



CIVILIAN PERSONNEL SECTION FACTSHEET

Current as of December 2023

PROHIBITED PERSONNEL PRACTICES

Applicable to U.S. appropriated fund civilian employees

PURPOSE: Prohibited Personnel Practices (PPPs) are employment-related activities that are banned in the federal workforce because they violate the merit system through some form of employment discrimination, retaliation, improper hiring practices, or failure to adhere to laws, rules, or regulations that directly concern the merit system principles.

PROHIBITED PERSONNEL PRACTICES (PPP):

1. An agency official shall not discriminate against an employee or applicant based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability (or handicapping condition), marital status, or political affiliation. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(1).
2. An agency official shall not request or consider a recommendation based on political connections or influence. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(2)
3. An agency official shall not coerce the political activity of any person or retaliate against an employee for refusing to engage in political activity. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(3)
4. An agency official shall not intentionally deceive or obstruct anyone from competing for employment. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)
5. An agency official shall not influence anyone to withdraw from competition in order to improve or injure the employment prospects of any person. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(5)
6. An agency official shall not give an unauthorized advantage in order to improve or injure the employment prospects of any person. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(6)
7. A federal government employee shall not engage in nepotism (i.e., hire, promote, or advocate the hiring or promotion of relatives). 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(7)
8. An agency official shall not retaliate against an employee for whistleblowing. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(8)
9. An agency official shall not retaliate because an employee: filed a complaint, grievance or appeal; testified for or helped someone else with one of these activities; cooperated with or disclosed information to the Special Counsel or an Inspector General; or, refused to obey an order that would require the employee to violate a law, rule, or regulation. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(9)

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10. An agency official shall not discriminate due to conduct that does not adversely affect job performance. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(10)
11. An agency official shall not take or fail to take, recommend, or approve a personnel action if the official knows that doing so would violate a veterans' preference requirement. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(11)
12. An agency official shall not take or fail to take a personnel action if doing so would violate a law, rule or regulation implementing or directly concerning the merit system principles. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(12)
13. An agency official shall not implement or enforce a non-disclosure policy, form or agreement if it does not contain a specific statement notifying employees of their rights, obligations, or liabilities relating to classified information, communications to Congress, whistleblowing to an Inspector General, or any other whistleblower protection. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(13)
14. An agency official shall not access the medical record of another employee or applicant in furtherance of any conduct proscribed by the 13 other PPPs. 5 U.S.C. § 2302(b)(14)

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT OF A PROHIBITED PERSONNEL PRACTICE: The Office of Special Counsel (OSC) has the authority to investigate and prosecute violations of these 14 PPPs. Federal employees, former federal employees and applicants for federal employment can file a claim of PPP with OSC by completing OSC Form 14 online on OSC's website linked below under references. At this time, OSC is unable to process paper filings.

REFERENCES:

- 5 USC 2302: [5 U.S. Code § 2302 - Prohibited personnel practices | U.S. Code | US Law | LII / Legal Information Institute \(cornell.edu\)](#)
- OSC Prohibited Personnel Practices: <https://osc.gov/Services/Pages/PPP.aspx>
- How to File a PPP Complaint Online: [How to File a Prohibited Personnel Practices Complaint \(osc.gov\)](#)
- myFSS Prohibited Personnel Practices (Answer ID 000005551): [Knowledge Detail \(af.mil\)](#)

Additional guidance on this topic is available from your Employee Relations Specialist. Contact information found in the footer below.