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TRUMP WHITE HOUSE




Inspectors General Are Seeing More Whistleblower Retaliation Cases Under Trump

Several inspectors general have filed whistleblower retaliation complaints since President Donald Trump took office in January.

Whistleblower retaliation cases in

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President Donald Trump fired 17 inspectors general when he returned to office in January. Evan Vucci/AP

By Anna Kramer

December 22, 2025 05:01 AM





The internal watchdogs for President Donald Trump’s environmental agencies are seeing a significant increase in complaints and reports — particularly regarding alleged retaliation against whistleblowers.

The Department of Energy’s inspector general opened nine times as many whistleblower-retaliation reports to Biden’s administration as the inspector general of Joe Biden’s administration. The report is part of a biannual report to Congress on the state of the environment.

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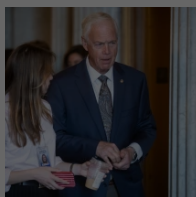
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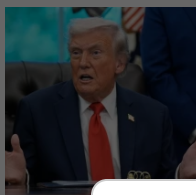
The Environmental Protection Agency’s inspector general referred roughly six times as many complaints to the office responsible for whistleblower retaliation for review.

The EPA referred 58 hotline calls related to whistleblower retaliation to the inspector general’s office in the 2025 fiscal year, compared to 9 total hotline calls referred in the 2024 fiscal year. At DOE, the inspector general’s office opened a total of 45 investigations into allegations of whistleblower retaliation in the 2025 fiscal year, compared to 5 investigations opened the previous fiscal year.

TRENDING



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The EPA, hotlines, watchdogs.

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Interior did not provide a breakdown of whistleblower-retaliation statistics in any of its reports.

Federal employees are protected under the law from retaliation if they report internal wrongdoing, and inspectors general offices are responsible for investigating any allegations of retaliation. While the reports show an increase in tips, referrals and investigations, they don't provide any further specifics or conclusions.

The first year of the Trump administration has been in large part defined by its attitudes toward the federal workforce; the administration has made no secret of dismissing dissenting voices, calling federal workers the “deep state” and encouraging staff to report on each other.

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One, T. March Bell, Trump's nominee for inspector general at the Department of Health and Human Services, said he will work to "support the initiatives of President Trump and Secretary Kennedy" during his confirmation hearing.

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[The Trump admini](#) [redacted] [redacted] nsive pressure from a handful of Senate Republicans.



The offices have lost a significant number of staff due to voluntary resignation and retirement programs. The Department of Energy's inspector general's office lost about 30% of its staff, according to its latest report. Neither the EPA nor Interior reports specify their staff losses, but Greenblatt said he saw a "sizable" number of investigators and auditors leave the administration.

Each federal agency reports different statistics to Congress, making it impossible to directly compare various departments.

Most federal agencies have not yet published their most recent semiannual reports to Congress, with many citing the government shutdown for the delay.

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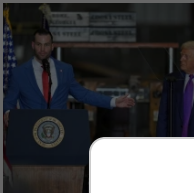
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For the last several years, the inspector general has been trying to improve how scientific integrity concerns are investigated.

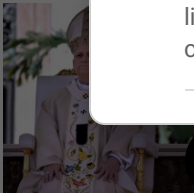
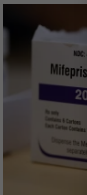
“In January 2025, we met with Office of Research and Development leaders to discuss our concerns. Further discussion on coordination procedures have been on hold pending the Agency’s comprehensive restructuring effort,” the report reads.

“EPA has made a number organizational improvements to enhance scientific expertise and research efforts within program offices to better carry out our statutory obligations and core mission,” a spokesperson for the EPA told NOTUS, referencing a new Office of Applied Science and Environmental Solutions. As of late 2025, revisions were still in process.

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