an action prohibited by the Rehabilitation Act because of an actual or perceived physical or mental impairment whether or not the impairment limits or is perceived to limit a major life activity.

“Being regarded as having such an impairment” does not apply to impairments that are both transitory and minor. A transitory impairment is an impairment with an actual or expected duration of 6 months or less.

h. *Major Life Activities.* These activities include, but are not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, and working. Major life activities also include the operation of a major bodily function, including, but not limited to, functions of the immune system, special sense organs and skin, normal cell growth, digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, and reproductive functions. The operation of a major bodily function includes the operation of an individual organ within a body system. The term “major” shall not to be interpreted strictly to create a demanding standard for disability. Whether an activity is a “major life activity” is not determined by reference to whether it is of “central importance to daily life.” See 29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(i)(1)(ii).

i. *Qualified Individual with Disability.* With respect to an individual with a disability, means that individual satisfies the requisite skill, experience, education and other job-related requirements of the employment position, such individual holds or desires the position, and such individuals, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of such position. (29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(m)).

j. *Civil Action.* A complaint filed by an employee, class agent, claimant, applicant for employment, or former employee in a Federal district court.

4. **References.**

a. Executive Order No. 14173, *Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity* (2025).

b. Executive Order No. 14168, *Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government* (2025).

c. Executive Order No. 14151, *Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing* (2025).

d. Executive Order No. 11478, *Equal Employment Opportunity in the Federal Government* (1969), as amended.

e. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (Title VII), 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2000e-17.

f. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. §§ 701-7961.

g. The Equal Pay Act of 1963, as amended, 29 U.S.C. § 206(d).

h. Section 15 of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended, 29 U.S.C. § 633a.

i. The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) of 2008, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000ff-2000ff11.

j. Federal Sector Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.101-1614.707.

k. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Management Directive 110 (EEOC MD-110), as revised (August 5, 2015).

l. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), *Further Guidance Regarding Ending DEIA Offices, Programs and Initiatives* (Feb. 5, 2025).

5. **Responsibilities.** The responsibility for assuring that equal opportunity is achieved within the FLRA rests with every employee. The following sets forth specific responsibilities for designated officials in discharging specific programmatic aspects of the FLRA EEO program.

a. Chairman. The Chairman of the FLRA has the overall responsibility for the FLRA EEO program and shall:

i. Provide personal leadership in establishing, maintaining, and carrying out a continuing program designed to ensure equal opportunity for all employees and all applicants for employment in every aspect of the FLRA's policies and practices;

ii. Provide sufficient resources to carry out an EEO program; and

iii. Annually review the EEO program to ensure that its direction, capability, and results are consistent with the stated EEO goals of the Agency.

b. EEO Director. The EEO Director is appointed by the Chairman and delegated the authority for managing the overall FLRA EEO Program and reports directly to the Chairman concerning all EEO matters, and shall:

i. Develop and implement operating guidelines and instructions for the FLRA EEO programs;

ii. Make written materials available to all FLRA employees and applicants concerning all established EEO programs and the administrative and judicial procedures available to them, post the names and business telephone numbers of all EEO Counselors at each FLRA location, and post this information on the FLRA's intranet page;

iii. Develop EEO reports, as required;

iv. Manage the EEO counseling process, and incorporate alternative dispute resolution (ADR) procedures wherever deemed appropriate, to attempt to resolve matters at the lowest possible level and the earliest possible stage, and to provide a workable process of investigations, dispute resolutions, hearings, as necessary, and final decisions;

v. Evaluate periodically the sufficiency and responsiveness of the EEO Program and report findings with recommendations to the Chairman;

vi. Ensure that the FLRA makes reasonable accommodations regarding the religious beliefs of all employees and applicants when such accommodations can be made without undue hardship on the FLRA;

vii. When authorized by the Chairman, make the final decision on discrimination complaints, and order such improvements as considered necessary; and

c. When not authorized to make the final decision for the Chairman, review the record of a complaint before the final decision is made, and make recommendations to the Chairman, as appropriate.

d. The Director of the Human Resources Division (HRD). Shall develop and implement plans that:

i. Communicate the Agency's EEO policy and program to all sources of job candidates;

ii. Work with Agency managers to develop solutions to problems of recruitment, training, employee utilization, and career advancement with other individuals within the FLRA;

iii. Train managers and supervisors to ensure their understanding and implementation of the EEO Program;

iv. Collect and maintain (as required) accurate employment information on the race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, and disability information of its employees to use in studies and analyses which contribute to achieving the Agency's EEO objectives; and

v. Ensure that, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 4302, all supervisors' performance appraisals:

- include a critical element promoting the protection of whistleblowers, including the degree to which he or she:

- responds constructively when employees of the FLRA make disclosures described in 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(8)(A) or (B);
- takes responsible actions to resolve those disclosures; and
- fosters an environment in which employees of the agency feel comfortable making disclosures to supervisory employees or other appropriate authorities.

- Specify that in order to be rated fully successful or higher with respect to this performance element:

- The supervisor must not have engaged in conduct resulting in a determination by the Chairman of the FLRA, an administrative law judge, the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Office of Special Counsel, a judge of the United States, or the Inspector General of the FLRA that the supervisor has engaged in a prohibited personnel practice as defined by 5 U.S.C. § 2302(a)(1).

- The supervisor has not engaged in conduct that caused the FLRA to enter into a settlement agreement with an individual alleging that the supervisor committed a prohibited personnel act as defined by 5 U.S.C. § 2302(a)(1).

e. EEO Counselors. EEO Counselors are selected by the EEO Director. They make informal inquiries and seek solutions to informal complaints. These duties and responsibilities are collateral duties which are performed in addition to a counselor's regular duties. EEO Counselors shall receive a minimum of 32 hours of appropriate training prior to assuming their counseling responsibilities, and shall receive a minimum of 8 hours training annually.

f. EEO Investigators. EEO investigators, including contract investigators where appropriate, are selected by the EEO Director and are responsible for timely investigating formal complaints of discrimination submitted by employees, those deemed employees for purposes of Title VII, or applicants for positions at the FLRA. EEO investigators shall complete the minimum number of hours of training required by the EEOC prior to performing EEO complaint investigations, and shall complete the minimum number of annual training hours required by the EEOC.

g. Managers and Supervisors. All managers and supervisors are responsible for implementing the EEO program in their organizational units, and shall:

- i. Stay informed of all EEO program policies and procedures;
- ii. Comply with FLRA EEO policy as set forth in this Policy;
- iii. Ensure that employees working as collateral-duty EEO Counselors are provided an adequate amount of duty time to carry out their counseling responsibilities in a timely and effective manner;

iv. Provide all employees and applicants equal opportunity within the merit system in employment, development, career advancement, and treatment in their areas of responsibility;

v. Consult with the FLRA Director of Human Resources and/or the EEO Director about personnel management decisions (such as decisions to discipline, hire, dismiss, promote, or demote an employee) that may have EEO implications;

vi. Provide an atmosphere free from discrimination and retaliation;

vii. Make reasonable accommodations as required by law; and

viii. Cooperate with EEO Counselors and/or EEO Investigators in carrying out their EEO responsibilities.

h. Employees. Employees shall:

i. Keep informed of all EEO program policies and procedures if required by their job description or performance plan;

ii. Cooperate with supervisors and managers in carrying out their responsibilities in the EEO Program;

iii. Comply with FLRA EEO policy as set forth in this Policy;

iv. Provide non-discriminatory treatment to all individuals with whom they are in contact while in the performance of their official duties; and

v. Cooperate with EEO Counselors and/or EEO Investigators in carrying out their EEO responsibilities.

B. GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR PROCESSING COMPLAINTS

1. **Coverage.** This section covers individual and class complaints of employment discrimination and retaliation, prohibited by Title VII, as amended, made by employees, former employees, those deemed employees for the purposes of Title VII, and applicants who believe they have been discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, and/or complaints of retaliation (reprisal), as described below:

a. **Race, Color, Religion, and National Origin.** Allegations of discrimination filed by members of protected categories and allegations of failure to accommodate religious needs. (29 C.F.R. § 1614.103(a)).

b. Sex. Allegations of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual orientation, pregnancy, and sex-based wage claims, filed by any individual. (29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.103(a), 1614.702(j), (k); *Bostock v. Clayton County, GA*, 140 S. Ct. 1731 (2020)).

c. Age. Allegations of age discrimination filed by persons who were at least 40 years of age when the action complained of took place. (See 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.103(a), 1614.201).

d. Disability. Allegations of discrimination based on physical or mental impairment, including alleged failures to make reasonable accommodations. (See 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.103(a), 1614.203, 1630.2).

e. Genetic Information. Allegations of discrimination based on genetic information including an individual's genetic tests, genetic tests of family members, and family medical history. (29 C.F.R. § 1614.103(a)).

f. Retaliation (reprisals). Allegations of reprisal in connection with: (i) opposing an Agency act or practice believed to be discriminatory; (ii) participating in the EEO process. (See 29 C.F.R. § 1614.103(a)).

2. **Effect of Regulations.** This Policy is intended to supplement the procedures found in 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.101-1614.707 and in EEOC MD-110. Employees are advised to consult these resources, as well as this Policy. In the event there is a conflict between the provisions of this Policy and the applicable regulations, the regulations will govern.

3. **Employee Rights.** All employees, those deemed to be employees for purposes of Title VII, former employees, and applicants for employment have a right to file a discrimination complaint. Employees involved in the discrimination complaint process, including complainants, class agents, and witnesses, have the right to use a reasonable amount of official time under the administrative complaint process, and the right to be free from coercion, interference, intimidation, or reprisal. Individuals will be notified of their rights at each stage of the complaint process. (See Section C - Individual Complaint Procedures).

4. **Representatives.** At any stage in the preparation and presentation of complaints or administrative appeals from decisions on complaints, complainants have the right to be accompanied, represented, and advised by a representative of their own choosing, including another FLRA employee, provided the choice does not involve a conflict of interest or position (*e.g.*, an EEO Counselor cannot also represent employees processing discrimination complaints), does not conflict with the priority needs of the FLRA, and does not give rise to unreasonable costs to the Government. A complainant or class agent must promptly notify the EEO Counselor or EEO Director in writing of the representative's identity. Any changes must also be reported in writing to one of them. The FLRA will designate its Agency representative. The Agency representative may not be an EEO staff member, the alleged-responsible management official, or, in the case of a class complaint, a member of the class.

5. **Time Extensions.** A time limit may be extended if a complainant, agent, or claimant shows that: a) he or she was not notified and were not otherwise aware of the time limit;

b) he or she neither knew nor reasonably should have known that the alleged discriminatory action occurred; c) despite due diligence, circumstances beyond his or her control prevented submission of the matter within the time limit; or d) for other reasons considered sufficient by the EEO Director. Time limits may also be reasonably extended for other reasons noted in the regulations. (*See, e.g.*, 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.105(a)(2), 1614.105(e), 1614.105(f), and 1614.108(e)).

6. **Computation of Time.** Any time period specified in this chapter will be computed by counting as the first day the day following the event, such as the day after receiving a notice. When the last day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday, the time period will be extended to include the next business day. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.604).

C. INDIVIDUAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

1. **Pre-complaint Procedures.** An individual complainant who believes that he or she has been discriminated against must consult with an EEO Counselor before filing a complaint in order to pursue an informal resolution of the matter. The counselor may not reveal the complainant's identity during the informal counseling process unless authorized by the complainant. The counselor can be contacted through the EEO Director or by notifying one of the EEO Counselors listed in the FLRA's [intranet site](#). The counselor must be contacted within 45 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory action, the effective date of an alleged personnel action, or the date that complainant knew, or reasonably should have known, of the discriminatory action. In an attempt to resolve the issue on an informal basis, the counselor shall advise the complainant, in writing, at the initial counseling session, of his or her rights and responsibilities including:

a. The right to pursue only those matters raised in the pre-complaint process in a subsequent complaint;

b. The right to a hearing or an immediate Agency decision after an investigation;

c. The right to elect among procedures for pursuing allegations of discrimination (*see* 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.106, 1614.201, 1614.301, and 1614.302);

d. The obligation to mitigate damages;

e. The obligation to keep the FLRA and EEOC informed of their current address; and

f. The obligation to serve copies of an appeal on the FLRA.

g. The counselor shall also inform the complainant of administrative and judicial time limits. In addition, the counselor shall advise the complainant that, where the FLRA has deemed ADR appropriate, the complainant may choose either the ADR program or

counseling. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.105). The FLRA ADR program is set forth and described in an Addendum to this Policy.

2. **Time Limits.** The counselor shall conduct the final interview within 30 calendar days of the date on which the complainant brought the matter to the counselor's attention. The 30-day counseling period may be extended for:

- a. Up to an additional 60 calendar days if the complainant and the FLRA agree to such an extension in writing; or
- b. 90 calendar days if the FLRA and the complainant agree to participate in an ADR procedure.
- c. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the counselor shall notify the complainant, in writing, of the right to file a complaint of discrimination up to 15 calendar days after complainant's receipt of the notice. The counselor shall also inform the complainant of the appropriate official with whom to file a complaint and of the complainant's duty to promptly inform the Agency if the complainant retains a representative. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.105(d)).
- d. When advised that a complaint has been filed by an aggrieved person, the counselor shall submit a written report within 15 calendar days to the EEO Director and to the aggrieved person concerning the issues discussed and actions taken during counseling.

