



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
**FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20424

TO: All FLRA Employees  
FROM: Rebecca J. Osborne, Director of Legislative Affairs and Program Planning  
DATE: February 10, 2025  
RE: Whistleblower Protection/Prohibited Personnel Practices

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The purpose of this memorandum is to ensure that all Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) employees are aware of, and understand, the prohibited personnel practices and whistleblower protections available to federal employees.

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) is an independent agency that protects federal employees from prohibited personnel practices, including whistleblower retaliation and unlawful hiring practices. OSC also provides an independent, secure channel for disclosing and resolving wrongdoing in federal agencies.

The Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 and the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012 provide the right for all covered federal employees to make whistleblower disclosures and to ensure that employees are protected from whistleblower retaliation. The Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017 and OSC's Reauthorization Act of 2017 further enhanced and reinforced these rights and protections.

Whistleblowing is defined as the disclosure of information that an employee reasonably believes evidences: a violation of any law, rule or regulation; gross mismanagement; gross waste of funds; an abuse authority; a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety; or censorship related to scientific research or analysis. Employees may make lawful disclosures to anyone, including, for example, management officials, the [FLRA's Inspector General](#), and/or [OSC](#).

You will find attached and hyperlinked below two documents prepared by OSC. FLRA employees also receive these two documents in the initial employee orientation materials. The first is the fact sheet, [Your Rights as a Federal Employee](#), which provides detailed information on the fourteen prohibited personnel practices and employees' rights to file complaints with OSC. Additionally, you should review [Your Rights When Reporting Wrongs](#), which describe different avenues for making whistleblower disclosures as federal employees. More information can also be found on the [OSC website](#).

Employees should also be aware of posters the OSC has created to inform employees of their rights and responsibilities. They are:

"Whistleblower Channel": Describes the secure channel that current federal employees, former employees, and applicants for federal employment may use to disclose: a violation of any law, rule, or regulation; gross mismanagement; gross waste of funds; an abuse of authority; a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety; of censorship related to scientific research (if the censorship meets one of the other categories of wrongdoing).

"Whistleblower Retaliation": Answers the question of, "What is whistleblower retaliation?" Reminds employees that they may not take, fail to take, or threaten to take any personnel action against an employee because of protected whistleblowing.

"Prohibited Personnel Practices" (PPPs): Lists the 14 prohibited personnel practices, including: whistleblower retaliation; discrimination for engaging in conduct unrelated to work performance, such as discrimination based on sex or religion; and hiring and promotion offenses that offend the merit system. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(1)-(b)(14).

Materials describing permitted and prohibited activities under the Hatch Act, including:

- [The Hatch Act: Permitted and Prohibited Activities for Most Federal Employees](#)
- [The Hatch Act and Further Restricted Employees](#)
- [The Hatch Act and State, D.C., and Local Employees](#)
- [The Hatch Act Social Media Use Refresher](#)

Federal employees have the right to be free from prohibited personnel practices, including retaliation for whistleblowing. The FLRA is committed to making sure that all employees are aware of their rights as well as the safeguards that are in place to protect them. If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact the Office of Legislative Affairs and Program Planning at 771-444-5778 or email your questions to: [olapp@flra.gov](mailto:olapp@flra.gov). You can also visit the OSC website at: <https://osc.gov/Services/>.

Attachments