



(emailed to EPA staff April 29, 2021)

Colleagues,

Protecting your rights as federal employees is a focal point of President Biden's agenda, as outlined by [Executive Order 14003](#). I am also committed to protecting employee rights, including your right to be free from prohibited personnel practices and retaliation for whistleblowing.

The purpose of this memorandum is to ensure agency employees are aware of and understand the [prohibited personnel practices](#) and whistleblower protections available to all federal employees.

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) is an independent agency protecting 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 employees are protected from whistleblower retaliation. The Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017 and OSC's Reauthorization Act of 2017 further enhance and reinforce these rights and protections.

Whistleblowing is defined as the disclosure of information 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.
- 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 or OSC.

Please review the fact sheet, [Your Rights as a Federal Employee](#), for detailed information on the fourteen prohibited personnel practices and employees' rights to file complaints with OSC.

Additionally, I encourage you to review [Know Your Rights When Reporting Wrongs](#), for different avenues to make whistleblower disclosures as federal employees. More information can also be found on the [OSC website](#).

EPA is committed to making sure all employees are aware of their rights as well as the safeguards in place to protect them. Thank you for your attention.

Michael S. Regan  
Administrator