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An Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs employee said individuals who have filed discrimination complaints with the agency are calling for updates on their cases but cannot get information. PM IMAGES / GETTY IMAGES

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Federal contract employees who alleged discrimination forced to wait as enforcement agency is dismantled

Layoffs are scheduled to take effect at the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs on June 6. Between the reduction in force and separation incentives, the agency’s workforce is expected to shrink by about 90%.

[SEAN MICHAEL NEWHOUSE](#) | MAY 15, 2025

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Even as the Trump administration has moved to significantly downsize the Labor Department’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, federal contract employees who have filed discrimination complaints with the agency are calling for updates on their cases. While OFCCP, in some instances, has validated their allegations, staffers can’t inform the contractors because the agency’s work is largely paused.

“Staff members are informing complainants that the process is held in abeyance until further notice and, at this time, the agency doesn’t have an update,” according to an OFCCP employee who is on administrative leave and is scheduled to be laid off under reduction-in-force procedures. “But a lot of these victims have been waiting for quite some time and haven’t been provided with a true, accurate update on where their case stands.”

OFCCP is responsible for enforcing [Section 503](#) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in federal contracting, and the [Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974](#), which requires federal contractors and subcontractors to take affirmative action to employ and advance certain veterans.

The agency used to perform investigations under [Executive Order 11246](#), a 1965 presidential directive that established antidiscrimination requirements for federal contractors and subcontractors, but [Trump repealed it](#) on the second day of his second term and since then OFCCP's work has mostly been on hold.

Still, cases under the anti-discrimination laws for individuals with disabilities and veterans are piling up.

The OFCCP employee said that routine audits to ensure compliance with both laws as well as cases of complaints from individuals with disabilities and veterans are paused but respectively number in the several hundreds.

"There are a lot of cases — a lot of complaint investigations, some are high profile — that are in the process of being settled for veterans and individuals with disabilities, but it's currently on pause and those issues may go wayside," the employee said.

The individual also said that complaints submitted since OFCCP's work stoppage haven't even been processed.

"Typically you get a complaint, the regional offices will review it, process it and then assign it to the investigators. The regional offices haven't even processed any of those cases since Jan. 24 due to the secretary's guidance that everything will be held in abeyance," the employee said. "So you have a whole caseload nationwide of complaints being filed. None of those people have received responses yet."

DOL did not respond to a request for comment.

The department on April 16 put employees in [five OFCCP regions and its enforcement branch on administrative leave](#). Then, on May 6, it sent out 30-day RIF notices.

"It's frustrating," Daryl Laurie, president of the American Federation of Government Employees' National Council of Field Labor Locals, [said in a statement](#). "The department did not provide the proper 120-day notice of the RIF to the union as is required by our collective bargaining agreement and it got an unnecessary waiver from [the Office of Personnel Management] so that it only had to provide a 30-day RIF notice to the employees rather than the required 60-day notice. DOL could have been transparent with its OFCCP employees about what it was doing and allowed them to make an informed decision about their future."

AFGE reported that, between RIFs and separation incentives, OFCCP has reduced its workforce from 485 as of September 2024 to about 50 between the national office in Washington, D.C., and the only remaining field office in Dallas. This is in line with an internal February DOL memo that proposed [reducing the agency's staff by about 90%](#).

OFCCP in fiscal 2024 recovered \$22.5 million for 12,756 contract employees, according to [DOL's annual performance report](#).

During the [April 30 Cabinet meeting](#), Labor Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer said she had "eliminated discriminatory DEI offices" in her department, including OFCCP.

"We were really punishing a lot of these companies. If they weren't complying, they weren't going to have a federal contract," she said. "We've let go of that program completely."

doing was out of step, if not flat out contradictory, to our country's laws, and all reform options are on the table to bring OFCCP into compliance with its constitutional and statutory bounds."

Eschbach also wrote that the agency would examine contractors' previously submitted affirmative action plans to determine if there's evidence that the policies promoted "longstanding unlawful discrimination" and, as part of an effort to deter diversity, equity and inclusion programs, identify potential civil compliance investigations of corporations, non-profits and higher education institutions.

Prior to leading OFCCP, Eschbach worked at a law firm where [she represented SpaceX](#), which is one of Department of Government Efficiency head Elon Musk's companies.

The employee said that the weakening of OFCCP will give contractors a free pass.

"We're weaponizing contractors now to do anything that they want without having to follow any rules [and] without any consequences," they said. "All this has caused chaos and confusion for not only the federal government workers who work there, but chaos and confusion for the victims who are standing there not sure what to do, and contractors who are trying to remain in compliance [and] are no longer sure if they're going to be in trouble for remaining in compliance. The chaos and confusion is everywhere." [G](#)

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