



BULLETIN

The Office of Compliance Bulletin is a new publication designed to provide timely information to employees of the legislative branch of the Federal government on current issues of concern. The Office of Compliance • 110 2nd Street SE, Room LA-200 Washington, DC 20540-1999 • www.compliance.gov • 202/724-9250

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Stress and Anxiety at the Workplace

The workplace is frequently a stress and anxiety-filled environment. Deadlines, uncertainty, and concerns about performance or career goals can all work to produce frequent feelings of anxiety and stress. Such normal feelings are only worsened by workplace conflicts, discrimination, or concerns about workplace safety.

In addition to such normal “everyday” stress inducers, we are also faced with the very real prospects of terrorism and senseless, random violence like this region’s recent “sniper” attacks. Understandably, many of us are now struggling to cope with all of these elements and at the same time remain effective in the workplace.

Workplace issues, terrorism, or crime can all contribute to the normal human reaction of stress and anxiety. But while stress and anxiety can keep us alert to dangers, they can also become overwhelming. Don’t forget, though, that there are ways to cope with such feelings.

How Can I Cope With My Stress or Anxiety?

- Remember that your emotional reactions to workplace problems, traumatic events, or fears of the unknown are normal human responses: Don’t ignore your feelings or not seek help because you think it means you are weak or abnormal.
- Try to maintain as normal a schedule as possible both at home and at work, but if small changes in your routine make you feel safer – such as taking your daily walk inside rather than outside – by all means make them.
- If your feelings are related to or worsened by recent events, try to limit your television viewing to minimize the negative effects that constant repetition of a story can have.
- Spend extra time with those you love.
- Maintain (or begin) a healthy diet and exercise routine.
- Take time to relax and do something good for yourself that will help you feel better, even if it is only for a few brief moments at work.
- Understand that stress and anxiety may cause frequent and intense mood changes.
- If you are a spiritual person, allow time for prayer and meditation.
- Talk with colleagues and friends you trust about what you are thinking and feeling – people do care and talk can be healing. You may find you are not alone in your feelings.
- Most importantly, ask for help if you need it.

Where Can I Turn for Help?

There *are* sources of aid and comfort to help you with your stress and anxiety, regardless of the cause.

If you feel that you are facing discrimination or unfair treatment in the workplace, the Office of Compliance can advise you and possibly assist in remedying these problems.

(Over)

With the passage of the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA) of 1995, Congressional employees are covered by eleven workplace safety and protection statutes, including protection from discrimination, unfair labor practices, and unsafe working conditions. The Office of Compliance provides confidential advice and information, and provides a process to remedy violations of the CAA.

Employee Assistance Programs are also available to provide assistance and counseling for dealing with stress, anxiety, job-related problems, and other issues related to emotional health and well-being. Both the Senate and the House of Representatives have full-time Employee Assistance Programs for staff. Services are confidential and free.

If you are district office staff and need to utilize the services of any of these offices but cannot come in person, please contact the appropriate office by phone to make necessary arrangements.

How Can I Get in Touch With These Offices?

Office of Compliance

Room LA-200, Adams Building (Behind the Jefferson Building)
110 Second Street

Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 am to 5 pm

Telephone: 202-724-9250
Recorded Information: 202-724-9260
TTY/TDD: 202-426-1912
Web Site: www.compliance.gov

Senate Employee Assistance Program

SH-420B, Hart Senate Office Building

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 am to 6 pm or by appointment

Telephone: 202-224-3902
TTY/TDD: 202-228-4799

House of Representatives Office of Employee Assistance

(also available to employees of the Architect of the Capitol's Office and Capitol Police)

H2-140, Ford House Office Building

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 am to 5:30 pm or by appointment

Telephone: 202-225-2400
TTY/TDD: 202-226-0094
Web Site: <http://onlinecao/hr/cvroea.htm>

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