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YOUR RIGHTS IN THE CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE

PLEASE RETAIN FOR YOUR RECORDS

Official Notification—Pursuant to Section 1381 (h)(1) & (2)
of the Congressional Accountability Act

www.compliance.gov

BE INFORMED ABOUT THE CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

2ND SESSION
112TH CONGRESS
(2012)

AS AN EMPLOYEE OF CONGRESS, it is in your best interest to take a few minutes to become familiar with your workplace rights in the Legislative Branch in the event that you need to timely exercise those rights with the Office of Compliance (OOC). The OOC is a nonpartisan, independent agency of the United States Congress.

The Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (CAA) provides you with the right to work in a workplace that is free from discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, and genetic information. Several other important rights including, but not limited to, family and medical leave, servicemember protections, veterans' employment opportunities, collective bargaining, safety, health, and access for people with disabilities—are also described in this notification. The CAA also prohibits retaliation, reprisal, or intimidation for exercising your rights. In some circumstances, applicants, former employees, and members of the public are also covered by the CAA.

If you have questions about your rights under the CAA, please contact the OOC and ask to speak to a counselor. Our counselors will answer your questions and inform you of the mandated legal process for asserting a workplace rights violation claim. All counseling between you and the OOC is strictly confidential. To preserve your workplace rights claim, the CAA requires that you file a request for counseling with the OOC no later than 180 days from the date of the alleged violation.

You may be legally barred from asserting a claim that is not filed within the time limit. You may ultimately decide not to pursue your claim after counseling, but timely filing will preserve your claim while making that decision. Your employer will not be notified of your claim if you decide not to pursue the claim after counseling.

If counseling does not resolve your claim, you may proceed to confidential mediation at the OOC with your employer to try to reach a resolution. If mediation does not resolve your claim, you may seek a legal ruling on your claim by filing a complaint with the OOC for a confidential hearing or by filing a civil suit in federal court.

Please call the OOC at (202) 724-9250 or visit our website at www.compliance.gov to learn more about your rights and the dispute resolution process administered by the OOC.



Sincerely,

Tamara E. Chrisler
Executive Director

YOUR RIGHTS IN THE CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE

As a Legislative Branch employee, you are protected by the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (CAA). The CAA applies to Congress and its agencies many of the workplace rights, safety, health, and public access laws that are available to private sector and Executive Branch employees. You may also be entitled to redress for violations of the CAA, including monetary awards, attorney's fees, costs, reinstatement, promotion, or backpay. To assert your rights under the CAA, you must file with the Office of Compliance (OOC) a Request for Counseling within 180 days of an alleged violation. Please visit www.compliance.gov for further information about the rights and protections provided to Congressional employees, or contact the OOC at (202) 724-9250 and ask to speak to a counselor. All counseling is strictly confidential.

NO HARASSMENT OR DISCRIMINATION

Section 201 of the CAA

Prohibits harassment and discrimination in personnel actions based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Section 202 of the CAA

Provides rights and protections for employees taking or requesting leave for certain family and medical reasons.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS

Section 203 of the CAA

Requires the payment of minimum wage and overtime compensation to nonexempt employees, restricts child labor, and prohibits sex discrimination in wages.

POLYGRAPH TESTING PROTECTIONS

Section 204 of the CAA

Except in certain circumstances, prohibits requiring or requesting that lie detector tests be taken; using, accepting, or inquiring about the results of a lie detector test; or firing or discriminating against an employee based on the results of a lie detector test or for refusing to take a test.

NOTIFICATION OF OFFICE CLOSING OR MASS LAYOFFS

Section 205 of the CAA

Under certain circumstances, requires that employees be notified of an office closing or of a mass layoff at least sixty days in advance of the event.

UNIFORMED SERVICES RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS

Section 206 of the CAA

Protects employees who are performing service in the uniformed services from discrimination and provides certain benefits and reemployment rights.

REPRISAL OR INTIMIDATION PROHIBITED FOR EXERCISING WORKPLACE RIGHTS

Section 207 of the CAA

Prohibits employing offices from intimidating, retaliating, or discriminating against employees who exercise their rights as applied by the CAA.

ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Section 210 of the CAA

Protects members of the public who are qualified individuals with disabilities from being denied access to public services, programs, activities, or places of public accommodation in Legislative Branch agencies.

HAZARD-FREE WORKSPACES

Section 215 of the CAA

Requires that all workplaces be free of recognized hazards that might cause death or serious injury.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND UNIONIZATION

Section 220 of the CAA

Protects the rights of certain Legislative Branch employees to form, join, or assist a labor organization, or to refrain from such activity.

GENETIC INFORMATION

NONDISCRIMINATION & PRIVACY

Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act

Prohibits the use of an employee's genetic information as a basis for discrimination in personnel actions.

VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Veterans' Employment Opportunities Act

Gives certain veterans enhanced access to job opportunities and establishes a redress system for preference eligible veterans in the event that their veterans' preference rights are violated.