3. **Manner of Filing.** A complaint must:

- a. Be signed by complainant, or complainant's representative, and submitted to the Chairman;
- b. Describe the specific FLRA personnel management policy or practice giving rise to the complaint or the action that allegedly harmed the complainant;
- c. Be filed by email or U.S. Postal Service;¹ and
- d. Be filed within 15 calendar days of the date of receipt of the notice referred to in Section C(2) – Time Limits, above. When filed by U.S. Postal Service, the date of filing is the postmark date rather than when the complaint is received by the designated receiving official.

4. **Amendment of Complaints.** A complainant may amend a complaint at any time prior to the conclusion of the investigation to include issues or claims like those raised in the complaint. After requesting a hearing, a complaint may be amended only on motion to the administrative judge. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.106(d)).

¹ *Cf.* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.403 (a).

5. **Transfer of Received Complaints.** Upon receipt of the complaint, the receiving official shall transmit it to the EEO Director, who shall acknowledge its receipt in accordance with paragraph C(6) – Acknowledgement of Complaint, below.

6. **Acknowledgment of Complaint.** The EEO Director shall acknowledge receipt of a complaint in writing, and shall inform the complainant of the date on which the complaint was filed. Such acknowledgment shall also advise the complainant that:

a. The complainant has the right to appeal the final decision or dismissal of all, or (subject to paragraph C(7)(c), below) a portion of, the complaint; and the FLRA is required to conduct a complete and fair investigation of the complaint within 180 calendar days of the filing of the complaint, unless the parties agree in writing to extend the period.

7. **Dismissal of a Complaint.**

a. Prior to a request for a hearing, the Chairman, or designee, shall dismiss an entire complaint for the reasons set forth in 29 C.F.R. § 1614.107, including where:

i. The complainant has failed to contact an EEO Counselor, or has raised a matter that has not been presented to the EEO Counselor, and is unrelated to issues presented;

ii. The complaint is not timely filed (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.107 (a)(2));

iii. The complaint lacks specificity and detail;

iv. The complaint involves matters not subject to FLRA control;

v. The complainant fails to state a claim covered in this Policy (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.107(a)(1));

vi. The claim is the same as one pending or previously decided by the FLRA or the EEOC (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.107(a)(1));

vii. The claim relates to an issue that is moot, or an action that is in a preliminary stage (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.107(a)(5));

viii. The complainant cannot be located, provided that reasonable efforts have been made to locate the complainant (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.107(a)(6));

ix. The complainant has failed to: (a) proceed with the complaint without undue delay; or (b) respond to the Agency's request to provide relevant information, or otherwise proceed with the complaint (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.107(a)(7));

x. The complainant has filed a civil action in a Federal district court (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.107(a)(3));

xi. The complaint alleges dissatisfaction with the processing of a previously filed complaint (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.107(a)(8)); and/or

xii. The complaint is part of a clear pattern of misuse of the EEO process. A clear pattern of misuse requires evidence of multiple complaint filings and

(1) allegations that are similar or identical, lack specificity or involve matters previously resolved; or

(2) evidence of circumventing other administrative processes, retaliating against the FLRA in-house administrative processes or overburdening the EEO complaint system. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.107(a)(9)).

b. If the Agency determines that the complaint does not meet the requirements of EEOC regulations, the Agency will give the complainant, and representative, if any, a written notice of proposed dismissal of the complaint, and an opportunity to respond, or to provide a specific explanation and/or relevant information in writing within 15 calendar days. If such an explanation or information is not received within the 15 calendar days, the complaint will be dismissed. The Agency will notify the complainant and his or her representative of its decision to dismiss the complaint. The content of the final decision is discussed in Section C(11) – Final Action by the FLRA, below. Allegations may be withdrawn, in writing, at any time.

c. Where the Agency determines that some, but not all, of the claims in a complaint should be dismissed, the Agency shall notify the complainant, and representative, if any, in writing of its determination, the rationale for that determination, and that those claims will not be investigated. A copy of this notice shall be placed in the investigative file. The determination is reviewable by an administrative judge if a hearing is requested on the remainder of the complaint, but it is not appealable until final action is taken on the remainder of the complaint.

8. **Investigation of Allegations.**

a. The EEO Director shall provide for an independent, impartial, and prompt investigation of a complaint. An investigation is conducted in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1614.108 and shall include a complete and impartial review of:

i. The circumstances under which the alleged discrimination occurred;

ii. The treatment of members of the complainant's group as compared with the treatment of other employees in the same organization; and

iii. Any work-related policies and practices that may constitute, or appear to constitute, discrimination even though they have not been expressly cited by the complainant.

b. Time Limits. The Agency will conduct a complete and fair investigation within 180 calendar days of the filing date of the complaint (29 C.F.R. § 1614.108(e)) or, where the complaint has been amended, within the earlier of 180 days after the last amendment of the complaint or 360 days after the original complaint was filed (29 C.F.R. § 1614.108(f)), unless otherwise directed when an appeal from dismissal is involved. An extension of time is authorized for not more than:

i. 90 calendar days if the complainant and Agency agree in writing; and/or

ii. 30 calendar days if the complaint file must be sanitized.

c. Authority of the Investigator. An investigator is authorized to:

i. Investigate all aspects of the complaint;

ii. Require all Agency employees to cooperate in the conduct of investigations;

iii. Obtain sworn statements from Agency employees who have knowledge of the events surrounding the complaint;

iv. Obtain certified copies of relevant documents and information about a person's membership, or non-membership, in a complainant's group; and/or

v. Where appropriate, when a party fails to provide requested information: (1) draw an adverse inference against the uncooperative party; (2) establish the matter to which the requested information relates in favor of the opposing party; (3) exclude other evidence submitted by the uncooperative party; (4) issue, in whole or in part, a decision in favor of the party opposing the uncooperative party; or (5) take other appropriate action. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.108(c)(3)).

d. Report of Investigation. A report of investigation will contain relevant documents and information, including affidavits or other sworn statements acquired during the investigation. A copy of the report of investigation will be furnished to the complainant or the complainant's representative with a notice of complainant's right to an EEOC hearing or an immediate final FLRA decision without a hearing. The complainant must notify the EEO Director in writing of the choice within 30 calendar days of receiving the investigation file. If the complainant does not notify the Agency within the 30-day period, the final FLRA decision may be issued.

9. **Hearings.** A hearing will be conducted when requested by the complainant, in writing, within the time limits specified in 29 C.F.R. § 1614.108(f). When a complainant requests a hearing, the FLRA shall request the EEOC to appoint an administrative judge to conduct the hearing. Procedures for the hearing can be found at 29 C.F.R. § 1614.109 and EEOC MD-110, Chapter 7. Where there is no issue of material facts, findings and conclusions may be issued without a hearing or other appropriate action may be taken. (29 C.F.R. § 1614.109(g)). Absent good cause, the administrative judge will issue a decision, and, where discrimination is found, order appropriate relief, within 180 calendar days of receipt by the administrative judge of the complaint file.

10. **Offer of Resolution** (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.109(c)).

a. The Agency may make an offer of resolution:

i. To a complainant represented by an attorney, at any time after the filing of a formal complaint, until 30 calendar days prior to a hearing, or

ii. To a complainant not represented by an attorney, at any time after the appointment of an administrative judge, but not later than 30 calendar days prior to the hearing.

b. An offer of resolution must be in writing and provide:

i. An explanation of the possible consequences of failing to accept the offer;

ii. Attorney's fees and costs, as of the date of the offer;

iii. Any specific non-monetary relief; and

iv. Any monetary relief, which may be offered as a lump sum, or may be itemized as to amounts and types.

c. The complainant shall have 30 calendar days from receipt of the offer to accept it. If the complainant does not accept the offer and the relief ultimately awarded, whether by an administrative judge, the FLRA, or the EEOC, is not more than the offer, the complainant may not recover attorney's fees or costs incurred after the end of the 30-day acceptance period. However, the EEOC may, in unusual circumstances, find that equitable considerations make it unjust to withhold such attorney's fees and costs.

d. An acceptance of an offer of resolution must be in writing and be postmarked or received by the Agency within the 30-day period.

11. **Final Action by the FLRA.** The Chairman, or designee, shall take the following final FLRA action on complaints based on information in the complaint file:

a. Where an administrative judge has issued a decision, the FLRA shall issue a final order within 40 calendar days after receipt of the judge's decision.

i. The final order shall notify the complainant whether or not the Agency will implement the decision and order of the administrative judge, and must inform the complainant of the right of appeal, the right to file a civil action, applicable time limits, the name and address of the EEOC official with whom to file an appeal, and the name of the proper defendant in a civil action. A copy of the EEOC Form 573, Notice of Appeal/Petition, shall be attached. (*See* Sections P – Civil Actions and Q – Confidentiality, below);

ii. If the final order does not fully implement the administrative judge's decision and order, the Agency shall simultaneously file an appeal with the EEOC and append a copy of the appeal to the final order.

iii. If the Agency fails to issue a final order within the 40-day period, the decision of the administrative judge becomes the final action of the Agency.

b. When the Agency dismisses a complaint in its entirety, receives a request for a final decision or does not receive a response to the notice referenced in Section C(7) – Dismissal of a Complaint, above, it shall issue a final decision. The final decision shall include:

i. Findings on the merits of each issue in the complaint, or, as appropriate, the rationale for dismissing any claims in the complaint;

ii. When there is a finding of discrimination, appropriate remedies and relief in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1614.501; and

iii. When there is a finding of discrimination, the complainant and complainant's representative will be notified that in order to request attorney's fees or costs, a verified statement of costs and fees accompanied by an affidavit, executed by the attorney, must be submitted to the Agency within 30 calendar days of receipt of the final decision. (*See* Section O – Appeals to the EEOC, below).

c. Time Limits. The Chairman, or designee, shall issue a final decision within 60 calendar days after:

i. Receiving a request for an immediate final FLRA decision;

ii. The 30-day period for requesting a hearing or an immediate final FLRA decision has expired, and the complainant has requested neither a hearing nor a final FLRA decision.

d. Transmittal of Decision. The final decision shall be transmitted to the complainant and complainant's representative by a method that will show the date of issuance and receipt.

D. MIXED CASES

1. **Choice of Procedures.** Where a personnel action is appealable to the MSPB, an employee may appeal to the MSPB or file a discrimination complaint, but not both. The choice is made when a timely appeal is filed with the MSPB, or a formal timely complaint of discrimination is filed with the FLRA. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.302).

2. **Mixed Case Appeals.** When an individual elects to file a mixed case appeal with the MSPB, the matter is processed pursuant to MSPB procedures. (*See* 5 C.F.R. §§ 1201.151-1201.175).

3. **Mixed Case Complaints.** When an individual elects to file a formal discrimination complaint with the FLRA, it is processed pursuant to Section C – Individual Complaint Procedures, above, with the following exceptions:

a. A complainant’s appeal from a final FLRA decision and request for a hearing is made to the MSPB, not the EEOC;

b. A final FLRA decision shall be made within 45 calendar days after completion of the investigation without a hearing; or

c. If a final FLRA decision is not issued within 120 calendar days from the filing of a formal complaint, an employee may appeal to the MSPB at any time thereafter as specified at 5 C.F.R. § 1201.154(b)(2), or may file a civil action as specified at 29 C.F.R. § 1614.310(g), but not both.

4. **Dismissal of Mixed Case Complaints.** Mixed case complaints shall be dismissed for the reasons specified in Section C(7) – Dismissal of a Complaint, above, and additionally shall be dismissed if the complainant has made a prior timely election of the MSPB procedures. (29 C.F.R. § 1614.302(c)(2)).

5. **Petition for Review of Final MSPB Decisions Involving Allegations of Discrimination.** An individual who has been before the MSPB with a matter involving allegations of discrimination and has received a final MSPB decision may petition the EEOC to consider the MSPB decision on the discrimination issues within 30 calendar days after receipt of notice of the final MSPB decision, or within 30 calendar days after the decision of an MSPB field office becomes final. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.303).

6. **Review Procedures.** The procedures governing petitions to the EEOC for review of final MSPB decisions are set forth in 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.303-305.

E. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES. The filing of grievances over matters covered by this policy are not permitted by either the FLRA’s Administrative Grievance System Policy No. 3820.1, or the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Federal Labor Relations Authority and Union of Authority Employees effective June 3, 2024.

F. AGE DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

1. **Administrative Complaint.** An individual within the protected age group may choose to use either the EEO complaint procedure, or mixed case procedures, as applicable to the circumstances of the case.

2. **Civil Action.** As an alternative to filing a complaint, an aggrieved individual may bypass the administrative complaint process and file a civil action directly in an appropriate United States District Court. (*See* Section P(3)(c) – Age Complaints, and 29 C.F.R. § 1614.201(a)).

G. CLASS COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.204)

1. **Pre-complaint Procedures.** Paragraph C(1) – Pre-complaint Procedures, above, apply to class complaints, with the additional following procedures:

a. An employee or applicant who wishes to pursue a class complaint will be the agent of the class (hereinafter referred to as "agent"); and

b. The counselor shall explain to the agent the class complaint procedures and the agent's responsibilities.

2. **Manner of Filing.** Paragraph C(3) – Manner of Filing, above, applies to class complaints, with the following exceptions:

a. The term "agent" is substituted for complainant; and

b. The complaint must describe the policy or practice adversely affecting both the class and agent.

