

Compliance Firm Finds Increase in Reports of Employment Retaliation

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NAVEX Global, the compliance software firm, issued a report last month regarding the status of workplace retaliation in 2014. According to NAVEX, the five-year trend in rising volume of reports of employee retaliation continued in 2014, finding an increase in reporting of over 44% between 2010 and 2014. Companies in 2014 saw, on average, 1.3 reports of retaliation per 100 employees at the company. NAVEX posited that the climb was likely due to the increasing maturation of compliance programs, as well as increased employee awareness of [whistleblower protections](#).

The types of initial reporting that prompted the retaliation ranged among several different categories, but was primarily made up of what NAVEX classified as the “HR, Diversity and Workplace Respect” category, made up of “discrimination, harassment, compensation, general HR and cases marked as ‘other.’” Reporting incidents falling in this category led to 69% of all retaliation reports in 2014. The next largest category for which reporting led to retaliation was “Business Integrity (i.e. bribery, falsification of documents, fraud, COI [conflicts of interest], vendor/customer issues, HIPAA),” followed by “Environment, Health and Safety (i.e. EPA compliance, assault, safety, OSHA, substance abuse),” “Misuse, Misappropriation of Corporate Assets (i.e. employee theft, time clock abuse),” and finally “Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting (i.e. financial misconduct, internal controls, expense reporting).”

In significant and encouraging news, substantiation rates for retaliation jumped from the 10-12% it had been in the prior year to 27% in 2014. Assuming this number is not an anomaly, the change reflects a profound shift in corporate culture away from being a rubber stamp for management and toward compliance programs that seriously investigate employee [allegations of retaliation](#).