

NO FEAR ACT NOTICE

On May 15, 2002, Congress enacted the “Notification and Federal Employee Anti-Discrimination 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 anti-discrimination and whistleblower protection laws.” Pub. L. 107-174, Summary. In support of this purpose, Congress found that “agencies cannot be run effectively if those agencies practice or tolerate discrimination.” Pub.L. 107-74, 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 anti-discrimination, whistleblower protection and retaliation laws.

Anti-Discrimination 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, marital status or political affiliation. Discrimination on these bases is prohibited by one or more of the following statutes: 5 USC 2302(b)(1), 29 USC 206(d), 29 USC 631, 29 USC 633a, 29 USC 791 and 42 USC 2000e-16.

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 Employee Opportunity 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. See, e.g., 29 CFR 1614. The Office maintains a memorandum of agreement with the National Park Service to provide these services. The Human Resources Department will give you the contact information for the EEO Counselor. 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 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).

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 violation 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 USC 2302(b)(8). If you believe that you have been the victim of whistleblower retaliation, you may file a written complaint (Form OCS-11) with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel at 1730 M Street NW., Suite 218, Washington, DC 20036-4505 or online through the OSC Website at 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 anti-discrimination or whistleblower protections 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 Anti-discrimination Laws and Whistleblower Protection Laws sections 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 who has

engaged in discriminatory or retaliatory conduct, up to and including removal. If OCS has initiated an investigation under 5 USC 1214, however, according to 5 USC 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 724, as well as the Human Resources Office. Additional information regarding Federal anti-discrimination, whistleblower protection and retaliation laws can be found at the EEOC Web site at www.eeoc.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 USC 2302(d).