



# OIG

## Office of Inspector General

U.S. Department of State • Broadcasting Board of Governors

# WHISTLEBLOWER INFORMATION

## Civil and Foreign Service Employees

### What is a whistleblower?

A whistleblower is a Federal employee, former Federal employee, or applicant for Federal employment who discloses information which he or she reasonably believes is evidence of:

- a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety;
- a violation of any law, rule, or regulation;
- gross mismanagement;
- a gross waste of funds; or
- an abuse of authority.

### Where can I report such wrongdoing?

If the wrongdoing involves the Department of State (Department) or the Broadcasting Board of Governors, (BBG) you should report the information to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) hotline. In most cases, OIG can offer you confidentiality to the fullest extent possible.

### Are whistleblowers protected from retaliation?

Yes. The Whistleblower Protection Act prohibits reprisal against whistleblowers. The Department and BBG may not take or threaten to take any personnel action, such as removal or an unsatisfactory evaluation, against a whistleblower because of the disclosure. However, in order for the whistleblower protections to apply, the disclosure must have been made *prior* to the alleged retaliation.

### What can I do if I believe retaliation has occurred?

You may contact OIG or the Office of Special Counsel (OSC). OIG can help you understand your rights and may investigate the retaliation and alert the Department or BBG to any illegal reprisal. However, OIG cannot serve as your legal representative or advocate.

You also have the right to file a complaint with the OSC, a separate Federal agency that investigates and prosecutes illegal retaliation against whistleblowers. OSC may be able to stay (or delay) any adverse personnel action that is taken against a whistleblower and eventually may be able to attain remedial action for the whistleblower, such as job restoration, back pay, or removal of suspensions.

### Where can I report retaliation related to equal employment opportunity (EEO) activity?

Such allegations should be addressed to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) for your agency. For the Department, you can find more information on the EEO process below.



Office of Inspector General (OIG) Hotline Form: [oig.state.gov/hotline-form](https://oig.state.gov/hotline-form)

OIG Hotline: **1-800-409-9926**

Office of Civil Rights (OCR): [www.state.gov/s/ocr](https://www.state.gov/s/ocr) **202-647-9295**

Broadcasting Board of Governors OCR: [ocr@bbg.gov](mailto:ocr@bbg.gov) **202-382-7800**



# OIG

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U.S. Department of State • Broadcasting Board of Governors

# WHISTLEBLOWER INFORMATION

## Employees of Contractors and Grantees

### What is a whistleblower?

A whistleblower is an employee of a Federal contractor, subcontractor, or grantee who discloses information which he or she reasonably believes is evidence of:

- a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety;
- a violation of any law, rule, or regulation;
- gross mismanagement;
- a gross waste of funds; or
- an abuse of authority.

The disclosure must be made to:

- a Member of Congress or a representative of a committee of Congress;
- the Office of Inspector General (OIG);
- the Government Accountability Office (GAO);
- a Federal employee responsible for contract or grant oversight or management;
- the Department of Justice or other law enforcement agency;
- a court or grand jury; or
- a management official or other employee of the contractor, subcontractor, or grantee who has the responsibility to investigate, discover, or address misconduct.

### Where can I report such wrongdoing to OIG?

If the wrongdoing involves the Department of State (Department) or the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), you should report the information you have to the

OIG hotline. OIG can offer you confidentiality to the fullest extent possible.

### Are whistleblowers protected from retaliation?

Yes. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2013 prohibits a contractor, subcontractor, or grantee from discharging, demoting, or otherwise discriminating against an employee as a reprisal for whistleblowing activity.

### What can I do if I believe retaliation has occurred?

Employees of contractors, subcontractors, and grantees may file a complaint with OIG, which will investigate such complaints unless OIG determines that the complaint is frivolous, fails to allege a violation of the prohibition against whistleblower reprisal, or has been addressed in another proceeding. If OIG finds that retaliation has occurred, it will recommend that the Department or BBG order the contractor, subcontractor, or grantee to take remedial action, such as job restoration, back pay, or removal of suspensions. You may file a complaint on OIG's website.

### Where can I report retaliation related to equal employment opportunity (EEO) activity?

Such allegations should be addressed to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Office of Inspector General (OIG) Hotline Form: [oig.state.gov/hotline-form](https://oig.state.gov/hotline-form)

OIG Hotline: **1-800-409-9926**

Whistleblower Reprisal Form: [oig.state.gov/contractor-whistleblower-reprisal](https://oig.state.gov/contractor-whistleblower-reprisal)

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: [www.eeoc.gov](https://www.eeoc.gov)