

**Article Published in *Lifestyles Magazine*- May 2004**

**Protecting Your Legal Rights–Retaliation**

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The federal and state statutes which protect your legal rights from discrimination such as Title VII (race, color, religion, sex or national origin), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act ( 40 years of age and older) and the Americans with Disabilities Act, also contain provisions prohibiting an employer from taking adverse action against you for making a complaint or filing a charge of discrimination. For instance, if you complained of sexual harassment against your employer it would be illegal for your employer to take any adverse action against you, including discharge, because you made such a complaint. In addition to termination, adverse action includes, but is not limited to, a reduction of pay or benefits, suspension, interference with job duties and responsibilities or other hostile actions. It is also illegal for an employer to retaliate against you if you have supported another employee's claim of discrimination.

The federal and state agencies which handle claims of discrimination also handle claims of retaliation. At the administrative level the charge will be investigated to determine if a violation occurred and if so, the agency will attempt to conciliate the matter. If the matter cannot be amicably resolved, then a complaint may be filed with a federal court or heard before an administrative law judge in the state agency. The anti-retaliation laws may subject an employer to damages including the employees lost wages, benefits, attorneys' fees, costs, compensatory and punitive damages. In order to pursue a case of retaliation, a charge of discrimination under the applicable statute must to be filed with a state or federal administrative agency. Because the time limitations for filing are strict, I encourage you not to delay receiving information regarding your legal rights. For further information, please visit [www.joettedoran.com](http://www.joettedoran.com)

*This article is not intended as legal advice. You should consult with an attorney for individual advice regarding your own situation.*

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