3. Acceptance or Dismissal of a Complaint.

a. Within 30 calendar days of the Agency's receipt of a complaint, the EEO Director will forward the complaint, a copy of the EEO Counselor's report, relevant information, and Agency recommendations to the EEOC. The EEOC will assign the complaint to an administrative judge. The administrative judge may dismiss the complaint for any of the reasons found in paragraph C(7) – Dismissal of a Complaint, above, or because the complaint does not meet the prerequisites of a class complaint.

b. The administrative judge will transmit the decision to accept or dismiss the class complaint to the Agency and the agent. The FLRA must issue its final order within 40 calendar days of receipt of the administrative judge's decision.

i. The final order shall notify the agent whether or not the Agency will implement the decision and order of the administrative judge, and must inform the agent of the right of appeal, the right to file a civil action, applicable time limits, the name and address of

the EEOC official with whom to file an appeal, and the name of the proper defendant in a civil action. A copy of the EEOC Form 573, Notice of Appeal/Petition, shall be attached. (See Sections P – Civil Actions and Q – Confidentiality, below).

ii. If the final order does not fully implement the administrative judge's decision and order, the Agency shall simultaneously file an appeal with the EEOC and append a copy of the appeal to the final order.

iii. If the Agency fails to issue a final order within the 40-day period, the decision of the administrative judge becomes the final action of the FLRA.

iv. A dismissal of a class complaint shall inform the agent either that the complaint is being accepted as of that date as an individual complaint to be processed under Section C – Individual Complaint Procedures, above, or that the complaint is also being dismissed as an individual complaint.

c. Within 15 calendar days of receiving notice that the administrative judge has accepted a class complaint (or a reasonable time set by the administrative judge), the FLRA shall, by reasonable means, notify all class members of the acceptance of a class complaint.

4. **Obtaining Evidence.**

a. Once the class complaint is accepted, the agent, or the agent's representative, and the Agency representative shall be given a period of at least 60 calendar days to prepare their cases and develop evidence through accepted discovery techniques. The time for developing evidence may be extended, upon the request of either party, by the administrative judge.

b. If cooperative efforts fail, either party may request a ruling from the administrative judge on a request to develop evidence. Failure to comply with such a ruling without good cause may result in the administrative judge's action(s) set forth at 29 C.F.R. § 1614.204(f).

c. During the period for development of evidence, the administrative judge may direct that an investigation of facts relevant to the complaint be conducted by an outside Agency certified by the EEOC, and that a copy of that investigative file be given to the representatives of each party.

5. **Opportunity for Resolution.** After the evidence is developed, the administrative judge shall furnish the agent, or the agent's representative, and the Agency representative a copy of all pertinent documents and provide opportunities for discussion and resolution. Any resolution will be reduced to writing, signed by the agent and/or class representative, and the Agency's representative. The complaint may be resolved at any time pursuant to the notice and approval provisions set forth below.

a. Notice. If a resolution is proposed, notice must be given, where possible, to all members of the class. The notice must include a copy of the proposed resolution, set out the relief, if any, the Agency will grant, and inform the class members that the resolution will bind all class members. The notice must also inform the members of the right to object to the resolution to the administrative judge within 30 days of receipt of the notice.

b. Approval. The Agency will provide the administrative judge with the proposed resolution and the notice sent to the class members. If the administrative judge determines that the resolution is not fair, adequate and reasonable, the agreement between the class agent and the Agency will be vacated. The class agent, class members, and the Agency may appeal the determination to the EEOC. If the administrative judge determines that the resolution is fair, adequate and reasonable, the resolution becomes binding. Any class member who filed objections to the proposed resolution may appeal the administrative judge's decision.

6. **Hearings.** A hearing shall be conducted in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1614.109 (a)-(f).

7. **Findings and Recommended Decision.** The EEOC will send the hearing record, analysis and findings, and recommended decision on the complaint to the FLRA Chairman, or designee, and will notify the agent of the date on which this was done.

8. **Final FLRA Decision.** Within 60 calendar days of receipt of the administrative judge's findings and recommendations, the Agency must issue a decision to accept, reject, or modify those findings and recommendations. If the Agency does not issue a decision within 60 calendar days, the administrative judge's findings and recommendations become the decision of the Agency. The decision shall be served on the class agent within 5 calendar days after the expiration of the 60-day period.

a. If the final FLRA decision dismisses the class element of the complaint, the allegations of individual discrimination shall be processed under Section C – Individual Complaint Procedures, above.

b. A final decision finding discrimination is binding on the class. A finding of no discrimination is not binding on a class member's individual complaint.

c. The Agency shall notify class members of the final decision and the relief awarded, if any, through the same medium used to give notice of the existence of the class complaint and within 10 calendar days of transmittal of the decision to the agent.

H. COMPLAINTS BASED ON PHYSICAL OR MENTAL DISABILITY

1. The Agency shall make reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental disability of a qualified applicant or employee unless it can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its program. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1630.2(o)(4) or FLRA Policy 3891.1 Reasonable Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities).

2. Reasonable accommodation may include, but shall not be limited to:
 - a. Making facilities readily accessible to, and usable by, disabled persons;
 - b. Job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, appropriate adjustment or modification of examinations, training materials or policies;
 - c. Provision of readers and interpreters, or other similar actions.

3. In determining whether an accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the Agency, factors to be considered include: (a) the overall size of the Agency's program with respect to the number of employees, number and type of facilities, and budget; (b) type of Agency operation, including the composition and structure of the Agency's work force; and (c) the nature and cost of the accommodation.

I. COMPLAINTS OF RETALIATION (REPRISAL)

1. **Manner of Filing.** Any employee who believes that he or she has suffered retaliation (reprisal) based on his or her:

- a. Opposition to discriminatory FLRA policies or practices; and/or
- b. Participation in a discrimination complaint procedure

may file formal charges of retaliation (reprisal). Allegations of retaliation (reprisal) may be processed as an individual complaint of discrimination, or as a mixed case if related to an Agency action which is appealable to the MSPB. (*See* Sections C – Individual Complaint Procedures, D – Mixed Cases, and E – Grievance Procedures, above).

2. **Allegations at Hearing Stage.** If a complainant alleges coercion, interference, intimidation, discrimination, or reprisal, during the hearing stage, the EEOC may consolidate the allegations with any pending complaint.

J. COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE CHAIRMAN, THE EEO DIRECTOR, OR AN EEO COUNSELOR

1. **Chairman.** When the FLRA Chairman is named in an individual capacity in a complaint of discrimination, a designee named by the Chairman will take any action that is otherwise the primary responsibility of the Chairman.

2. **EEO Director or EEO Counselor.** The EEO Director and EEO Counselors shall not participate in the complaint process if named in any capacity in a complaint of discrimination. The EEO Director shall notify the FLRA Chairman of the disqualification and

shall refer the complaint file to the Chairman. The Chairman shall designate a person to receive and process the complaint.

K. COMPLIANCE WITH SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS

1. When a complainant believes that the Agency has failed to comply with the terms of a settlement agreement, he or she must notify the EEO Director in writing, within 30 calendar days of when the complainant knew or should have known of the alleged noncompliance. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.504; paragraph O(4) – Time Limits, below; MD-110, Chap. 9(IX)(F), Ch.10(II)(A)(3)). The complainant may request that the agreement be specifically implemented or that the complaint be reinstated.

2. The Agency shall respond to the complainant in writing. If the Agency fails to respond or the complainant is dissatisfied with the response, the complainant may appeal to the EEOC in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1614.504. The complainant may file an appeal 35 calendar days after serving the EEO Director with the allegations of noncompliance, but must file an appeal within 30 days of the Agency response.

L. COMPLAINTS ALLEGING VIOLATION OF THE EQUAL PAY ACT

1. Complaints alleging violation of the Equal Pay Act may be filed as individual or class complaints. (*See* Sections C – Individual Complaint Procedures, and G – Class Complaint Procedures, above; *see also* 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.202, 1614.409).

2. In its enforcement of the Equal Pay Act, the EEOC has the authority to investigate FLRA employment practices on its own initiative at any time in order to determine compliance with the provisions of the Act. The EEOC will provide notice to the Agency when it will be initiating an investigation.

M. CONSOLIDATION AND JOINT PROCESSING OF COMPLAINTS (*see* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.606)

1. Complaints filed by different persons relating to the same or similar issues may, after appropriate notice to the parties, be consolidated for joint processing.

2. Two or more complaints of discrimination filed by the same individual shall be consolidated after appropriate notice to the complainant.

3. There is one investigation, one attempted informal adjustment, one proposed disposition, and one hearing when complaints have been joined for processing.

N. ATTORNEY’S FEES AND COSTS (29 C.F.R. § 1614.501(e))

1. The Agency is authorized to award reasonable attorney’s fees or costs incurred in the processing of an administrative complaint when there is a finding of discrimination or retaliation (reprisal), as follows:

a. Attorney's fees may be awarded for services performed after the filing of the complaint and after the complainant has notified the Agency that he or she are represented; and

b. Attorney's fees may be awarded only to members of the bar and law clerks, paralegals, or law students under the supervision of members of the bar. No fees may be awarded, however, for the services of any employee of the Federal Government.

2. The amount of the attorney's fees and costs is determined under 29 C.F.R. § 1614.501(e). If the Agency determines not to award attorney's fees or costs to a prevailing complainant, it will give specific reasons for denying the award. Attorney's fee awards may be appealed to the EEOC. (*See* Section O – Appeals to the EEOC, below).

O. APPEALS TO THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

1. **Procedures.** The procedures governing appeals on individual and class complaints and grievances (if applicable) are found at 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.401-1614.410. Appeals must be filed with the Director, Office of Federal Operations, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

- a. by mail directed to P.O. Box 77960, Washington, DC 20013; or
- b. by email; or
- c. through FedSEP or the EEOC's Public Portal, as applicable; or
- d. by personal delivery; or
- e. by facsimile.

Appellant should use EEOC Form 573, Notice of Appeal/Petition, and should indicate what is being appealed. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.403(a)).

2. **Appealable Matters.** Appealable matters include:

- a. Dismissal of an entire complaint;
- b. The final FLRA decision on the merits and/or partial dismissal of the complaint;
- c. The award of attorney's fees or costs; and
- d. Failure to comply with the terms of a settlement agreement. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.504).

3. **Non-appealable Decisions.** A complainant may not appeal to the EEOC when:
 - a. The Agency dismisses some but not all claims in a complaint;
 - b. A determination has not been made on all issues in the complaint;
 - c. The issue of discrimination giving rise to the complaint is being considered, or has been considered, in connection with any other appeal by the complainant to the EEOC;
 - d. A final FLRA decision has been issued on the merits of the mixed case complaint; or
 - e. An FLRA decision rejects or cancels a mixed case complaint, unless a misapplication of procedures is alleged.

4. **Time Limits.**

a. **FLRA Decisions.** A complainant may appeal any matters, outlined in paragraph O(2) – Appealable Matters, to the EEOC within 30 calendar days of receiving the dismissal or final decision. If there is an attorney of record, the 30-day period will run from the day the attorney received the dismissal or final FLRA decision. Time limits may be extended, at the discretion of the EEOC Office of Federal Operations, upon a showing that complainant was not notified of the time limit and was not otherwise aware of it, or that circumstances beyond his or her control prevented the filing of an appeal within the time limit.

b. **Non-compliance Complaint.** If the Agency fails to respond, in writing, within 30 calendar days of receipt of allegations of noncompliance, or if complainant is not satisfied with the Agency’s attempt to resolve the allegations, the complainant may appeal to the EEOC. A complainant may file an appeal 35 calendar days after the service of the allegations of noncompliance, but must file within 30 calendar days after receiving the final FLRA decision.

5. **Briefs.** Any statement or brief in support of the appeal must be submitted to EEOC and FLRA representatives within 30 calendar days of filing the appeal.

P. CIVIL ACTIONS (see 29 C.F.R. §§1614.407-409)

1. **Statutory Rights.** The FLRA will notify complainants, agents, and claimants, of the right to file civil actions and the applicable time frames.

2. **Proper Defendant.** When a civil action is filed, the FLRA Chairman is the appropriate official to be named as defendant in captioning the complaint.

3. **Types of Complaints and Time Limits.**

a. Individual and Class Complaints and Claims. A complainant or class agent may file a civil action alleging Title VII, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Rehabilitation Act, GINA, and Pregnant Workers Fairness Act violations in an appropriate Federal district court (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.407):

i. Within 90 calendar days of receiving notice of the final FLRA decision on a complaint or claim where no appeal has been filed;

ii. After 180 calendar days of filing a complaint or claim with the Agency, if there has been no decision on the complaint or claim;

iii. Within 90 calendar days of receiving the final EEOC decision on an appeal; or

iv. After 180 calendar days of filing an appeal with the EEOC, if there has been no final EEOC decision.

b. Mixed Case Complaints. A mixed case complainant may file a civil action in an appropriate Federal district court within 30 calendar days of receiving:

i. The final FLRA decision, unless an appeal is filed with MSPB;

ii. The MSPB decision, unless a petition for consideration is filed with the EEOC;

iii. The EEOC decision not to consider the MSPB decision;

iv. The EEOC concurrence with the MSPB decision;

v. The MSPB concurrence and adoption of the EEOC decision, if the EEOC differs from the MSPB decision; and

vi. The Special Panel decision, if MSPB disagrees with the EEOC decision and reaffirms its initial decision with or without revisions.

vii. A civil action may also be filed:

(1) After 120 calendar days of filing a complaint with the Agency if there has been no final FLRA decision on the complaint;

(2) After 120 calendar days of filing an appeal with MSPB if there has been no decision on the appeal; or

(3) After 180 calendar days of filing a petition for consideration with EEOC if there is no decision by the Commission, reconsideration decision by

the MSPB, or decision by the Special Panel. (*See* Section D – Mixed Cases, above; 29 C.F.R. § 1614.310).

c. **Age Complaints.** A complainant or agent may serve the EEOC with a notice of intent to file a civil action, and after 30 calendar days, may file a civil action in an appropriate Federal district court. The notice of intent must be filed within 180 calendar days after the alleged discriminatory act occurred. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.201).

d. **Equal Pay Act Complaints.** A complainant or class agent may file a civil action alleging violation of the Equal Pay Act in an appropriate Federal district court within two years or, if the violation is willful, within three years of the alleged violation. (*See* 29 C.F.R. § 1614.408).

