

DOJ Antitrust Unit Launches Whistleblower Rewards Program

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The U.S. Department of Justice, Antitrust Division (DOJ) has announced a new initiative aimed at enhancing the detection and prosecution of antitrust violations. On July 7, 2025, the DOJ's Antitrust Division, in collaboration with the U.S. Postal Service, launched the "Whistleblower Rewards Program." This program is designed to incentivize individuals to report antitrust crimes affecting the postal service, its revenues, or property, offering whistleblowers the opportunity to receive up to 30% of any criminal fines recovered for violations.

Assistant Attorney General Abigail Slater emphasized the importance of this program in breaking down the "walls of secrecy" that often surround antitrust offenses, such as price fixing and bid rigging. The initiative aims to create a pipeline of leads from those with firsthand knowledge of criminal activities, thereby raising the stakes for offenders.

The program is part of the DOJ's ongoing efforts to combat collusion and cartel activities, which AAG Slater has declared a priority. It builds upon the agency's existing leniency program. Whistleblowers who voluntarily provide original information leading to criminal fines or recoveries of at least \$1 million may be eligible for rewards ranging from 15% to 30% of the recovery. The discretion for payment lies with the Antitrust Division.

This initiative also complements the DOJ's Procurement Collusion Strike Force, a multiagency effort established in 2019 to uncover antitrust violations in government procurement. The Postal Service Office of Inspector General, a key member of this strike force, actively collaborates with other agencies to incentivize reporting of collusive behavior without fear of reprisal.

This newly established program underscores the DOJ's commitment to rooting out illicit behavior across industries, particularly those involving USPS procurement. Corporations found guilty of antitrust violations can face fines up to \$100 million, while individual defendants may incur fines up to \$1 million, with potential for higher penalties based on the impact of the violation.

As a result of the Whistleblowers Rewards Program, companies should anticipate increased scrutiny and enforcement actions. It is advisable for businesses to review their compliance programs and ensure robust measures are in place to prevent and detect potential antitrust violations. Organizations should be prepared to respond promptly to any inquiries or actions from the DOJ and ensure they have legal strategies in place to address potential claims.

Troutman Pepper Locke is monitoring the DOJ's evolving priorities and guidance closely. If you have questions on

how these priorities impact your business or wish to begin evaluating your existing compliance programs and policies and procedures, please do not hesitate to contact a member of our Antitrust or White Collar Litigation and Government Investigations team.

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