

NFFE News



NFFE Sends Letter to USDA on Anti-Harassment Program

September 15, 2022

Yesterday, National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) President Randy Erwin sent a letter to the Labor Relations Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture with comments for the agency's draft regulation on its Anti-Harassment Program. The letter urges USDA to include the union's comments on the draft regulation, which aim to ensure that harassment reports are properly addressed and do not result in retaliation. Particularly within the Forest Service, employee reports of harassment do not result in consequences for perpetrators, leading to retaliation and further harassment.

"The Anti-Harassment Program has the great potential to eliminate workplace harassment as we know it, but a critical component has been missing for years: employee trust in the program," the letter reads. Harassed employees must have a safe way to seek redress where protection from retaliation is real. As incentive for employees to come forward, USDA must consistently enforce consequences for harassers and notify employees of those actions."

"Almost all investigations result in skewed reports and findings of no harassment," the letter continues. "The perception among the workforce is the only ones to face consequences for reporting harassment are the victims. This must change. Please take this opportunity to instill a new confidence among our ranks that management is intent on addressing harassment and will not tolerate retaliation."

"The safety and well-being of our members is NFFE's highest priority," said NFFE President Randy Erwin "No one working in the federal government should have to tolerate harassment, and those harassing their coworkers should face appropriate consequences for their unacceptable actions. The USDA's anti-harassment program has been in place for years, but it must be followed properly. We hope that our comments on the draft regulation are included, and that the program sees the intended results of reducing and eliminating harassment."

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