Q. CONFIDENTIALITY

1. **Pre-complaint Process.** The identity of an aggrieved person will be maintained on a confidential basis in the pre-complaint process unless the person authorizes the counselor to reveal the person's identity.

2. Post-complaint Process.

a. The complainant, the complainant's representative, and the Agency representative will be provided copies of the complaint file and the investigative summary. (*See* MD-110, Ch. 6(VIII)(F)).

b. Information and documents may also be disclosed to a witness who is a Federal employee where the investigator determines that the disclosure of the information is necessary to obtain further information from the witness (*see* MD-110, Chapter 6(VII)(A)(2)).

3. **Whistleblower Protections.** The provisions of this Policy are consistent with and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or Executive order relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General or the Office of Special Counsel of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower protection. The definitions, requirements, obligations, rights, sanctions, and liabilities created by controlling Executive orders and statutory provisions are incorporated into this Policy and are controlling. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(13).

Disclosures concerning censorship related to scientific research are also protected when the disclosure is not specifically prohibited by law or such information is not specifically required by Executive order to be kept classified in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs and the disclosing individual reasonably believes that the censorship is causing or will cause: (1) any violation of law, rule, or regulation; (2) gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or (3) a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 2302 note.

R. USE OF OFFICIAL DUTY TIME AND RESOURCES

1. **Official Duty Time and Resources.** FLRA employees involved in the complaint process, such as complainants, agents, witnesses, and representatives, have the right to use a reasonable amount of official duty time and Agency resources, including library research, copy machines and office supplies, as needed, to prepare a complaint under this Policy.

2. **Reasonable** refers to the time necessary to allow a complete presentation of information associated with the complaint. The time will vary depending on the nature and complexity of the complaint and the Agency's need to have its employees available to perform their normal duties on a regular basis.

3. **Official duty time** refers to time used during working hours without charge to leave or loss of pay.

4. Employees who do not request anonymity during pre-complaint procedures or who file a formal complaint must get advance approval from their immediate supervisors to use official duty time prior to meeting with EEO personnel.

5. Employees who request anonymity during pre-complaint procedures must use annual leave, or schedule meetings with EEO personnel before or after regular office hours or during scheduled lunch periods.

This policy is effective on March 6, 2025.

Michael Jeffries
Executive Director

Addendum

Federal Labor Relations Authority Alternative Dispute Resolution Program for Equal Employment Opportunity Disputes

The Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program provides an alternative to the informal counseling process and an option during the formal complaint process, currently provided for in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) regulations codified in 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.101-1614.707. This ADR program supersedes all other existing Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)-related ADR programs at the Agency.

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The ADR program as described below will be administered in a manner that is consistent with the core principles as outlined in the EEOC Management Directive 110 (MD-110), including fairness, flexibility, and an emphasis on training and evaluation.

2. The FLRA ADR program includes but is not limited to, mediation, and is available as an alternative to informal EEO counseling, or during the formal complaint process, for aggrieved persons who believe they have been discriminated against based on race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment), national origin, age, disability (mental and/or physical), genetic information, and retaliation (reprisal), coercion or intimidation as referenced in the FLRA EEO Policy (to which this ADR program notice is attached and which is available on the FLRA's intranet).

3. The ADR program is designed to settle disputes without litigation or administrative adjudication. ADR is intended to address individual disputes within a reasonable period at the informal stage of the EEO process by using trained mediators to facilitate resolution. If ADR is chosen during the informal counseling stage, the initial 30-day informal period is extended to 90 calendar days. This replaces the informal counseling process. The second opportunity for ADR is during the formal complaint process. A formal complaint must be timely filed, and if ADR is requested during that stage of the process, the time period for processing the complaint may be extended by agreement for not more than 90 days. If the dispute is not resolved, the complaint must be processed within the extended time period.

4. The aggrieved person may request ADR, or its use may be recommended by a management official or an EEO Counselor.

5. Participation in the ADR program by the aggrieved person is strictly voluntary. However, when the aggrieved person elects to participate in the ADR program, appropriate management officials are required to participate in this program as well. Management will abide by the procedural requirements of the ADR program. The Agency will designate management officials who have the authority to enter into a settlement agreement. This official with settlement authority will not be the official directly involved in the case. As explained below, the

aggrieved person and FLRA management are entitled to be represented throughout the ADR process.

6. Due to the voluntary nature of this process, the aggrieved person can terminate ADR after sessions have begun. Participants are advised that this is an alternative process, and therefore all EEO processes are still available if ADR is not successful.

B. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INFORMAL COUNSELING AND MEDIATION

1. **EEO Counseling.** During the informal counseling period, an EEO Counselor works with the aggrieved person and management to gather information on the matter and attempts to resolve the dispute. If the matter is not resolved during this period, the EEO Counselor writes a counseling report that documents the alleged discrimination and any attempts at settlement. The counseling report must detail the issue(s), basis of discrimination claimed, and address any other jurisdictional questions. The counseling report is subsequently used in the processing of the formal complaint to determine the scope of the complaint. Counselors are trained to gather information (interview witnesses and gather records and documents) about the matter in order to effectively write the counseling report. The EEO Counselor generally focuses on gathering information from each individual separately. Informal resolution efforts by the counselor are usually pursued by circulating information and resolution proposals between the parties rather than directly holding joint discussions.

2. ADR

a. ADR involves alternatives to formally established processes, usually litigation, for resolving disputes. In the context of EEO processes, ADR generally provides an alternative to the traditional informal EEO counseling and/or formal complaint processes. ADR usually involves a third-party neutral such as a mediator or facilitator working with the parties in dispute to facilitate communication and to assist them in working toward a resolution of their dispute. Generally, the third-party neutral is a process expert, skilled in a particular type of ADR.

b. The FLRA ADR program is available at any time during the EEO process. However, the objective is to seek informal resolution of alleged employment discrimination through the Agency EEO process at the earliest possible time while not infringing upon the rights guaranteed under 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.101-1614.707.

c. Mediators are neutral third parties whose focus is to facilitate communication and problem solving by the individual disputants. Mediators work to identify common ground between the parties and help them develop options for resolving their dispute. The mediator is someone from outside the disputants' office/organization who has no interest in the matter. The mediator meets with the disputing parties and their representative(s) (if any) jointly to discuss the issues and ways of possibly resolving the dispute.

d. The mediator may meet separately with the parties, namely the management representative with authority to settle on behalf of the FLRA and with the aggrieved person with any representative, to further discuss the issues and explore possible settlement

options privately. The mediator may carry settlement offers between the parties. Mediators do not evaluate the merits of the matters in dispute or the fate of the potential case if the matter is not resolved through mediation and is pursued through the formal complaint process and litigation in the courts. However, the mediator may provide information about the resolution of similar disputes. The parties retain complete control over the outcome. The parties decide whether or not to continue with mediation, whether or not to resolve the matter through a settlement agreement, and how to fashion the terms of their agreement. Mediation is a confidential process, as more fully discussed in Section D, below. The mediator does not keep records or write reports or otherwise disclose anything about the mediation proceedings. Because he or she has no role in documenting the matter, mediators do not engage in fact-finding activities. If the mediation does not result in a resolution of the matter during the informal stage, the EEO Counselor will be informed only that mediation has not resolved the dispute. Thereafter, the aggrieved person will receive written notice from the EEO Counselor that if the aggrieved person wishes to go forward with the dispute, a formal complaint must be filed with the EEO Director. The mediator will play no role in advancing the EEO process. Mediation may continue, however, into the formal stage of the complaint process so long as a formal written complaint has been timely filed.

C. ADR PROGRAM COVERAGE. This ADR program covers EEO disputes initiated by all current employees, those deemed employees for purposes of Title VII, former employees concerning matters arising during their employment, and applicants for FLRA employment. Also, the program covers aggrieved persons who are currently involved in the pre-complaint counseling stage. However, for the latter instances, the pre-complaint process cannot extend the period for filing a formal EEO complaint beyond the 90-day period (discussed during the introduction of this addendum) provided in 29 C.F.R. §§ 1614.101-1614.707 for informal counseling. Even if the aggrieved person files a formal complaint, any informally initiated ADR process may continue, if all parties agree.

D. CONFIDENTIALITY

1. In general, a mediator is prohibited from disclosing any dispute resolution communication or any communication provided to the mediator in confidence, including personnel data, such as performance evaluations. A dispute resolution communication is any oral or written communication prepared for purposes of a proceeding under this program, except any written agreement to mediate or any final written agreement reached as a result of this program. Unless the communication falls within one of the exceptions discussed below, the mediator cannot voluntarily disclose the communication and cannot be forced to disclose the communication through a discovery request or other compulsory process.

2. A mediator may disclose a communication if all parties and the mediator agree in writing to the disclosure. A mediator may disclose a communication if the communication already has been made public. A mediator may disclose a communication if there is a statute that requires the communication to be made public. A mediator may disclose a communication if so ordered by a court. Courts may order disclosure upon finding that the mediator's testimony or the disclosure is necessary to prevent a manifest injustice, help establish a violation of law, or prevent harm to the public health and safety. Courts may require disclosure upon determining

that the need for disclosure outweighs the detrimental impact on the integrity of dispute resolution proceedings in general.

3. The aggrieved person is advised that these provisions of this Policy are consistent with and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or Executive order relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General or the Office of Special Counsel of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower protection. The definitions, requirements, obligations, rights, sanctions, and liabilities created by controlling Executive orders and statutory provisions are incorporated into this program and are controlling. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(13). Disclosures concerning censorship related to scientific research are also protected when the disclosure is not specifically prohibited by law or such information is not specifically required by Executive order to be kept classified in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs, and the disclosing individual reasonably believes that the censorship is causing or will cause: (1) any violation of law, rule, or regulation; (2) gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or (3) a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. 5 U.S.C. § 2302 note.

4. The EEO Director or his or her designee will assure that all aggrieved parties and mediators are familiar with these confidentiality provisions.

E. PROCEDURES. The procedures for electing either mediation or the traditional EEO counseling process are outlined below. These procedures also apply where mediation is elected after a formal written EEO complaint has been filed.

1. As set forth in the EEO Policy, when an aggrieved person timely contacts an EEO Counselor alleging specific grounds for believing that unlawful discrimination has occurred, the EEO Counselor will inform the aggrieved person of the ADR option and provide them with a copy of the ADR program. If deemed necessary, the aggrieved person may contact the EEO Director for further explanations concerning how ADR works generally.

2. The EEO Counselor will also advise the aggrieved person of his or her rights and responsibilities in the EEO process, as set forth in 29 C.F.R. § 1614.105(b).

3. The initial contact with the EEO Counselor will start the time limits provided in EEOC regulations for informal counseling. If the person elects to use ADR instead of counseling, the 30-day informal counseling period shall be extended to 90-days.

4. If the aggrieved person chooses to use ADR, he or she must fill out the ADR Request Form (Form A).

5. The EEO Counselor will contact the EEO Director for assistance in obtaining names of mediators within 5 working days of the notification that ADR has been chosen by the aggrieved person. Mediators must be mutually agreeable to the aggrieved person and the appropriate management official(s).

a. Mediators will come from the following sources:

i. The Shared Neutrals Program, and/or

ii. The private sector.

b. All mediators must meet minimum training and qualification requirements as defined in the EEOC Management Directive (MD)-110.

6. The EEO Director will coordinate the mediation effort, having primary responsibility for logistical arrangements. The EEO Director is responsible for the overall management of the ADR program. He or she develops and maintains trained staff to implement the ADR program and ensure that the ADR program is in compliance with applicable EEOC and Office of Personnel Management regulations. The EEO Director arranges for mediators and manages, implements, and evaluates the ADR process.

7. The mediation process will commence by the mediator contacting the aggrieved person (and representative, if any) and the appropriate management official with settlement authority to schedule the mediation session. When the parties to the dispute convene, they will sign an Agreement to Mediate (Form B). Per MD-110, the alleged discriminating management official cannot be the management official with settlement authority. By signing the agreement, the parties indicate that they understand the mediation process and the conditions and procedures of participation. After electing to participate in the mediation process, the aggrieved person may opt-out of the process at any time.

8. If mediation successfully resolves the EEO dispute, the parties will execute a Mediation Settlement Agreement describing the resolution of the dispute. (Form C serves as an example of such an agreement). The mediator will notify the EEO Counselor that the dispute has been resolved so that the counselor can close the case. An aggrieved person cannot file an EEO complaint concerning anything said or done during attempts to resolve the dispute through ADR, including the Agency's failure to provide a neutral. Allegations by an aggrieved person that the Agency has not complied with the terms of the Mediation Settlement Agreement shall be handled in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1614.504 (*see* also MD-110, Ch. IX), beginning with the aggrieved person's notice to the EEO Director, in writing, of the alleged non-compliance within 30-days.

