

# Whistleblower Reporting

## Complaints About Institutions Regulated By Other Agencies

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Different federal financial regulators regulate different types of institutions. The Federal Reserve is the primary regulator of bank holding companies, state banks that are members of the Federal Reserve System, foreign banking organizations operating in the United States, and certain other types of financial companies. To determine whether the institution you're reporting about is regulated by the Federal Reserve, you can use the [lookup tool](#) provided by the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council.

## Consumer Complaints Against Financial Institutions

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If you're a consumer having an issue with a bank supervised by the Federal Reserve that has been unfair or misleading, discriminated against you in lending, or violated a federal consumer protection law or regulation, you should submit a consumer complaint instead of a whistleblower report. You can file a complaint online through the [Federal Reserve's Consumer Complaint Form](#). You can also call or email [Federal Reserve Consumer Help](#), the Federal Reserve System's central repository for consumer complaints and inquiries, and they will walk you through the process of filing a complaint and answer any questions you might have.

## Complaints About The Federal Reserve System

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If you wish to report fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement related to the programs or operations of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, you should [contact the Office of Inspector General](#).

If you need assistance resolving an issue related to the Federal Reserve System's regulatory activities, have questions about the Federal Reserve System's regulatory processes or procedures, or otherwise want to discuss an issue related to the Federal Reserve System confidentially, you should [contact the Ombuds's office](#).

## Who Should File a Report?

If you have information about a financial institution regulated by the Federal Reserve that you believe has violated federal or state laws, violated a regulation, or engaged in other wrongdoing, we encourage you to contact us.

If you are a consumer having a problem with your financial institution, or if you do not meet the above criteria but have information you wish to report, please see the sidebar for links to other departments and agencies that may be the appropriate place for you to file a report.

### **What Should I Report?**

Examples of activity that should be reported include:

- A financial institution is violating the law.
- A financial institution is failing to comply with legal requirements, for instance, failing to report cash transactions in excess of \$10,000 as required by law.
- An employee is embezzling money from a financial institution or engaging in other fraud against the institution.
- A financial institution's director or officer is breaching a fiduciary duty, for example, by failing to act with care or in good faith or failing to disclose a material personal benefit.

### **Is This Anonymous?**

You may choose to remain anonymous, though we ask that you provide as much information as possible to help us in any investigation.

If you choose to provide your name and personal contact information, the Federal Reserve will protect your identity as confidential. Your identity and information generally will not be disclosed, including in response to Freedom of Information Act requests. There are, however, certain circumstances where the information could be disclosed, including in a referral to or in response to requests from other federal or state financial institution supervisory agencies, other law enforcement agencies, in response to federal or state grand jury, criminal trial, or government administrative subpoenas, a court order, or other legal process.

### **Am I Protected from Retaliation?**

The Federal Reserve takes seriously claims of retaliation against whistleblowers and encourages any claim of retaliation to be reported to us.

If you are an employee of a depository institution, your employer cannot retaliate against you for reporting to us a possible violation of any law or regulation. A bank that does so may be sued by the whistleblower employee in federal court and the court may require the bank to reinstate the employee, pay compensatory damages, or take other actions to remedy any past discrimination. (12 U.S.C. § 1831j)

### **Am I Eligible for a Monetary Reward?**

The Federal Reserve is authorized to provide monetary incentives to individuals who come forward to report possible violations of certain federal banking laws. In appropriate circumstances and with the concurrence of the U.S. Attorney General, the Federal Reserve is authorized to award up to \$100,000 for original information about a financial institution's

illegal activity that results in monetary sanctions collected by the Federal Reserve or by certain other regulatory or law enforcement agencies. (12 U.S.C. § 1831k)

### **How Do I File a Whistleblower Report?**

You can choose to file by phone, email, or mail:

#### *Phone*

1-800-337-0429

#### *Email*

[ombuds@frb.gov](mailto:ombuds@frb.gov) or the [Contact Us form](#)

#### *Mail*

Office of the Ombuds  
Federal Reserve Board  
20th & C Streets, NW  
OSEC Ombuds Office, M-4775  
Washington, D.C. 20551

Other things to know about submitting a whistleblower report:

- All of our investigations are confidential. This means we cannot confirm or deny the existence of an investigation or give you updates on the status of your report. If we have questions about the information you have provided, and you have given us your contact information, we will contact you.
- The more specific your report is, the better. For example, it is helpful if you can identify any individuals involved in the activity, any documents or materials that may support the possible violation, and examples of particular misconduct.
- A whistleblower need not be a company insider. A whistleblower can be anyone with information about potential wrongdoing.

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