

**For:** FSA and RMA Supervisors

**Whistleblower Protection Training Requirement**

**Approved by:** Deputy Administrator for Management



**1 Whistleblower Protection Training**

**A Background**

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) plays an important role in helping whistleblowers. OSC is an independent agency that protects federal employees from “prohibited personnel practices,” including whistleblower retaliation and unlawful hiring practices.

Pursuant to the White House’s 2013 Second Open Government National Action Plan, covered agencies must complete the Office of Special Counsel’s (OSC) 2302 (c) Certification Program, which allows federal agencies to meet the statutory obligation to inform their workforce about the rights and remedies available to them under the prohibited personnel practices and whistleblower retaliation protection provisions of 5 U.S.C. part 2302.

**B Purpose**

This notice:

- provides guidance to supervisors regarding Whistleblower Protection and
- lists the FY 2016 AgLearn training and posting requirements.

<b>Disposal Date</b>  February 1, 2017	<b>Distribution</b>  All FSA and RMA Supervisors; State Offices relay to County Offices
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## Notice PM-2976

### 1 Whistleblower Protection Training (Continued)

#### C Action

The Department of Agriculture requests completion of the following action items in a timely manner.

- **By September 30, 2016**, supervisors must ensure that they have provided the following information to all new employees who came on board after September 15, 2016 :
  - Your Rights as a Federal Employee:  
<https://osc.gov/Resources/Your%20Rights%20as%20a%20Federal%20Employee.pdf>
  - Know Your Rights When Reporting Wrongs:  
<https://osc.gov/Resources/Know%20Your%20Rights%20When%20Reporting%20Wrongs.pdf>.
- **By October 31, 2016** ensure that agency supervisors complete the OSC's Whistleblower Protection training. For those who did not attend the live sessions on May 10, 2016, or June 8, 2016, the training that was provided by the OSC Outreach and Training Officer, was recorded, loaded into AgLearn and assigned to the "to-do" list of all FSA/RMA supervisors. The USDA Whistleblower Protection (Item ID: USDA-Whistleblower-Recording) course is presented as a video, and is approximately 90 minutes in length.
- **As soon as possible** supervisors must ensure that they have displayed the following posters in a visible location in the office. These posters can be accessed using the corresponding links.
  - Whistleblowing: [https://osc.gov/Resources/post\\_wb.pdf](https://osc.gov/Resources/post_wb.pdf)
  - Whistleblower Retaliation: [https://osc.gov/Resources/post\\_wbr.pdf](https://osc.gov/Resources/post_wbr.pdf)
  - Prohibited Personnel Practices (PPPs) :  
<https://osc.gov/Resources/PPP%20Poster%20Update.pdf>
  - Although not required, OSC highly recommends that agencies also post a notice of The Hatch Act:  
<https://osc.gov/Resources/HA%20Poster%20Lesser%20Restricted%202016.pdf>.

#### D Contacts

For questions or additional information, contact either of the following:

- Brenda Lucas at [Brenda.Lucas@dm.usda.gov](mailto:Brenda.Lucas@dm.usda.gov) or
- Allen Hatcher at [Allen.Hatcher@dm.usda.gov](mailto:Allen.Hatcher@dm.usda.gov).