9. If mediation in the informal stage is unsuccessful, the mediator will report the outcome (without specifics) to the EEO Director and will indicate on the Mediator Reporting Form (Form D) that no resolution was reached. The EEO Director will then contact the EEO Counselor of record and ask them to prepare the Notice of Final Interview/Right to File a Formal Discrimination Complaint and the EEO Counselor's Report as referred to in the FLRA EEO Policy. The latter report will specify the aggrieved person's alleged grounds of discrimination, and will reflect that the aggrieved person was offered and accepted ADR, in lieu of counseling, but that such efforts at informal resolution were unsuccessful.

10. The EEO Counselor will provide the aggrieved person with two copies of the Counselor's report, the Notice of Final Interview, the Notice of Right to File a Formal Discrimination Complaint, and the Complaint Form. The EEO Counselor will advise the aggrieved person that if the aggrieved person elects to file a complaint of discrimination on any of the grounds previously raised, it must be filed within 15 calendar days of receipt of the Notice of Right to File a Discrimination Complaint.

11. If the aggrieved person has opted for EEO counseling rather than ADR mediation during the informal stage of the EEO process, he or she still may choose to invoke mediation after a formal written EEO complaint has been timely filed (*see* paragraph 10, above) by so notifying the EEO Director in writing. The same procedures governing ADR at the informal stage also apply after a formal EEO complaint has been filed, except that if mediation is successful, the EEO Director upon being so notified will take the necessary steps to close the case by advising the EEO investigator, the EEOC, and/or the FLRA representative responsible for preparing a final agency determination, as appropriate. If mediation of the formal complaint is unsuccessful, the complaint must be processed within the applicable time period as extended by the 90 days during which ADR procedures were in effect.

F. IMPLEMENTATION. The ADR program will be implemented and training will be conducted through a variety of methods designed to involve employees and inform them about mediation as an alternative to EEO counseling and as an adjunct to the processing of formal complaints.

1. **Awareness Education.** The ADR program for mediating EEO disputes will be explained Agency-wide to management and employees in the following manner:

- a. A memorandum signed by the FLRA Chairman, the General Counsel, and the Chairman of the Federal Service Impasses Panel will be sent to all employees describing the ADR mediation process as an alternative to traditional EEO counseling and/or EEO litigation;
- b. Notification will be sent to all employees when the program begins; and
- c. Detailed information concerning the ADR program, including a copy of the program, will be placed on the FLRA's intranet page.

2. **Training.**

- a. Training about ADR, mediation, and the EEO process will be a vital factor in the successful implementation of the program at the FLRA. Employees need detailed information about the two alternatives (counseling or ADR available at the informal stage). Participants in mediation need to know what to expect and the roles of the parties. The Agency's full support for the ADR process should be communicated.
- b. The EEO Director will provide a briefing (approximately 30 minutes) about the ADR program to all staff during the first 3 months of the program and routine updates.

In addition, a portion of the New Employee Orientation will include a description of this program.

G. EVALUATION

1. **Data Requirements.** Management will evaluate the program and how it is functioning on an annual basis. The following statistical data will be used:

- a. The total number of EEO cases filed;
- b. The number of disputes referred to ADR, the stage of referral (informal or formal), and the number of those referred which were resolved;
- c. The parties' level of satisfaction with the ADR process, and the reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Participant's Comments Form - Form E);
- d. The amount of time spent on ADR attempting to resolve the dispute; and
- e. The estimate of cost savings, showing the criteria used to calculate savings.

2. **Data Gathering.** The ADR program will be evaluated by using the following questionnaires: Mediator's Reporting Form (Form D) and Participants' Comments (Form E). The distribution of evaluation questionnaires and the gathering of information will be the responsibility of the EEO Director or his or her designee. The EEO Director will have the responsibility of summarizing the information to be evaluated and will develop an annual report on the status and/or accomplishments of the ADR program. These summary reports will be shared with the FLRA Chairman, the General Counsel, and the Chairman of the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

Note: All forms referenced throughout this document are available in the addendum of FLRA Policy No. 3701, Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, which is available on the FLRA's intranet. Employees who would like copies can also contact the FLRA's Human Resources Director or the EEO Director.

Form A

FLRA ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION REQUEST/REFERRAL

Case #:

1. Date of Request/Referral:
2. Name of Requester:
3. Organization of Requester:
4. Telephone # of Requester:
5. Briefly summarize the dispute which you wish to resolve:

6. Note other parties to this dispute (These may be referenced in #5 above. Please provide name and telephone number if possible).

Form A (Con't)

I understand that ADR is a joint effort between the parties to facilitate an expedited resolution of disputes involving them.

I understand that the pre-complaint processing period shall be extended to 90 days for the purposes of resolving the dispute through the ADR process.

I understand that my right to continue with the administrative complaints process will remain intact and available to me should an agreement not be reached using ADR, provided I have timely filed a formal complaint.

I understand that I have the right to representation (attorney or other person of my choice) throughout this process.

Signature of ADR Requester

Date of Request

Form B

AGREEMENT TO MEDIATE

The parties agree to engage in mediation to attempt resolution of issues pertaining to the dispute of alleged employment discrimination. The parties understand that mediation is voluntary and may be ended by the requester at any time.

The parties understand that the mediator(s) has/have no authority to decide the case and is/are not acting as advocates, or attorneys, for any party.

Mediation is a confidential process. Any documents submitted to the mediators, and any statements made during the mediation are for settlement purposes only. The parties agree not to subpoena the mediators, or any documents prepared by or submitted to the mediator(s). In no event will the mediator(s) voluntarily testify for any party or submit any type of report concerning this mediation.

Confidentiality will not extend to (1) threats of imminent physical harm; (2) matters deemed not to be confidential under the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996, 5 U.S.C. §§ 571-584; or disclosures made pursuant to statutory whistleblower rights (*see* 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(13)).

The aggrieved person is advised that the provisions of this agreement are consistent with and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or Executive order relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General or the Office of Special Counsel of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower protection. The definitions, requirements, obligations, rights, sanctions, and liabilities created by controlling Executive orders and statutory provisions are incorporated into this agreement and are controlling. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(13). Disclosures concerning censorship related to scientific research are also protected when the disclosure is not specifically prohibited by law or such information is not specifically required by Executive order to be kept classified in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs, and the disclosing individual reasonably believes that the censorship is causing or will cause: (1) any violation of law, rule, or regulation; (2) gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or (3) a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. 5 U.S.C. § 2302 note.

No party is bound by anything said or done at the mediation unless a written settlement agreement is reached and executed by the parties and/or their representatives. If an agreement is reached, it will be reduced to writing and, when signed and approved by the parties and/or their representatives, will be binding upon them.

By signature below, we acknowledge that we have read, understand, and agree to this mediation process.

Aggrieved Person

Date

Management/Settlement Official

Date

Mediator

Date

Form C

MEDIATION SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

Memorandum of settlement in the complaint(s) of (name), Case Numbers(s) if applicable.

The Aggrieved person, (name), and the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), the parties to this agreement, hereby agree and stipulate as follows:

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

1. The FLRA (name of Center/Division/Office)

agrees to _____

2. The Aggrieved person _____ agrees to withdraw or dismiss with prejudice all informal/formal complaints of illegal discrimination related to and including the complaint(s) identified above which he or she has filed against the FLRA.

The Aggrieved person represents that no other action or suit with respect to the matters encompassed by the complaint referenced herein or to related matters occurring at any time up to and including the effective date of this agreement has been or will be filed in or submitted to any court, administrative agency, or legislative body. If any other related complaint was filed prior to the effective date of this agreement, (name) agrees that it too is covered by the terms of this agreement and, by signing this agreement, withdraws and dismisses each with prejudice. The Aggrieved person is advised that these provisions are consistent with and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or Executive order relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General or the Office of Special Counsel of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower protection. The definitions, requirements, obligations, rights, sanctions, and liabilities created by controlling Executive orders and statutory provisions are incorporated into this agreement and are controlling. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(13). Disclosures concerning censorship related to scientific research are also protected when the disclosure is not specifically prohibited by law or such information is not specifically required by Executive order to be kept classified in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs, and the disclosing individual reasonably believes that the censorship is causing or will cause: (1) any violation of law, rule, or regulation; (2) gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or (3) a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. 5 U.S.C. § 2302 note.

This agreement is not intended as, and will not be construed by either party to constitute, an admission or statement by either party as to the validity of any legal position or factual contention advanced in the above referenced complaint(s). Nor does it indicate in any way the views of either party as to the substantive merits of the complaint(s).

Issues related to compliance under this agreement shall be resolved in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1614.504; MD-110, Chap. 9(IX).

This agreement shall become effective as of the date the last signature is obtained below. This settlement agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the aggrieved person and FLRA, and there are no other representations or obligations except for those enumerated herein. The parties agree that the terms of this agreement constitute a full and complete satisfaction and settlement of all claims which the aggrieved person may have against the FLRA, its officers, agents or employees which are encompassed by or arise out of the instant complaint(s).

The aggrieved person acknowledges that he or she clearly and fully understands the terms and conditions of this agreement and fully agree to its terms. Further, the aggrieved person acknowledges having voluntarily entered into this agreement.

Aggrieved person

Date

Name of Management/Settlement Official

Date

Form D

FLRA ADR MEDIATOR REPORTING FORM

INSTRUCTIONS: This form is to be completed immediately upon closing of your case. Please return the form to the EEO Director.

1. Mediator's Name:

2. Office Telephone Number:

3. ADR Case Number:

4. Date of Sessions and Time Spent:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.

5. If either party had a representative in attendance, please indicate which party did so:

A. Employee	B. Manager or 2nd Party
1. _____Attorney	1. _____Attorney
2. _____Other	2. _____Other

6. OUTCOME:

_____Not Settled	_____Settled prior meeting
_____Settled, agreement	_____Partial settlement signed

7. GENERAL: In the preparation process, it was determined that ADR was appropriate to address this dispute. In your opinion was it appropriate in this case?

1. Yes/No

2. Why or why not?

8. Other comments or suggestions:

Signature

Date

Form E

FLRA PARTICIPANT'S COMMENTS - ADR

To assist in improving the ADR process, please take a few minutes to answer the questions below. Send your completed survey to the EEO Director at 1400 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20424. All personal information will be kept confidential.

Please circle the letter which best reflects how you feel about each of the following statements:

1- Strongly Agree 2- Somewhat Agree 3-No opinion 4- Somewhat Disagree 5- Strongly Disagree

1. The Mediator explained the program so that I knew what to expect during the process.

1 2 3 4 5

2. The Mediator allowed me and/or my representative to fully present my case.

1 2 3 4 5

3. The Mediator carefully listened to my side of the case.

1 2 3 4 5

4. The Mediator treated all parties fairly.

1 2 3 4 5

5. The Mediator asked appropriate questions.

1 2 3 4 5

6. The Mediator helped facilitate realistic options for settling the dispute.

1 2 3 4 5

7. Did you reach an agreement and settle your case? Yes/No

8. Did the ADR process help you understand the other party's/parties' concerns? Yes/No

9. Did you feel that the process helped the other party or parties understand your concerns?

10. How satisfied are you overall with the ADR process?
11. Please provide any comments you wish to make regarding the process in the space below:

Signature (Optional)

Date

Attachment 3



NO FEAR ACT NOTICE

On May 15, 2002, Congress enacted the “Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002,” which is now known as the No FEAR Act. One purpose of the Act is to “require that Federal agencies be accountable for violations of antidiscrimination and whistleblower laws.” Public Law 107-174, Summary. In support of this purpose, Congress found that “agencies cannot be run effectively if those agencies practice or tolerate discrimination.” Public Law 107-174, Title I, General Provisions, section 101(1).

The Act also requires this agency to provide this notice to Federal employees, former Federal employees and applicants for Federal employment to inform you of the rights and protections available to you under Federal antidiscrimination and whistleblower protection laws.

Antidiscrimination Laws

A Federal agency cannot discriminate against an employee or applicant with respect to the terms, conditions or privileges of employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, or political affiliation. Discrimination on these bases is prohibited by one or more of the following statutes: 5 U.S.C. 2302(b)(1), 29 U.S.C. 206(d), 29 U.S.C. 631, 29 U.S.C. 633a, 29 U.S.C. 791, 42 U.S.C. 2000e-16, and 42 U.S.C. 2000ff-2000ff-11..

If you believe that you have been the victim of unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability, you must contact an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) counselor within 45 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory action, or, in the case of a personnel action, within 45 calendar days of the effective date of the action, before you can file a formal complaint of discrimination with your agency. *See, e.g.*, 29 CFR 1614. If you believe that you have been the victim of unlawful discrimination on the basis of age, you must either contact an EEO counselor as noted above or give notice of intent to sue to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) within 180 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory action. If you are alleging discrimination based on marital status or political affiliation, you may file a written complaint with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) (see contact information below). In the alternative (or in some cases, in addition), you may pursue a discrimination complaint by filing a grievance through your agency’s administrative or negotiated grievance procedures, if such procedures apply and are available.

