

**PART 1977—DISCRIMINATION  
AGAINST EMPLOYEES EXERCISING  
RIGHTS UNDER THE WIL-  
LIAMS-STEIGER OCCUPATIONAL  
SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT OF  
1970**

GENERAL

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AUTHORITY: Secs. 8, 11, Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 657, 660); Secretary of Labor's Order No. 12-71 (36 FR 8754).

SOURCE: 38 FR 2681, Jan. 29, 1973, unless otherwise noted.

GENERAL

**§ 1977.1 Introductory statement.**

(a) The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 651, et seq.), hereinafter referred to as the Act, is a Federal statute of general application designed to regulate employment conditions relating to occupational safety and health and to achieve safer and healthier workplaces throughout the Nation. By terms of the Act, every person engaged in a business affecting commerce who has employees

is required to furnish each of his employees employment and a place of employment free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm, and, further, to comply with occupational safety and health standards promulgated under the Act. See part 1975 of this chapter concerning coverage of the Act.

(b) The Act provides, among other things, for the adoption of occupational safety and health standards, research and development activities, inspections and investigations of workplaces, and recordkeeping requirements. Enforcement procedures initiated by the Department of Labor, review proceedings before an independent quasi-judicial agency (the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission), and express judicial review are provided by the Act. In addition, States which desire to assume responsibility for development and enforcement of standards which are at least as effective as the Federal standards published in this chapter may submit plans for such development and enforcement of the Secretary of Labor.

(c) Employees and representatives of employees are afforded a wide range of substantive and procedural rights under the Act. Moreover, effective implementation of the Act and achievement of its goals depend in large part upon the active but orderly participation of employees, individually and through their representatives, at every level of safety and health activity.

(d) This part deals essentially with the rights of employees afforded under section 11(c) of the Act. Section 11(c) of the Act prohibits reprisals, in any form, against employees who exercise rights under the Act.

**§ 1977.2 Purpose of this part.**

The purpose of this part is to make available in one place interpretations of the various provisions of section 11(c) of the Act which will guide the Secretary of Labor in the performance of his duties thereunder unless and until otherwise directed by authoritative decisions of the courts, or concluding, upon reexamination of an interpretation, that it is incorrect.