



# e-NEWSLETTER

*Information on workplace rights, safety and health, and accessibility in the legislative branch*



## OCWR TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of Congressional Workplace Rights' (OCWR) education and outreach team is hosting an in-person training on the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA). The training will be held on Thursday, October 12, 2023 in the Mary Pickford Theater on the third floor of the Library of Congress's James Madison Memorial Building. This CAA training is open to current employees of the legislative branch of the federal government. Please register in advance for this program at [ocwr.gov](https://ocwr.gov).

The OCWR has also recently expanded its [course catalog](#) and added a new training module on age discrimination. With today's workers living longer, staying healthier, and retiring later, many older workers may experience ageist behavior. This new module examines the relationship between ageism and age discrimination, discusses the laws prohibiting age discrimination and the legal standards of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), and proposes strategies to identify and prevent ageism and age discrimination in the workplace.

Contact the OCWR at [OCWRtraining@ocwr.gov](mailto:OCWRtraining@ocwr.gov) to receive more information on upcoming training opportunities or to schedule a training program for your office.

## New Notice of Congressional Workplace Rights

The OCWR has a revised workplace rights poster with new information. The CAA requires all employing offices to "post and keep posted (in conspicuous places upon its premises where notices to covered employees are customarily posted) a notice provided by the Office (OCWR) that describes the rights, protections, and procedures applicable to covered employees" including contact information for the OCWR.

The poster can be downloaded from the [OCWR website](#). Printed copies also are available by contacting the OCWR at (202) 724-9250.

**YOUR RIGHTS**  
in the Congressional Workplace

The Office of Congressional Workplace Rights (OCWR) enforces the rights and protections of the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA) for covered employees of the legislative branch, including, in some cases, unpaid staff. The OCWR administers a process to resolve claims alleging violations of these laws.

- Unlawful Discrimination & Harassment**  
Prohibits harassment and discrimination in personnel actions based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability.
- Protections for Pregnant Workers**  
(effective June 27, 2023)  
Requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations for an employee's known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.
- Family & Medical Leave**  
Provides rights and protections for employees needing leave for specified family and medical reasons.
- 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. The CAA also enhances access for eligible veterans to job opportunities and establishes a redress system if their veterans' preference rights are violated.
- Polygraph Testing**  
Restricts the use and the results of polygraph testing.
- Retaliation**  
Prohibits intimidation, reprisal, or discrimination against employees who exercise their rights under the CAA.
- Fair Labor Standards**  
Requires minimum wage and overtime compensation to nonexempt employees, restricts child labor, and prohibits sex-based wage differentials.
- Genetic Information**  
Prohibits the use of genetic information as a basis for taking a personnel action.
- Mass Layoffs**  
Requires that employees be notified of an office closing or of a mass layoff.
- Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs**  
Prohibits employing offices from asking most job applicants about their criminal history prior to extending conditional offers of employment.

All claims alleging violations of the above laws must be filed with the OCWR within **180 days** of the alleged violation. Employees with claims passing preliminary review may proceed to an OCWR administrative hearing. Alternatively, employees may file a complaint in Federal Court after filing a claim with the OCWR or after preliminary review. The OCWR also offers voluntary mediation and confidential advising services.

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.
- Collective Bargaining & Unionization**  
Allows certain legislative branch employees the right to form, join, or assist a labor organization or to refrain from such activity.
- Hazard-Free Workplaces**  
Requires employing offices to comply with occupational safety and health standards and to provide workplaces free of recognized hazards.

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REVISED JUNE 2023

## TRAINING CORNER

The OCWR will be hosting a pop up training session on resilience. This training module identifies what resilience is, describes the different barriers to resilience, explains why resilience is important in the legislative workplace, and proposes strategies to improve the resilience of legislative branch employees. To register, click on the link below.

Resilience [October 26, 2023](#)

**Don't miss updates: e-Alerts, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram**



**OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL WORKPLACE RIGHTS**

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