



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.



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\(c\)\)](#)



Polygraph Testing

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



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 \(CAA SEC. 205\)](#)



Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs

Prohibits employing offices from asking most job applicants about their criminal histories prior to extending conditional offers of employment. [2 U.S.C. § 1316b \(CAA SEC. 216b\)](#)

The OCWR provides staff with confidential advising services. To pursue a claim of violation of the CAA, an employee must first file a claim with the OCWR within 180 days of the alleged violation. Claims go through a preliminary review process and may go to a hearing on the merits, or the employee may file in federal district court. Mediation is also available to 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 \(CAA SEC. 215\)](#)