

# CFPB and NLRB Announce Information Sharing Agreement to Protect American Consumers and Workers from Illegal Practices

*The agreement will help the agencies address unlawful practices involving employer surveillance and employer driven debt*

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) today signed an information sharing agreement, creating a formal partnership between the two agencies to better protect American families and to address practices that harm workers in the “gig economy” and other labor markets. Two areas of immediate concern include employer surveillance and employer-driven debt. The agreement will help to identify and end financial practices that harm workers and to enhance the enforcement of federal consumer financial protection and labor laws and regulations.

“Many workers discover that getting a job can mean piling up debt instead of making a living,” said CFPB Director Rohit Chopra. “Information sharing with the National Labor Relations Board will support our efforts to end debt traps that stop workers from leaving one job for another.”

“Employers’ practices and use of artificial intelligence tools can chill workers from exercising their labor rights,” said NLRB General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo. “As our economy, industries, and workplaces continue to change, we are excited to work with CFPB to strengthen our whole-of-government approach and ensure that employers obey the law and workers are able to fully and freely exercise their rights without interference or adverse consequences.”

The CFPB and NLRB share interests in protecting American workers in labor and financial markets. The CFPB and NLRB’s signed agreement supports the two agencies’ collaboration on related efforts, and recognizes the overlap of potentially harmful conduct that may pose risks to consumers and workers under federal consumer financial protection law and the National Labor Relations Act. In particular, the CFPB has been focused on restoring competition to consumer financial markets to benefit families and honest businesses alike. Consumers and honest businesses can be harmed when anti-competitive financial practices are used to trap workers into jobs or harvest personal data from workers to benefit certain firms.

Last year the CFPB launched efforts to learn more about the risks consumers face from their employers. The CFPB's [Request for Information](https://cfpb.gov/about-us/newsroom/cfpb-launches-inquiry-into-practices-that-leave-workers-indebted-to-employers/) (cfpb.gov/about-us/newsroom/cfpb-launches-inquiry-into-practices-that-leave-workers-indebted-to-employers/) from the public, along with its [roundtable event](https://cfpb.gov/about-us/blog/shining-a-spotlight-on-workers-financial-experiences/) (cfpb.gov/about-us/blog/shining-a-spotlight-on-workers-financial-experiences/) with worker organizations and labor unions, revealed the financial dangers posed to consumers going into work every day. For example:

- **Employer-driven debt:** Accepting a job can also mean falling into doom loops of debt. Organizations reported to the CFPB that workers may increasingly have to personally shoulder debt for employer-mandated training or equipment that they might not need, or that may be more expensive or harmful than what they might purchase in a competitive market. As a result, workers are often saddled with significant debt that may be owed to employers or pursued by third-party debt collectors and that stymies them from changing jobs for better wages or working conditions.
- **Employer surveillance and selling personal data:** Workers may not realize that employer surveillance tools - used to track things like worker productivity - can continue to track them outside of working hours, and the companies that own the surveillance tools might sell worker data to financial institutions, insurers, and other employers. Certain actions by these surveillance companies may be violating the Fair Credit Reporting Act along with other consumer financial protection laws.

Today's information sharing agreement is a step towards ensuring that workers are more fully protected from bad actors, debt traps, and illegal labor practices through promoting transparency and information sharing between the CFPB and NLRB.

[Read today's Memorandum of Understanding Between the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the National Labor Relations Board.](https://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/documents/cfpb_mou-nlr-2023-03.pdf) [📄](https://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/documents/cfpb_mou-nlr-2023-03.pdf) (https://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/documents/cfpb\_mou-nlr-2023-03.pdf)

Consumers can submit complaints about employer-driven debt, as well as about other financial products and services, by visiting the [CFPB's website](https://cfpb.gov/complaint/) (cfpb.gov/complaint/) or by calling (855) 411-CFPB (2372). Consumers can submit complaints in more than 180 languages via phone.

Employees who believe their company has violated federal consumer financial laws, including violations related to workplace financial products and services, are encouraged to send information about what they know to [whistleblower@cfpb.gov](mailto:whistleblower@cfpb.gov). To learn more about reporting potential industry misconduct, visit the [CFPB's website](https://cfpb.gov/enforcement/information-industry-whistleblowers/) (cfpb.gov/enforcement/information-industry-whistleblowers/).

Established in 1935, the National Labor Relations Board is an independent federal agency that protects employees from unfair labor practices and protects the right of private sector employees to join together, with or without a union, to improve wages, benefits and working conditions. The NLRB conducts thousands of workplace elections and investigates thousands of unfair labor practice charges each year.

Workers who think their labor rights have been violated can call the NLRB at [1-844-762-6572](tel:1-844-762-6572) for assistance filing an unfair labor practice charge.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is a 21st century agency that implements and enforces Federal consumer financial law and ensures that markets for consumer financial products are fair, transparent, and competitive. For more information, visit [www.consumerfinance.gov](http://www.consumerfinance.gov) (<http://www.consumerfinance.gov/>).

## Topics

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