

From: owner-nih-all-staff@list.nih.gov on behalf of [NIH Executive Secretariat](#)
To: [List NIH-ALL-STAFF](#)
Subject: From the Acting NIH Director: Update on addressing harassment in NIH-funded activities
Date: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 1:44:28 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Dear Colleagues:

Today, I was pleased to [announce](#) that NIH is implementing a general provision in the [2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act \(P.L. 117-103\)](#) that makes reporting to NIH by NIH-funded institutions mandatory “when individuals identified as a principal investigator or as key personnel in an NIH notice of award are removed from their position or are otherwise disciplined due to concerns about harassment, bullying, retaliation, or hostile working conditions.” Previously, NIH lacked clear authority to *require* funded institutions to report to NIH whether personnel changes to an NIH grant are related to harassment, only that they *should* report it. Passage of this bill into law ensures NIH is made aware when the reason for the personnel changes is harassment, and it therefore strengthens NIH’s ability to take the necessary action to ensure safe work environments wherever NIH-funded activities are conducted. This is an important milestone in support of NIH’s vital commitment to do what we can to [end harassment in biomedical research](#).

I also want to take this opportunity to share data on our efforts to address harassment in the NIH workplace. Since the launch of our anti-harassment program in 2018, which implemented [new policies](#) and a [new process](#) for handling allegations, [the NIH Civil Office](#) has reviewed **1,253** allegations of inappropriate conduct, including [all forms of harassment](#). This number demonstrates that staff know how to report an allegation and are seeking help, which is a critical step. The Civil Office coordinated closely with the [Employee and Labor Relations Branch](#), the [Office of Intramural Training and Education](#), and Contracting Officer’s Representatives and contract companies to ensure substantiated violations of the policy were addressed appropriately and as quickly as possible. This resulted in **253** [informal corrective actions](#) and **101** [formal corrective actions](#). Many allegations that did not result in a corrective action were found to be associated with common workplace conflict or communication issues that did not meet the definitions outlined in the [policy](#). In those cases, reporting parties were referred to a more appropriate resource to address their concerns, including the [Office of the Ombudsman](#), [Employee Assistance Program](#), and [Office of Intramural Training and Education](#). [Case studies](#) are available to provide examples of the overall process and potential outcomes. The program has now been benchmarked by seven other federal agencies, and NIH leadership is encouraged by the fact that staff are reporting their concerns to the NIH Civil Office, that inappropriate conduct is being addressed and corrected, and that staff are being provided resources for conflicts that may fall outside the scope of harassment. I’d like to extend my gratitude to the entire NIH community for your confidence in and continued support of this critical program.

With utmost respect for all you do,

Lawrence A. Tabak, D.D.S., Ph.D.
Acting Director, NIH



