

# Whistleblower Retaliation

## 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(8)

---

### WHAT IS WHISTLEBLOWER RETALIATION?

A federal employee authorized to take, direct others to take, recommend or approve any personnel action may not take, fail to take, or threaten to take any personnel action against an employee because of protected whistleblowing.

*EXAMPLE: A supervisor directs the geographic reassignment of an employee because the employee reported safety violations to senior agency officials.*

### PROTECTED WHISTLEBLOWING IS DEFINED AS DISCLOSING INFORMATION WHICH THE DISCLOSER REASONABLY BELIEVES EVIDENCES:

1. a violation of law, rule, or regulation,
2. gross mismanagement,
3. gross waste of funds,
4. an abuse of authority, or
5. a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU BELIEVE WHISTLEBLOWER RETALIATION HAS OCCURRED?

If you believe that you have been subject to retaliation for protected whistleblowing you can file a complaint with the Office of Special Counsel (OSC). OSC is an independent agency that investigates and prosecutes allegations of prohibited personnel practices (PPP) by federal employees. OSC has the authority to investigate PPPs, including allegations of whistleblower retaliation, and may seek corrective or disciplinary action when warranted.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

U.S. OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL  
1730 M STREET, N.W., SUITE 218  
WASHINGTON, DC 20036-4505

PHONE: (202) 254-3640\*

TOLL FREE: 1-800-572-2249\*

\*Hearing and Speech Disabled: Federal Relay Service 1-800-877-8339

[www.OSC.gov](http://www.OSC.gov)