



OFFICE of
INSPECTOR GENERAL
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Whistleblower Channel

Disclosures of Wrongdoing

Whistleblowers play a vital role in keeping the federal government honest, efficient, and accountable. The Office of Special Counsel (OSC) provides a secure channel that current federal employees, former employees, and applicants for employment can use to disclose any of the following six types of wrongdoing:

- A violation of any law, rule, or regulation
- Gross mismanagement
- A gross waste of funds
- An abuse of authority
- A substantial and specific danger to public health or safety
- Censorship related to scientific research if censorship meets one of the other categories of wrongdoing (e.g., gross mismanagement)

What Happens After OSC Receives a Disclosure of Wrongdoing?

In brief, when a whistleblower disclosure is filed with OSC:

1. The whistleblower is interviewed by OSC staff to determine whether there is a “substantial likelihood” that the allegation occurred. The statute requires that the substantial likelihood determination be made in 45 days;
2. The Special Counsel then may require an agency head to investigate and report on the disclosure. The whistleblower also has a statutory right to review and comment on the agency report of investigation;
3. After the investigation, the Special Counsel sends the agency’s report, the whistleblower’s comments, and the Special Counsel’s determination as to the completeness and apparent reasonableness of the agency report and any corrective action, to the President and congressional oversight committees; and
4. The information transmitted to the President is made public on OSC’s website.

OSC does not have independent investigative authority in these cases. However, Congress gave OSC an important oversight role in reviewing government investigations of potential wrongdoing.

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