

**PART 27—WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION FOR FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION EMPLOYEES**

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 301, 3151; 28 U.S.C. 509, 510, 515-519; 5 U.S.C. 2303; President's Memorandum to the Attorney General, Delegation of Responsibilities Concerning FBI Employees Under the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, 3 CFR p. 284 (1997).

SOURCE: Order No. 2264-99, 64 FR 58786, Nov. 1, 1999, unless otherwise noted.

**Subpart A—Protected Disclosures of Information**

**§ 27.1 Making a protected disclosure.**

(a) When an employee of, or applicant for employment with, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (FBI employee) makes a disclosure of information to the Department of Justice's (Department's) Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR), the Department's Office of Inspector General (OIG), the FBI Office of Professional Responsibility (FBI OPR), the FBI Inspection Division (FBI-INSD) Internal Investigations Section (collectively, Receiving Offices), the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General, the Director of the FBI, the Deputy Director of the FBI, or to the highest ranking official in any FBI field office, the disclosure will be a "protected disclosure" if the person making it reasonably believes that it evidences:

- (1) A violation of any law, rule or regulation; or
- (2) Mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a sub-

stantial and specific danger to public health or safety.

(b) Any office or official (other than the OIG or OPR) receiving a protected disclosure shall promptly report such disclosure to the OIG or OPR for investigation. The OIG and OPR shall proceed in accordance with procedures establishing their respective jurisdiction. The OIG or OPR may refer such allegations to FBI-INSD Internal Investigations Section for investigation unless the Deputy Attorney General determines that such referral shall not be made.

[Order No. 2926-2008, 73 FR 1495, Jan. 9, 2008]

**§ 27.2 Prohibition against reprisal for making a protected disclosure.**

(a) Any employee of the FBI, or of any other component of the Department, who has authority to take, direct others to take, recommend, or approve any personnel action shall not, with respect to such authority, take or fail to take, or threaten to take or fail to take, a personnel action, as defined below, with respect to any FBI employee as a reprisal for a protected disclosure.

(b) Personnel action means any action described in clauses (i) through (xi) of 5 U.S.C. 2302(a)(2)(A) taken with respect to an FBI employee other than one in a position which the Attorney General has designated in advance of encumbrance as being a position of a confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character.

**Subpart B—Investigating Reprisal Allegations and Ordering Corrective Action**

**§ 27.3 Investigations: The Department of Justice's Office of Professional Responsibility and Office of the Inspector General.**

(a)(1) An FBI employee who believes that another employee of the FBI, or of any other Departmental component, has taken or has failed to take a personnel action as a reprisal for a protected disclosure (reprisal), may report the alleged reprisal to either the Department's OPR or the Department's

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OIG (collectively, Investigative Offices). The report of an alleged reprisal must be made in writing.

(2) For purposes of this subpart, references to the FBI include any other Departmental component in which the person or persons accused of the reprisal were employed at the time of the alleged reprisal.

(b) The Investigative Office that receives the report of an alleged reprisal shall consult with the other Investigative Office to determine which office is more suited, under the circumstances, to conduct an investigation into the allegation. The Attorney General retains final authority to designate or redesignate the Investigative Office that will conduct an investigation.

(c) Within 15 calendar days of the date the allegation of reprisal is first received by an Investigative Office, the office that will conduct the investigation (Conducting Office) shall provide written notice to the person who made the allegation (Complainant) indicating—

(1) That the allegation has been received; and

(2) The name of a person within the Conducting Office who will serve as a contact with the Complainant.

(d) The Conducting Office shall investigate any allegation of reprisal to the extent necessary to determine whether there are reasonable grounds to believe that a reprisal has been or will be taken.

(e) Within 90 calendar days of providing the notice required in paragraph (c) of this section, and at least every 60 calendar days thereafter (or at any other time if the Conducting Office deems appropriate), the Conducting Office shall notify the Complainant of the status of the investigation.

(f) The Conducting Office shall determine whether there are reasonable grounds to believe that there has been or will be a reprisal for a protected disclosure. The Conducting Office shall make this determination within 240 calendar days of receiving the allegation of reprisal unless the Complainant agrees to an extension.

(g) If the Conducting Office decides to terminate an investigation, it shall provide, no later than 10 business days before providing the written statement

required by paragraph (h) of this section, a written status report to the Complainant containing the factual findings and conclusions justifying the termination of the investigation. The Complainant may submit written comments on such report to the Conducting Office. The Conducting Office shall not be required to provide a subsequent written status report after submission of such comments.

(h) If the Conducting Office terminates an investigation, it shall prepare and transmit to the Complainant a written statement notifying him/her of—

(1) The termination of the investigation;

(2) A summary of relevant facts ascertained by the Conducting Office;

(3) The reasons for termination of the investigation; and

(4) A response to any comments submitted under paragraph (g) of this section.

(i) Such written statement prepared pursuant to paragraph (h) of this section may not be admissible as evidence in any subsequent proceeding without the consent of the Complainant.

(j) Nothing in this part shall prohibit the Receiving Offices, in the absence of a reprisal allegation by an FBI employee under this part, from conducting an investigation, under their pre-existing jurisdiction, to determine whether a reprisal has been or will be taken.

### **§ 27.4 Corrective action and other relief; Director, Office of Attorney Recruitment and Management.**

(a) If, in connection with any investigation, the Conducting Office determines that there are reasonable grounds to believe that a reprisal has been or will be taken, the Conducting Office shall report this conclusion, together with any findings and recommendations for corrective action, to the Director, Office of Attorney Recruitment and Management (the Director). If the Conducting Office's report to the Director includes a recommendation for corrective action, the Director shall provide an opportunity for comments on the report by the FBI and the Complainant. The Director, upon receipt of the Conducting Office's