



OSHA National News Release

U.S. Department of Labor

April 8, 2020

U.S. Department of Labor Reminds Employers That They Cannot Retaliate Against Workers Reporting Unsafe Conditions During Coronavirus Pandemic

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is reminding employers that it is illegal to retaliate against workers because they report unsafe and unhealthful working conditions during the coronavirus pandemic. Acts of retaliation can include terminations, demotions, denials of overtime or promotion, or reductions in pay or hours.

“Employees have the right to safe and healthy workplaces,” said Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Loren Sweatt. “Any worker who believes that their employer is retaliating against them for reporting unsafe working conditions should contact OSHA immediately.”

Workers have the right to file a whistleblower complaint online with OSHA (or 1-800-321-OSHA) if they believe their employer has retaliated against them for exercising their rights under the whistleblower protection laws enforced by the agency.

OSHA’s Whistleblower Protection Program webpage provides valuable resources on worker rights, including fact sheets on whistleblower protections for employees in various industries and frequently asked questions.

OSHA enforces the whistleblower provisions of more than 20 whistleblower statutes protecting employees from retaliation for reporting violations of various workplace safety and health, airline, commercial motor carrier, consumer product, environmental, financial reform, food safety, motor vehicle safety, healthcare reform, nuclear, pipeline, public transportation agency, railroad, maritime, securities and tax laws. For more information on whistleblower protections, visit OSHA’s Whistleblower Protection Programs webpage.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA’s role is to help ensure these conditions for America’s working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit www.osha.gov.

The mission of the Department of Labor is to foster, promote and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights.

###