

**From:** [DOECAST](#)  
**Subject:** Employee Concerns and Differing Professional Opinion  
**Date:** Monday, March 25, 2024 9:28:00 AM

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Team DOE,

The Department of Energy (DOE), including the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), established the Employee Concerns Program (ECP) to ensure employee concerns are addressed through:

- Prompt identification, reporting, and resolution of concerns regarding DOE/NNSA facilities or operations in a manner that provides the highest degree of safe operations;
- Free and open expression of employee concerns that results in an independent, objective evaluation; and
- Supplementation of existing processes with an independent avenue for evaluating concerns.

DOE Order 442.1B, *Department of Energy Employee Concerns Program*, established the scope of the ECP by defining an employee concern as:

- An activity, policy, or practice of DOE or one of its contractors or subcontractors – including but not limited to, that which is related to the environment, safety, health, security, quality, and management of DOE facilities and/or operations – should be improved, modified, or terminated; or
- He or she has been subjected to harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or discrimination by DOE or one of its contractors or subcontractors for raising an employee concern.

DOE maintains the ECP for all federal, contractor, and subcontractor employees to raise employee concerns, without fear of reprisal. While employees are encouraged to seek resolution of concerns through local complaint or dispute resolution systems or with first line supervisors, they alternatively have the right to report employee concerns directly to DOE's ECP and may do so confidentially or anonymously.

Use of the ECP reinforces a positive safety culture, in which safety and employee involvement in all aspects of work performance are core values. Fostering a climate that encourages the free and open expression of concerns is essential to the safe and efficient accomplishment of the Department's missions, and I ask each of you to commit to the continued success of the ECP.

Additional information about the ECP can be found in DOE Order 442.1B, *Department of Energy Employee Concerns Program*. For more information, to report a concern, or to contact your local ECP Manager, please visit: [DOE Employee Concerns Program Contact List | Department of Energy](#) or contact the ECP Director at 202-586-6642 or by email at [EmployeeConcernsProgram@hq.doe.gov](mailto:EmployeeConcernsProgram@hq.doe.gov).

Additionally, to enable our Department's mission success, our work needs to be conducted safely, efficiently, and in a manner that ensures protection of workers, the public, and the environment. This includes fostering a climate within the Department that encourages a questioning attitude and the free and open expression of federal, contractor and subcontractor employee technical concerns without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

Employees who have environmental, safety, or health technical concerns must first seek resolution with their first line supervisors or use established concern or complaint resolution systems. Thus, the first step in resolving such technical concerns is using routine or local processes. These include discussions with management, use of review and comment processes, and/or use of local employee concerns processes (including the Employee Concerns Program). Most issues should be resolved through these routine processes.

If an employee believes that these routine processes did not adequately resolve their environmental, safety, or health technical concern, they are encouraged to use DOE's Differing Professional Opinion (DPO) process to resolve their concern. The DPO process recognizes the fundamental value of employees in contributing to better informed decisions regarding the environment, safety, and health.

For an overview of the DPO process, instructions on where to submit DPOs, and contact information for DPO Managers, please visit the Office of Environment, Health, Safety, and Security's DPO webpage at [DOE Differing Professional Opinions | Department of Energy](#).

Thank you for all you do for our mission.

Sincerely,

David Turk  
Deputy Secretary of Energy