



Trade Release

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OSHA announces interim final rules and invites public comment on whistleblower procedures

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration published in the Aug. 31 [Federal Register](#) interim final rules that will help protect workers who voice safety, health, and security concerns. The regulations, which establish procedures for handling worker retaliation complaints, allow filing by phone as well as in writing and filing in languages other than English.

“When workers believe their employers are violating certain laws or government regulations, they have the right to file a complaint and should not fear retaliation. Silenced workers are not safe workers,” said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA David Michaels. “Changes in the whistleblower provisions make good on the promise to stand by those workers who have the courage to come forward when they believe their employer is violating the law and cutting corners on a variety of safety, health and security concerns in the affected industries.”

The regulations, which cover workers filing complaints in the railroad, public transit, commercial motor carrier, and consumer product industries, also create greater consistency among various OSHA complaint procedures. The interim final rules establish procedures and time frames for handling complaints under the whistleblower sections of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 and the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008.

These regulations are effective immediately. Comments must be submitted by Nov. 1, 2010, and can be sent to www.regulations.gov, the Federal eRulemaking Portal, or by mail or fax.

OSHA enforces the whistleblower provisions of the OSH Act and 18 other statutes protecting employees who report violations of various commercial motor carrier, airline, nuclear power, pipeline, environmental, railroad, public transportation, securities, and health care reform laws. New fact sheets on these statutes and additional information will be available at <http://www.whistleblowers.gov>.

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 assure these conditions for America’s working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov>.

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