



Dear Colleagues,

Federal employees have the right to be free from prohibited personnel practices, including retaliation for whistleblowing. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 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.

The purpose of this memorandum is to ensure that all EPA employees are aware of and understand the prohibited personnel practices and whistle blower 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 whistle blower disclosures and to ensure that employees are protected from whistle blower retaliation. The Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017 and OSC's Reauthorization Act under the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2018 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 of 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 Inspector General of an agency and /or OSC.

More information can be found on the OSC website at: <https://osc.gov/Pages/WhatWeDo.aspx>

Andrew Wheeler
Acting EPA Administrator