



# YOUR RIGHTS

## in the Congressional Workplace

The Congressional Accountability Act (CAA) applies certain employment, labor, safety and health, and accessibility rights and protections to covered employees of the legislative branch, including, in some cases, unpaid staff.

The Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR) administers a process to resolve claims alleging violations of these laws. **Confidential advising is available at no cost.**



### Unlawful Discrimination & Harassment

Prohibits harassment and discrimination in personnel actions based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability. 2 U.S.C. § 1311 (CAA SEC. 201)



### Family & Medical Leave

Provides rights and protections for employees needing leave for specified family and medical reasons. 2 U.S.C. § 1312 (CAA SEC. 202)



### 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. 2 U.S.C. § 1316 (CAA SEC. 206)

The CAA also enhances access for eligible veterans to job opportunities and establishes a redress system if their veterans' preference rights are violated. 2 U.S.C. § 1316a (VEOA SEC. 4(c))



### Retaliation

Prohibits intimidation, reprisal, or discrimination against employees who exercise their rights under the CAA. 2 U.S.C. § 1317 (CAA SEC. 208)



### Fair Labor Standards

Requires minimum wage and overtime compensation to nonexempt employees, restricts child labor, and prohibits sex-based wage differentials. 2 U.S.C. § 1313 (CAA SEC. 203)



### Genetic Information

Prohibits the use of genetic information as a basis for taking a personnel action. 2 U.S.C. § 1302(c) (CAA SEC. 102(c))



### Mass Layoffs

Requires that employees be notified of an office closing or of a mass layoff. 2 U.S.C. § 1315 (CAA SEC. 205)



### Polygraph Testing

Restricts the use and the results of polygraph testing. 2 U.S.C. § 1314 (CAA SEC. 204)

A claim alleging violations of the above laws must be filed with the OCWR within **180 days** of the violation. If your claim passes a preliminary review by a hearing officer, you may request an administrative hearing or file a complaint in federal district court. If your claim does not pass the preliminary review, you still may file a complaint in federal district court. The OCWR offers, at no cost to covered employees, confidential advising services to provide information, guidance, and assistance with drafting claims. Mediation is also available upon request and agreement of the parties.

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



### Accessibility

Members of the public who are qualified individuals with disabilities may not be denied access to public services, programs, activities, or places of public accommodation. 2 U.S.C. § 1331 (CAA SEC. 210)



### Collective Bargaining & Unionization

Allows certain legislative branch employees the right to form, join, or assist a labor organization or to refrain from such activity. 2 U.S.C. § 1351 (CAA SEC. 220)



### Hazard-Free Workplaces

Requires employing offices to comply with occupational safety and health standards and to provide workplaces free of recognized hazards. 2 U.S.C. § 1341 (CAA SEC. 215)