Whistleblower Protection Laws

A Federal employee with authority to take, direct others to take, recommend or approve any personnel action must not use that authority to take or fail to take, or threaten to take or fail to take, a personnel action against an employee or applicant because of disclosure of information by that individual that is reasonably believed to evidence violations of law, rule or regulation; gross mismanagement; gross waste of funds; an abuse of authority; or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, unless disclosure of such information is specifically prohibited by law and such information is specifically required by Executive Order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs.

Retaliation against an employee or applicant for making a protected disclosure is prohibited by 5 U.S.C. 2302(b)(8). If you believe that you have been the victim of whistleblower retaliation, you may file a written complaint (Form OSC-14) with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel at 1730 M Street NW., Suite 218, Washington, D.C. 20036-4505 or online through the OSC Website <http://www.osc.gov>.

Retaliation for Engaging in Protected Activity

A Federal agency cannot retaliate against an employee or applicant because that individual exercises his or her rights under any of the Federal antidiscrimination or whistleblower protection laws listed above. If you believe that you are the victim of retaliation for engaging in protected activity, you must follow, as appropriate, the procedures described in the Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws sections or, if applicable, the administrative or negotiated grievance procedures in order to pursue any legal remedy.

Disciplinary Actions

Under the existing laws, each agency retains the right, where appropriate, to discipline a Federal employee for conduct that is inconsistent with Federal Antidiscrimination and Whistleblower Protection Laws up to and including removal. If OSC has initiated an investigation under 5 U.S.C. 1214, however, according to 5 U.S.C. 1214(f), agencies must seek approval from the Special Counsel to discipline employees for, among other activities, engaging in prohibited retaliation. Nothing in the No FEAR Act alters existing laws or permits an agency to take unfounded disciplinary action against a Federal employee or to violate the procedural rights of a Federal employee who has been accused of discrimination.

Additional Information

For further information regarding the No FEAR Act regulations, refer to 5 CFR part 724, as well as the appropriate offices within your agency (e.g., EEO/civil rights office, human resources office or legal office). Additional information regarding Federal antidiscrimination, whistleblower protection and retaliation laws can be found at the EEOC website <http://www.eeoc.gov> and the OSC Website at <http://www.osc.gov>.

Existing Rights Unchanged

Pursuant to section 205 of the No FEAR Act, neither the Act nor this notice creates, expands or reduces any rights otherwise available to any employee, former employee or applicant under the laws of the United States, including the provisions of law specified in 5 U.S.C. 2302(d).

Attachment 4



FLRA Policy No. 3010

**EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE AND
ADVERSE ACTIONS**

Issue Date: June 3, 2020

SECTION I. – GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. **Purpose.** This Policy sets forth the policies and processes of the Federal Labor Relations Authority (the FLRA or the agency) for dealing with employee misconduct and/or poor performance, and for furloughing employees for 30 days or less because of lack of work or funds.
- B. **Cancellation.** This FLRA Policy cancels FLRA Instructions No. 3752, Employee Discipline and Adverse Actions, dated September 2, 1998.
- C. **Scope.**
1. The formal disciplinary and adverse actions described in this Policy provide the tools and procedures for managers to apply in administering employee discipline. Employees who are covered by Sections II and III of this Policy generally fit into two categories:
 - (a) Those who commit serious or repeated acts of misconduct that are unacceptable in the work place and that would cause a loss of efficiency in achieving the FLRA mission if allowed to continue; and
 - (b) Those who fail to meet performance expectations. (Note: Procedures set forth in this Policy are optional for performance-based problems. 5 C.F.R. § 432 also sets forth procedures for performance-based actions. Those procedures are set forth in FLRA Policy 3430.3)
 2. Actions covered by this Policy include:

- (a) Reprimands;
- (b) Suspensions;
- (c) Reductions in grade or pay;
- (d) Furloughs of 30 days or less;
- (e) Removals; and
- (f) Permanent notations of a former employee's eOPF documenting an adverse finding in a personnel investigation.

3. This Policy does not apply to:

- (a) Suspensions for National Security under 5 U.S.C. § 7532;
- (b) Reductions-in-Force under 5 U.S.C. § 3502;
- (c) Reduction in grade back to the grade previously held of a new manager or supervisor who fails to successfully complete the one-year probationary period under 5 U.S.C. § 3321(a)(2);
- (d) An action initiated by the Office of the Special Counsel under 5 U.S.C. § 1215 or actions against Administrative Law Judges under 5 U.S.C. § 7521; and
- (e) Removal during a probationary or trial period, or during a temporary or time-limited appointment.

D. Applicability.

Sections II, III, and V of this Policy apply to all FLRA employees in excepted and competitive General Schedule positions.

Section IV applies to all supervisors in excepted and competitive General Schedule positions, as well as supervisors who are in Senior Level positions and Senior Executive Service.

With the exception of Section VI, this policy does not apply to individuals who are in a probationary or trial period.

This policy does not apply to employees serving under a temporary or time-limited appointment.

E. **Policy.** The Agency's policy is that:

1. Supervisors will timely identify and take appropriate action to notify employees of conduct and/or performance problems in order to correct the problem using informal processes such as counseling, training, and closer supervision to achieve the mission of the FLRA in an efficient manner. While what is "timely" rests with the discretion of the FLRA and the appropriate supervisor, performance issues should be identified and addressed as soon as practicable, and within the applicable performance appraisal period absent unusual circumstances, and not be allowed to carry over from appraisal period to appraisal period without being disclosed to the employee.
2. If good faith efforts to resolve the problem informally fail, or if the problem is so severe that informal resolution is impractical, supervisors will apply discipline that is consistent and appropriate to the situation to achieve the mission of the FLRA in an efficient manner.
3. The FLRA protects from retaliation employees who have information that they reasonably believe to be evidence of violations of law, rule or regulation; gross mismanagement; gross waste of funds; an abuse of authority; or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, unless disclosure of such information is prohibited by law. As a result, the FLRA will take appropriate disciplinary action against supervisors who retaliate against such whistleblowers.
4. The FLRA will attempt other means of avoiding costs in times of temporary budget shortfalls or mission lags so that furloughing employees is a last resort to accommodate the temporary deficit.

F. **References.**

1. 5 U.S.C. ch. 75, Adverse Actions;
2. 5 U.S.C. § 3322, Voluntary separation before resolution of personnel investigation;
3. Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017, Pub. L. 115-73, 131 Stat. 1235 (2017);

4. National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018, Office of Special Counsel Reauthorization, Pub. L. No. 115-91, § 1097, 131 Stat. 1283, 1617-1626 (2017);
5. 5 C.F.R. pt. 752, Adverse Actions;
6. FLRA Regulations 3820.1, dated August 1, 1986, Administrative Grievance System;
7. FLRA Instruction No. 3430.3, dated October 1, 2012, General Schedule Performance Management Plan; and
8. FLRA Policy No. 3451, dated November 30, 2018, SES Performance Management System.

G. Definitions.

1. Adverse action refers to suspensions for more than 14 days, reductions in grade or pay, furloughs for 30 days or less, and removals.
2. Current continuous employment means a period of employment immediately preceding a suspension action in the same or similar position without a break in Federal civilian employment of a workday.
3. Day means calendar day.
4. Disciplinary action refers to reprimands and suspensions of 14 days or less.
5. Employee, for purposes of Sections 2 and 3, means:
 - (a) An individual in the competitive service who:
 - (1) is not serving a probationary or trial period under an initial appointment; and
 - (2) has completed one year or current continuous employment under other than a temporary appointment limited to one year or less.
 - (b) A preference eligible in the excepted service who has completed one year of current, continuous employment in the same or similar positions.

- (c) An individual in the excepted service other than a preference eligible who:
 - (1) is not serving a probationary or trial period under an initial appointment pending conversion to the competitive service; or
 - (2) has completed two years of current continuous service in the same or similar positions on other than a temporary appointment limited to two years or less.

- 6. Furlough means placing an employee in a temporary status without duties or pay because of lack of work or funds or other non-disciplinary reason.

- 7. Grade means a level of classification under a position classification system.

- 8. Indefinite suspension means the placing of an employee in a temporary status without duties and pay pending investigation, inquiry, or other agency action. The indefinite suspension continues to an indeterminate period of time and ends with the occurrence of the pending conditions set forth in the notice of action, which may include the completion of any subsequent administrative action.

- 9. Pay means the rate of basic pay that is fixed by law or administrative action for the position held by the employee.

- 10. Personnel Investigation includes:
 - (a) an investigation by an Inspector General; and
 - (b) an investigation that, had the employee not voluntarily resigned, would have resulted in an adverse action as a result of performance, misconduct or for such cause as will promote the efficiency of the service under 5 U.S.C. ch. 43 or 5 U.S.C. ch. 75.

- 11. Preference eligible means veterans, spouses, widows, or mothers who meet the definition of “preference eligible” in 5 U.S.C. 2108. Preference eligibles, other than sole survivor veterans, are entitled to have 5 or 10 points added to their earned scores on a civil service examination; are entered on registers in the order prescribed by 5 C.F.R. § 332.401; are considered ahead of non-preference eligible for excepted service positions; and are listed ahead of individuals who are not preference eligibles in alternative ranking and selection procedures, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 3319. Preference eligibles, other than those who have not yet been discharged or released from active duty, are accorded a higher retention standing than non-preference eligible in the event of reduction-in-force under 5

U.S.C. § 3502. Preference does not apply to in-service placement actions such as promotions.

12. Prohibited personnel practice related to whistleblowing means:

- (a) a personnel action that a supervisor takes, fails to take, or threatens to take or not take because an employee or applicant for employment has lawfully disclosed information employee or applicant reasonably believes evidences: a) a violation of any law, rule or regulation, b) gross mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety;
- (b) a personnel action that a supervisor takes, fails to take, or threatens to take or not take against employees who:
 - (1) lawfully exercise their right to appeal, complain or grieve an action;
 - (2) testify for or assist others in the lawful exercise of their rights to appeal, complain or grieve an action;
 - (3) cooperate with or disclose information to individuals responsible for conducting internal agency investigations or to the Special Counsel;
 - (4) refusing to obey directions that would require the individual to violate a rule, law or regulation; or
- (c) a supervisor's access of the medical records of an employee or applicant for employment in furtherance of any prohibited personnel practice described in 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(1)-(13).

13. Reprimand is a formal memorandum—the least severe form of formal discipline for a first or relatively minor offense—that remains in the employee's Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) for an established period of at least one, but no more than three, years. Reprimands may be expunged before their expiration dates if the appropriate supervisor determines they should be expunged or the employee leaves the FLRA, whichever comes first. Reprimands will not be erased, removed, altered, or withheld from another agency as part of, or as a condition to, resolving a formal or informal complaint by the employee or settling an administrative challenge to an adverse personnel action.

14. Supervisor means an individual employed by the FLRA who has authority to take, direct others to take, recommend or approve any decision to hire, direct, assign, promote, reward, transfer, furlough, layoff, recall, suspend, discipline, or remove employees, to adjust their grievances, or to effectively recommend such action, if the exercise of the authority is not merely routine or clerical in nature but requires the consistent exercise of independent judgment.
15. Suspension means placing the employee, for disciplinary reasons, in a temporary status without duties and pay.

SECTION II. - DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: REPRIMANDS AND SUSPENSIONS OF 14 DAYS OR LESS

A. **Standard for Action.** The FLRA may reprimand an employee or suspend an employee for 14 days or less under this Section only for such cause as will promote the efficiency of the federal service.

B. **Procedures.**

1. Supervisory responsibilities before taking disciplinary action.
 - a. In cases of employee misconduct or poor performance, supervisors should consider the facts surrounding the circumstances carefully to ensure that formal action is warranted. This can include having a discussion with the employee and the employee's representative, if any.
 - b. The supervisor or designated FLRA representative should carefully document in writing the facts surrounding the offense. This documentation may take the form of a written memorandum or other internal document or may be reflected in the written reprimand or notice of proposed action that sets forth the reasons for the proposal.
 - c. In choosing the appropriate penalty, the supervisor should consider the employee's work performance and disciplinary history. When taking disciplinary action, supervisors have discretion to consider an employee's disciplinary record and past work record, including all past misconduct — not only similar past misconduct. Disciplinary action should be calibrated to the specific facts and circumstances of each individual employee's situation. Conduct that justifies the discipline of one employee at one time does not necessarily justify similar discipline of a different employee at a different time. Nonetheless, employees should be treated fairly. Thus,

supervisors should consider appropriate comparators and how they have treated similar instances of misconduct and/or poor performance as they evaluate potential disciplinary actions, in order to apply discipline consistently. Supervisors also should consider the Douglas Factors that are set forth herein as Appendix A.

- d. If the supervisor, after discussion with the Human Resources Division (HRD), determines that formal action is not required, management should document the occurrence and the reasons for the decision in a memorandum for the record. The memorandum is not filed in the employee's eOPF, but is retained in a separate agency file in case the problem continues or recurs within a one-year period. Copies of the memorandum should be provided to the employee or the employee's representative (if the employee designates a representative).
- e. When a supervisor, in coordination with the HRD, decides that formal discipline is warranted, the supervisor prepares an appropriate notice for the employee. For a reprimand, this is a notice of reprimand. For a suspension from duty without pay for up to fourteen days, this is a notice of proposed action.

