

Workplace Complaint & Reporting Cheat Sheet

Unfair treatment • Wage violations • Tax fraud | Last updated June 2026

MATCH YOUR SITUATION TO THE RIGHT AGENCY

Problem	Report To	Deadline / Notes
Discrimination / harassment	EEOC — eeoc.gov	180 days (300 in some states)
Unpaid wages / overtime	DOL Wage & Hour — dol.gov/agencies/whd	2–3 years depending on state
Unsafe working conditions	OSHA — osha.gov	As soon as possible
Under-the-table / cash pay	IRS Form 3949-A + state labor dept	No deadline — sooner is better
Tax evasion by employer	IRS — 800-829-0433 or Form 3949-A	Whistleblower awards possible
Retaliation after reporting	Same agency + OSHA whistleblower	30 days for most environmental; EEOC for discrimination

DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST — START TODAY

- Write down dates, times, locations, and witnesses for every incident
- Save emails, texts, pay stubs, and schedules
- Keep a personal copy of your employee handbook
- Note who you reported to internally and when
- Never rely on verbal promises — follow up in writing

INTERNAL REPORTING FIRST (RECOMMENDED)

- Send a dated, written complaint to HR — email creates a timestamp
- Request a case or ticket number
- If HR ignores you or is the problem, go directly to the external agency

YOUR INFORMATION (for your records)

Employer name & address: _____

Your job title & start date: _____

Supervisor / HR contact: _____

EIN or business name (if known): _____

Dates of incidents: _____

RETALIATION IS ILLEGAL

- Federal law protects workers who report discrimination, safety violations, and wage theft
- If fired or demoted after reporting, file a retaliation claim with the same agency
- Consult an employment attorney — many offer free initial consultations

Sample Written Complaint to HR

Copy, customize, and send via email for a paper trail

Subject: Formal Complaint — [Brief description]

Dear [HR Manager / Employer Name],

I am writing to formally report [describe issue: unpaid overtime / discriminatory treatment / unsafe conditions / cash pay without tax withholding] that occurred on [date(s)].

Details: [Describe what happened factually — who, what, when, where.]

I am requesting that this matter be investigated and corrected promptly. Please confirm receipt of this complaint and provide a reference number.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Date]

ESCALATION CHECKLIST

- Reported to HR in writing with date stamp
- Filed with EEOC / DOL / OSHA / IRS as appropriate
- Saved confirmation numbers for all filings
- Consulted employment attorney if retaliation occurred
- Not shared complaint details on social media

