



YOUR RIGHTS in the Congressional Workplace



The Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR) enforces the rights and protections of the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA) for covered employees of the legislative branch, including, in some cases, unpaid staff. The OCWR administers a process to resolve claims alleging violations of these laws.



Unlawful Discrimination & Harassment

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



Protections for Pregnant Workers

Requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations for an employee's known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.



Family & Medical Leave

Requires that employees be allowed to take paid or unpaid leave for certain family and medical reasons.



Veterans & Servicemembers

Protects employees who are past or present members of the uniformed services from discrimination or retaliation and provides certain benefits and reemployment rights.

The CAA also enhances access for eligible veterans to job opportunities and establishes a redress system if their veterans' preference rights are violated.



Polygraph Testing

Restricts the use of polygraph testing or test results.



Retaliation

Prohibits intimidation, reprisal, or discrimination against employees who exercise their rights under the CAA.



Fair Labor Standards

Requires minimum wage and overtime compensation to nonexempt employees, restricts child labor, and prohibits sex-based wage differentials.



Genetic Information

Prohibits the use of genetic information as a basis for taking a personnel action.



Mass Layoffs

Requires that employees be notified of an office closing or of a mass layoff.



Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs

Prohibits employing offices from asking most job applicants about their criminal record prior to extending conditional offers of employment.

All claims alleging violations of the above laws must be filed with the OCWR during the **180-day** period that begins on the date of the alleged violation. Employees with claims passing preliminary review may proceed to an OCWR administrative hearing. Alternatively, employees may file a complaint in Federal Court after filing a claim with the OCWR or after preliminary review. The OCWR also offers voluntary mediation and confidential advising services.

The OCWR also enforces the laws below. Contact us to learn more.



Accessibility

Ensures access to legislative branch facilities, services, programs, and activities for anyone with a disability.



Collective Bargaining & Unionization

Allows certain legislative branch employees to unionize, prohibits discrimination against employees because of their union activity, and prohibits retaliation against employees to discourage or encourage union activity.



Hazard-Free Workplaces

Requires that workplaces be in compliance with occupational safety and health standards and free from recognized hazards.