2. Employee entitlement.

- a. An employee reprimanded under this Section is entitled to a written reprimand that provides both specific information regarding the offense that is the basis for the reprimand and the length of time (one to three years) that the reprimand will remain in the employee's eOPF.
- b. An employee suspended under this Section is entitled to:
 - (1) Notice of the proposed suspension. The written notice shall inform the employee of the nature of the offense in enough detail that the employee can respond to the charges. It informs the employee of the specific duration of the advance notice period, of the proposed suspension, and of the employee's right to review the material that is relied upon to support the reasons for the action given in the notice.
 - (2) Representation. An employee whose suspension is proposed is entitled to be represented by an attorney or other representative. The FLRA may disallow an employee's representative if the

representative's activities would cause a conflict of interest or position, or if release from the employee's official position would give rise to unreasonable costs or whose priority work assignments preclude the employee's release to represent an employee.

- (3) Employee answer. The employee will be given a reasonable time to answer a proposed suspension, but not less than 24 hours. The answer may be presented orally, in writing, or both ways, and may include affidavits and other documentary evidence in support of the answer. If an employee makes only an oral response, the FLRA representative to whom the employee responds summarizes the points made by the employee and provides a copy of the summary to the employee or the employee's representative, if the employee designates a representative.
- (4) FLRA decision. The employee will be given a timely written decision. In arriving at its written decision, the FLRA deciding official may consider only the charges specified in the notice of proposed suspension and will consider any response made by the employee or the employee's representative to the designated FLRA representative. The FLRA decision will be to impose either the proposed penalty, a lesser penalty, or no penalty at all. The FLRA deciding official will deliver the notice of decision to the employee or the employee's representative, if the employee designates a representative, at or before the time the action is to be effective.

C. **Employee Right to File a Grievance.** Employees may not grieve a proposed disciplinary action. Employees against whom formal disciplinary action, including a reprimand, is imposed may file a grievance. Employees must use the FLRA Administrative Grievance System that is set forth in FLRA Regulation No. 3820.1.

D. **Agency Records.**

1. The FLRA will maintain copies of the written summary of the investigation of misconduct, if any, or instances of poor performance; the notice of proposed action; the summary of the employee's oral response and/or the employee's written response; the notice of decision; and any other material documenting the action in a FLRA disciplinary action file maintained by HRD.

2. Reprimands will state the duration (from one to three years) in which the reprimand will remain a part of the Employee's eOPF. Reprimands are temporary documents and must be removed from the eOPF at their scheduled expiration date.
3. Reprimands, along with other information about an employee's conduct or performance, may not be removed, altered or erased from the eOPF or withheld from another agency as part of, or as a condition to, resolving a formal or informal complaint by the employee or settling an administrative challenge to an adverse personnel action.
4. Suspensions are documented by OPM Form 50, which are permanent records filed in the employee's eOPF.
5. The FLRA may take corrective action at any time during the adverse action process when:
 - a. The FLRA becomes aware that the information contained in a personnel record is not accurate or records an action taken by the agency illegally or in error. In such cases, the FLRA would have the authority, unilaterally or by agreement, to modify an employee's personnel file to remove inaccurate information or the record of an erroneous or illegal action. The FLRA may take such action even if an appeal/complaint has been filed relating to the information that the FLRA determines to be inaccurate or to reflect an action taken illegally or in error. In all events, however, the FLRA must ensure that it removes only information that the agency itself has determined to be inaccurate or to reflect an action taken illegally or in error; or
 - b. Persuasive evidence comes to light prior to the issuance of a final agency decision on an adverse personnel action casting doubt on the validity of the action or the ability of the FLRA to sustain the action in litigation. In such a case, the FLRA may decide to cancel or vacate the proposed adverse action. Such additional information may come to light at any stage of the process prior to final agency decision including during an employee response period. To the extent an employee's personnel file or other FLRA records contain a proposed action that is subsequently cancelled, the FLRA will remove

that action from the employee's personnel file or other agency files.

SECTION III. - ADVERSE ACTIONS: REMOVAL, REDUCTION IN GRADE, PAY, AND SUSPENSION FOR MORE THAN 14 DAYS

- A. **Standard for Action.** The FLRA may remove an employee from Federal service, reduce an employee in grade and/or pay, or suspend the employee for more than 14 days for misconduct or poor performance under this Section only for such cause as will promote the efficiency of the service.
- B. **Procedures.**
1. Supervisory responsibilities before taking action.
 - a. In cases of employee misconduct or poor performance, supervisors must gather and consider the facts surrounding the circumstances carefully to ensure that formal action is warranted.
 - b. The supervisor or designated FLRA representative must carefully document in writing the facts surrounding the offense or the instances of poor performance. This documentation may take the form of a memorandum or other internal document, or a letter of proposed action that sets forth the reasons supporting the proposal.
 - c. In choosing the appropriate penalty, the supervisor should consider the employee's work performance and disciplinary history. When taking an adverse action, supervisors have discretion to take into account an employee's disciplinary record and past work record, including all past misconduct — not only similar past misconduct. Disciplinary action should be calibrated to the specific facts and circumstances of each individual employee's situation. Conduct that justifies the discipline of one employee at one time does not necessarily justify similar discipline of a different employee at a different time. Nonetheless, employees should be treated fairly. Thus, supervisors should consider appropriate comparators and how they have treated similar instances of misconduct and/or poor performance. Supervisors also must consider the Douglas Factors that are set forth herein as Appendix A.
 - d. Supervisors should coordinate with the HRD to determine if this Policy provides the appropriate processes for taking action on a performance

problem. Examples of reasons that a supervisor would choose this process include: a situation that involves both poor performance and misconduct, and a situation in which the supervisor wishes to use a history of performance problems and/or instances of misconduct that extend back beyond one year. If a supervisor takes a performance-based action under this Section, the supervisor must consider whether the employee has had appropriate notice of performance deficiencies and a reasonable opportunity to improve the deficiencies before that supervisor proposes an adverse action. As mentioned in the example above, and different from performance-based actions taken under 5 C.F.R. § 432.105(a), management can consider performance deficiencies that occurred further back than one year from the notice period. Although a supervisor is not required to provide a formal opportunity period to improve performance under this Section, the supervisor must be prepared to prove that the employee had appropriate notice and to justify the action before a third party under the higher “preponderance” standard of evidence rather than the “substantial” standard applied to actions taken under 5 C.F.R. pt. 432. See 5 U.S.C. § 7701(c)(1).

- e. If the supervisor, in consultation with the HRD, determines that formal action is not required, management should document the occurrence and the reasons for the decision in a memorandum for record. The memorandum is not filed in the employee’s eOPF, but is retained in a separate agency file in case the problem continues or recurs. Copies of the memorandum should be provided to the employee or the employee’s representative.
- f. When the supervisor, in coordination with the HRD, decides that adverse action is warranted, that supervisor prepares a notice of proposed action.

2. Employee entitlement.

- a. Notice of proposed action. The employee against whom an adverse action is being considered has the right to a written notice of proposed action at least 30 days before the action will be taken. The notice will explain the offense in enough detail that the employee can respond to the charges. It will also advise the employee of the specific proposed action and of the employee’s and the employee’s representative’s right to review the material and records relied upon to propose the action. The FLRA may not rely upon material that, under the Privacy Act, cannot be disclosed to

the employee, the employee's representative, or the employee's designated physician.

- b. Representation. An employee covered by this Section is entitled to be represented by an attorney or other representative. The FLRA may disallow an employee's representative only if the representative's activities might cause a conflict of interest or position or whose release from the employee's official position would give rise to unreasonable costs or whose priority work assignments preclude the employee's release.

- c. Employee answer.
 - (1) FLRA will give the employee, and the employee representative, if any, a reasonable amount of official time, to extend over not less than seven days, to review the material relied upon to support its proposal and to prepare an answer and to secure affidavits, if the employee is otherwise in a duty status.

 - (2) FLRA will designate an official to hear the employee's oral response who has the authority either to make or recommend a final decision on the adverse action.

 - (3) The employee may make an oral response, provide a written response, or respond in both ways to a designated FLRA official. The employee may provide affidavits or other documentary evidence to support the answer. If an employee makes only an oral response, the FLRA representative to whom the employee responds should summarize and document the points made by the employee for the record and provide a copy of the summary to the employee or the employee's representative, if the employee designates a representative.

- d. FLRA decision. In arriving at the decision, the FLRA designated official must consider only the reasons for the action set forth in the notice of proposed action. The FLRA designated official must also consider any information provided by the employee and the employee's representative, if any, in response to the charges. The decision must be to impose either the proposed penalty, a lesser penalty, or no penalty at all. The FLRA designated official will deliver the notice of decision to the employee at or before the time that the action will be affected and advise the employee of the employee's grievance or appeal rights. To the extent practicable, the

FLRA will issue decisions concerning proposed removals within 15 business days of the end of the employee answer period.

- C. **Employee Status During Notice Period.** Under ordinary circumstances, an employee whose removal, reduction in grade and/or pay, or suspension, including indefinite suspension, has been proposed will remain in a duty status in the employee's regular position during the advance notice period. If management concludes that the employee's presence in the employee's position of record may be detrimental to the employee or unduly disruptive to the efficiency of the agency, management may detail the employee to another position during the notice period. In circumstances in which the FLRA determines that the employee's continued presence in the workplace during the notice period may pose a threat to the employee or others, result in loss of or damage to Government property, or otherwise jeopardize legitimate Government interests, the FLRA may elect either one or a combination of the following alternatives:
1. Assign the employee to duties where the employee is no longer a threat to safety, the FLRA mission, or Government property;
 2. Allow the employee to take leave or carry the employee in an appropriate leave status (annual, sick, leave without pay, or absent without leave if the employee has absented himself from the workplace without requesting leave);
 3. Curtail the notice period when the FLRA can invoke the "crime" provision of 5 C.F.R. 752.404(d)(1). This provision, which is described below, may be invoked even in the absence of judicial action if the FLRA has reasonable cause to believe that the employee has committed a crime for which a sentence of imprisonment may be imposed; or
 4. Place the employee in a paid, non-duty status during the notice or proposed action period, subject to the limitations of 5 U.S.C. § 6329a (2018).
- D. **"Crime" Provision.** In accordance with 5 C.F.R. 752.404(d)(1), the FLRA may forego providing 30 days advance written notice if it has reasonable cause to believe that the employee has committed a crime for which a sentence of imprisonment may be imposed and is proposing a removal or suspension (including an indefinite suspension). If this is the case, the FLRA may require the employee to furnish the employee's answer to the proposed charges, including affidavits and other documentary evidence, within a time that is reasonable under the circumstances, but not less than seven days. If the circumstances require the employee to be kept away from the work site, the FLRA may place the employee in a non-duty status with pay for the time necessary to affect the action.

E. Introduction of Medical Evidence.

1. If the employee wishes the FLRA to consider any medical problem which contributed to the conduct or performance problem, the employee will be given a reasonable time to provide medical documentation in accordance with the applicable provisions of 5 C.F.R. 339. Whenever possible, the employee will provide the medical documentation within the time limits allowed for the response to the proposed action.
2. After its review of medical evidence, the FLRA is authorized by 5 C.F.R. 339.301 - 304 to require an agency-sponsored medical examination. In this case, the FLRA will name the physician and pay for the costs associated with the examination. If the FLRA determines that an agency-sponsored examination is necessary to make an informed decision regarding the proposed action, the FLRA will notify the employee in writing of the reasons for requiring the examination and the consequences if the employee fails to comply.
3. If the employee has the requisite years of service under either the Civil Service Retirement System or the Federal Employees Retirement System, the FLRA will provide the employee with information regarding disability retirement. In doing so, the FLRA will remain aware of its affirmative obligations under the provisions of 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203, that require reasonable accommodation of a qualified employee who is disabled.
4. An employee's application for disability retirement will not preclude or delay any other appropriate personnel action. 5 C.F.R. §§ 831.1204(e); 831.1205 describes the basis under which the FLRA will file an application for disability retirement on behalf of the employee.

F. Employee Grievance and Appeal Rights. An employee may not grieve or appeal a proposed action. An employee against whom action is taken under this Section is entitled to appeal the action to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB).

G. Agency Records.

1. The FLRA will maintain copies of the written summary of the investigation of misconduct, if any, or instances of poor performance; the notice of proposed action; the summary of the employee's oral response and/or the employee's written response; the notice of decision; and any other material documenting the action in an Agency disciplinary action file maintained in the HRD.

2. Information about an employee's conduct or performance may not be removed, altered or erased from the eOPF or withheld from another agency as part of, or as a condition to, resolving a formal or informal complaint by the employee or settling an administrative challenge to an adverse personnel action.
3. Suspensions are documented by OPM Forms 50, which are permanent records filed in the employee's eOPF.
4. The FLRA may take corrective action at any time during the adverse action process when:
 - a. The FLRA becomes aware that the information contained in a personnel record is not accurate or records an action taken by the agency illegally or in error. In such cases, an agency would have the authority, unilaterally or by agreement, to modify an employee's personnel file to remove inaccurate information or the record of an erroneous or illegal action. The FLRA may take such action even if an appeal/complaint has been filed relating to the information that the FLRA determines to be inaccurate or to reflect an action taken illegally or in error. In all events, however, the FLRA must ensure that it removes only information that the agency itself has determined to be inaccurate or to reflect an action taken illegally or in error; or
 - b. Persuasive evidence comes to light prior to the issuance of a final agency decision on an adverse personnel action casting doubt on the validity of the action or the ability of the FLRA to sustain the action in litigation. In such a case, the FLRA may decide to cancel or vacate the proposed adverse action. Such additional information may come to light at any stage of the process prior to final agency decision including during an employee response period. To the extent an employee's personnel file or other FLRA records contain a proposed action that is subsequently cancelled, the FLRA will remove that action from the employee's personnel file or other agency files.

