WHISTLEBLOWERS

These Are Your Rights Under the State Government Effectiveness Act

The Nebraska State Government Effectiveness Act prohibits agencies of state government from retaliating against employees who report wrongdoing in state government to proper authorities, and provides certain legal protections for employees who are “whistleblowers” covered by the Act.

These protections generally apply to any state employee who makes a report of “wrongdoing” to the Nebraska Ombudsman’s Office, or to any elected state official. “Wrongdoing” covered under the Act would include:

- A violation of any law;
- Gross mismanagement or gross waste of funds; or
- A situation that creates a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety.

An employing agency is forbidden from taking any personnel action against a state employee in retaliation for making a report of wrongdoing that is covered by the Act.

Any employee who experiences retaliation from an employer for making a report of wrongdoing that is covered under the Act may make a complaint to the Nebraska Ombudsman’s Office.

If the Ombudsman’s Office finds, after investigating the matter, that retaliation has occurred, then the personnel action against the employee may be stayed or suspended pending a hearing, and the employee may challenge the employer’s personnel action through grievance channels and, eventually, through the courts.

Ultimately, administrative authorities and/or the courts, may grant the employee such relief as is deemed appropriate, including back pay, and reasonable attorney’s fees.

For more detailed information regarding your legal rights under the Nebraska State Government Effectiveness Act, please contact:

Nebraska Ombudsman’s Office
P. O. Box 94604
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4712

402-471-2035  Toll Free 800-742-7690
Web Site: nebraskalegislature.gov/divisions/ombud.php
Email: ombud@leg.ne.gov

The State Government Effectiveness Act recognizes the importance of ordinary state employees in helping to protect against violations of the law, and fiscal waste and mismanagement in state government. The salvation of the state is in the watchfulness of its citizens, and the best eyes and ears of the citizens are the conscientious employees of state government.