SECTION IV. - SUPERVISOR VIOLATIONS OF WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS

- A. **In General.** Subject to 5 U.S.C. § 1214(f), if the Chairman of the FLRA, an administrative law judge, the MSPB, the Office of Special Counsel, a judge of the United

States, or the Inspector General of the FLRA has determined that an FLRA supervisor has committed a prohibited personnel practice related to whistleblowing, the Chairman of the FLRA, consistent with the procedures required under Section IV(B):

1. for the first prohibited personnel action committed by the supervisor:
 - a. shall propose suspending the supervisor for a period that is not less than three days; and
 - b. may propose an additional action the FLRA Chairman determines to be appropriate, including a reduction in grade or pay; and
2. for the second prohibited personnel action committed by the supervisor, shall propose removing the supervisor.

If the Chairman of the FLRA is responsible for determining whether a supervisor has committed a prohibited personnel practice related to whistleblowing, the Chairman may not delegate that responsibility.

B. Procedures.

1. Notice of proposed action. A supervisor against whom an action is proposed to be taken under Section IV(A) is entitled to written notice that:
 - a. states the specific reasons for the proposed action; and
 - b. informs the supervisor of the employee's right to review the material that the FLRA relies upon in support of the notice for the proposed action.
2. Representation. A supervisor covered by this Section IV is entitled to be represented by an attorney or other representative. The FLRA may disallow an employee's representative if the representative's activities might cause a conflict of interest or position or whose release from the employee's official position would give rise to unreasonable costs or whose priority work assignments preclude the employee's release.
3. Supervisor Answer. A supervisor who receives notice under Section IV(B)(1) may, not later than 14 days after the date on which the supervisor receives the notice, submit an answer and furnish evidence in support of that answer.
4. FLRA Decision. If, after the end of the 14-day period described in Section IV(B)(3), a supervisor does not furnish any evidence as described in that Section clause, or if the Chairman of the FLRA determines that the evidence furnished by the supervisor is insufficient, the Chairman shall impose the penalties proposed under Sections IV(A)(1) or IV(A)(2), as applicable. In arriving at the decision,

the Chairman must:

- a. consider only the reasons for the action set forth in the notice of proposed action;
- b. consider any information provided by the supervisor and the supervisor's representative, if any, in response to the charges;
- c. issue a written decision containing specific reasons for the decision as soon as practicable (in removal cases, within 15 business days of the end of the employee answer period, if practicable); and
- d. deliver the notice of decision to the supervisor or authorized representative at or before the time that the action will be effected and advise the supervisor of the employee's appeal rights.

C. Supervisor Appeal Rights. A supervisor may not appeal a proposed action. A supervisor against whom action is taken under this Section is entitled to appeal the action to the MSPB.

D. Agency Records.

1. The FLRA will maintain copies of the notice of proposed action, the answer of the employee if written, a summary thereof if made orally, the notice of decision and reasons therefor, and any order imposing an adverse action, together with any supporting material. Such material shall be furnished to the MSPB upon its request and to the supervisor upon the supervisor's request.
2. Reprimands, along with other information about an employee's conduct or performance, may not be removed, altered or erased from the eOPF or withheld from another agency as part of, or as a condition to, resolving a formal or informal complaint by the employee or settling an administrative challenge to an adverse personnel action.
3. Suspensions and removals are documented on OPM Form 50, which are permanent records filed in the employee's eOPF. Suspension and removals on OPM Form 50 are removed from the eOPF if the action, due to an employee appeal, is canceled or mitigated.
4. The FLRA may take corrective action at any time during the adverse action process when:

- a. The FLRA becomes aware that the information contained in a personnel record is not accurate or records an action taken by the agency illegally or in error. In such cases, the FLRA would have the authority, unilaterally or by agreement, to modify an employee's personnel file to remove inaccurate information or the record of an erroneous or illegal action. The FLRA may take such action even if an appeal/complaint has been filed relating to the information that the FLRA determines to be inaccurate or to reflect an action taken illegally or in error. In all events, however, the FLRA must ensure that it removes only information that the agency itself has determined to be inaccurate or to reflect an action taken illegally or in error; or
- b. Persuasive evidence comes to light prior to the issuance of a final agency decision on an adverse personnel action casting doubt on the validity of the action or the ability of the FLRA to sustain the action in litigation. In such a case, the FLRA may decide to cancel or vacate the proposed adverse action. Such additional information may come to light at any stage of the process prior to final agency decision including during an employee response period. To the extent an employee's personnel file or other FLRA records contain a proposed action that is subsequently cancelled, the FLRA will remove that action from the employee's personnel file or other agency files.

SECTION V. - ADVERSE ACTIONS: VOLUNTARY SEPARATION BEFORE RESOLUTION OF A PERSONNEL INVESTIGATION

- A. **Notating an Employees Personnel Record.** When an FLRA employee occupying a position in the competitive service or the excepted service is the subject of a personnel investigation and resigns from Government employment prior to the resolution of such investigation, the Chairman shall, if an adverse finding was made with respect to such employee pursuant to such investigation, make a permanent notation in the employee's official personnel record file. The Chairman shall make such notation not later than 40 days after the date of the resolution of such investigation.
- B. **Definitions:** In this section, the term "personnel investigation" includes an investigation by and Inspector General and an adverse personnel action as a result of misconduct or for such cause as will promote the efficiency of the serviced under 5 U.S.C. ch. 75.

- C. **Procedures.** Prior to making a permanent notation in an employee's official personnel record file under subsection (1), the Chairman shall:
1. Notify the employee in writing within 5 days of the resolution of the investigation and provide such employee a copy of the adverse finding and any supporting documentation;
 2. Provide the employee with not less than 30 days, to respond in writing and to furnish affidavits and other documentary evidence to show why the adverse finding was unfounded (a summary of which shall be included in any notation made to the employee's personnel file under subsection (D.1.)); and
 3. Provide a written decision and the specific reasons for the decision to the employee at the earliest practicable date.
- D. **Employee Appeal.** An employee is entitled to appeal the decision of the head of the agency to make a permanent notation under subsection (A) to the Merit Systems Protection Board under section 7701.
1. If an employee files an appeal with the Merit Systems Protection Board pursuant to this subsection, the Chairman shall make a notation in the employee's official personnel record indicating that an appeal disputing the notation is pending not later than 2 weeks after the date on which such appeal was filed.
 2. If the Chairman is the prevailing party on appeal, not later than 2 weeks after the date that the Board issues the appeal decision, the head of the agency shall remove the notation made under paragraph C.1. from the employee's official personnel record file.
 3. If the employee is the prevailing party on appeal, not later than 2 weeks after the date that the Board issues the appeal decision, the Chairman shall remove the notation made under paragraph C.1. and the notation of an adverse finding made under subsection B.3. from the employee's official personnel record file.

SECTION VI. - FURLOUGHES FOR 30 DAYS OR LESS

- A. **Standard for Action.** The FLRA may take action under this Section for reasons of lack of money or work.
- B. **Procedures.** When the FLRA decides that it must furlough employees for 30 days or less, it will follow procedures described below:
1. Notice of proposed furlough.

- a. Employees are entitled to 30 days advance written notice of a pending furlough of 30 days or less. The notice will include the employee's and the employee representative's, if any, right to review the material relied upon to determine that the furlough is necessary.
 - b. When some, but not all, employees in a competitive level are being furloughed, the notice of proposal will state the basis for selecting particular employees for furlough, as well as the basis for the furlough.
 - c. The advance written notice and opportunity to answer are not required for furloughs without pay caused by unforeseeable circumstances such as sudden emergencies requiring immediate curtailment of activities, acts of nature, or government shutdowns.
 - d. If a furlough extends beyond 30 calendar days (as in, for example, a government shutdown), the FLRA will treat the successive thirty-day period as a second furlough and issue another furlough notice as described in paragraphs a and b above. If the extension of the furlough is caused by unforeseen circumstances, the FLRA may dispense with the advance written notice and opportunity to answer as described in paragraph c above.
2. Representation. An employee covered by this Section is entitled to be represented by an attorney or other representative. The FLRA may disallow an employee's representative if the representative's activities might cause a conflict of interest or position or whose release from the employee's official position would give rise to unreasonable costs or whose priority work assignments preclude the employee's release.
3. Employee's answer.
- a. Except as provided above, the FLRA will give the employee a reasonable amount of official time to review the material relied upon to support the proposed furlough and to reply orally, in writing, or both ways.
 - b. The FLRA will designate an official to hear the employee's oral response who has the authority either to make or recommend a final decision on the furlough action. If an employee makes only an oral response, the FLRA representative to whom the employee responds

must summarize and document the points made by the employee for the record and provide a copy of the summary to the employee and the employee's representative, if any.

4. FLRA decision. In arriving at its decision, the FLRA designated official will consider only the reasons for action set forth in the notice of proposed action. It will also consider any information provided by the employee and the employee's representative, if any, in response to the proposed notice. The FLRA designated official will deliver the notice of decision to the employee at or before the time that the furlough will be affected and advise the employee of appeal rights.

C. **Employee Appeal Rights.** An employee against whom action is taken under this Section is entitled to appeal the action to the MSPB.

D. **Agency Records.**

1. The FLRA will maintain copies of the notice of proposed action; the summary of the employee's oral response, if any; the employee's written response, if any; the notice of decision; and any other material documenting the furlough.
2. Furloughs are documented on OPM Form 50, which are permanent records filed in the employee's eOPF.

SECTION VII. - PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND EVALUATION

The HRD administers and evaluates these programs and sets forth the procedures set forth in this Policy. Questions and suggestions for improvements are welcome and should be directed to the HRD.

This Policy is effective June 3, 2020.



Michael Jeffries, Executive Director

APPENDIX A. Douglas Factors

APPENDIX A. DOUGLAS FACTORS

Douglas Factors are the factors set forth by the Merit Systems Protection Board in its precedent setting case, *Douglas v. Veteran's Administration*, 5 M.S.P.R. 280 (1981). In considering disciplinary actions based on conduct issues, supervisors must consider Douglas Factors. Note that supervisors may properly take into account factors not listed under appropriate circumstances:

- (1) Nature and seriousness of the offense and its relation to the employee's duties, position, and responsibilities;
- (2) Employee's job level and type of employment, including fiduciary roles, contacts with the public, and prominence of the position;
- (3) Employee's past disciplinary record;
- (4) Employee's past work performance, including length of service, ability to get along with fellow workers, ability to do the work, and dependability;
- (5) The effect of the offense on the employee's ability to perform effectively and the supervisor's confidence in the employee;
- (6) Consistency of the penalty with those imposed upon other employees for same or similar offenses;
- (7) Notoriety of the offense and its impact upon the FLRA's reputation;
- (8) Clarity with which the employee was on notice that he or she was violating rules and had been warned about the misconduct or performance;
- (9) Potential for the employee's rehabilitation;
- (10) Mitigating circumstances such as unusual job tensions or sexual harassment; and
- (11) Adequacy and effectiveness of alternative sanctions to deter such future misconduct or poor performance.
- (12) Consistency of the penalty with other penalties imposed by the same supervisor for the same or similar instances of misconduct.

Attachment 5



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY
1400 K STREET N.W. • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20424-0001

Training Plan
(Rights and Remedies under Federal Antidiscrimination
and Whistleblower-Protection Laws)

(Last updated September 3, 2025; Last reviewed September 3, 2025)

Purpose and Background

The Agency developed the following training plan, which it has reviewed and updated as necessary, in response to the requirement in § 201 of the Notification and Federal Employees Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act), 5 U.S.C. §2301 note, amended by the Elijah E. Cummings Federal Employee Antidiscrimination Act of 2020, that each federal agency provide training to its employees regarding the rights and remedies applicable to them under the Federal Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws. Pursuant to Office of Personnel Management (OPM) regulations implementing the requirements of § 201 of the No FEAR Act, each federal agency is required to develop a written plan to train all of its employees, including supervisors and managers, regarding those matters. 5 C.F.R. § 724.203.

Scope of Training

The Agency will provide all Agency employees, including supervisors and managers, with training regarding their rights and remedies under Federal Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws.

Instructional Material and Method of Training

The training will be an online, self-paced, computer-based program. Although the course is self-paced, employees will be directed to complete it by the applicable deadlines in OPM's regulations.

Beginning with the FY 2018-2019 biennial training cycle, the Agency has used a self-guided PowerPoint training. Topics covered include: whistleblowing; race, color, and national origin; religion; sex and age; pregnancy; disability; retaliation; and genetic information. After completing the course, employees are able to: identify and interpret the antidiscrimination and whistleblower protection laws; explain the rights and responsibilities of whistleblower protection or antidiscrimination laws; follow the steps for filing a complaint alleging a violation of whistleblower protection or antidiscrimination laws; and understand the equal employment opportunity laws enforced

by the EEOC. Upon completion of the training segment, employees must provide a certificate of completion to the FLRA's Human Resources Division (HRD).

Training schedule

All agency employees will receive training on the rights and remedies available under applicable Antidiscrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws on a recurring cycle not to exceed two years.

The completion date for new employees is within 90 calendar days after their appointment.

Means of documenting completion of training

Employees are required to submit certificates of completion to the HRD. The HRD will maintain copies of these certifications in accordance with applicable record retention policies.

Periodic review of training plan

The Agency will continue to review this policy periodically, and update it as necessary.