



3.2. Current and former government employees who support the opposition

Sources reported that, during the reference period, government employees faced discrimination and harassment for expressing their political beliefs.[678](#) After the presidential elections of 2024, illegal layoffs and forced resignations were carried out in government institutions such as PDVSA, National Electricity Corporation (Corpoelec, Corporación Eléctrica Nacional, S.A.), Venezuelan Television (VTV, Venezolana de Televisión), and public-sector healthcare services, targeting government employees who had publicly expressed concerns about the transparency of the elections.[679](#) Tal Cual reported that more than 100 PDVSA employees in Caracas were dismissed and around 30 employees in the western division of PDVSA were forced to resign.[680](#)

In the months leading up to the 2024 elections, the government of Lara reportedly instructed its employees to delete WhatsApp from their mobile phones and install Telegram instead, and those who did not comply within three days were dismissed.[681](#) In Zulia state, the Ministry of Health reportedly punished government employees who had participated in anti-government demonstrations or posted critical messages on social media by transferring them to remote health-care centres or work locations far from their homes.[682](#)

The UNFFMV indicated that, in August 2024, at least seven public officials were detained and charged with "'intentional delay or omission of functions'", including of prosecutors who refused to prosecute persons being investigated for simply participating in protests. [683](#) Government employees have also been dismissed for 'liking' posts by Corina Machado on social media or for writing terms such as 'fraud' in reference to the 2024 elections.[684](#) Tal Cual reported that screenshots of messages critical of the government are sent to human-resources departments to enable reprisals against employees.[685](#) Senior PDVSA executives have also instructed administrative and operational staff to attend pro-government rallies and have monitored their social-media accounts for signs of criticism of the government.[686](#) Amaya indicated the following:

'In Venezuela, estimates suggest there are between six and eight million public employees, although the exact number is unknown due to the government's lack of transparency. Teachers and health-care workers tend to speak more openly about political issues, as they face less institutional exposure than staff working inside ministries or government agencies, where censorship and the risk of punishment are greater. Public officials are generally reluctant to identify themselves, and those who report serious wrongdoing may face reprisals. Reporting corruption remains difficult. The case of Víctor Hugo Quero Navas, detained in January 2025, disappeared, and later found, in May 2026, to have died in July 2025 in prison without public disclosure, illustrates the extent to which information can be withheld within state institutions.

[687](#) This pattern reflects a deeply entrenched "spiral of silence" among Venezuelan public workers'.[688](#)

According to a member of the Communist Party of Venezuela, harassment and repression are common in the workplace against government employees who express dissent.[689](#) The OVCS reported that between January and March 2026, the sectors with the highest number of worker protests were education (134), healthcare (49), transportation (42), and others (501).[690](#)

The ENH indicated that, between January and July 2024, 82 % of healthcare workers faced violence by relatives of patients, 45 % were victims of theft or robbery, 11 % experienced violence by para-state groups, and 11 % by state security forces, inside healthcare centres.[691](#) The Venezuelan Medical Federation (FMV, Federación Médica Venezolana) reported that, as of January 2026, five healthcare workers were in prison for political reasons, including:

An obstetrician-gynaecologist from Aragua, detained in November 2024 for alleged 'incitement to hatred' and held in Tocarón prison. The individual suffers from hypertension, joint problems, depression, and dermatological conditions.

A urological surgeon from Mérida, arrested on 20 October 2025 and held in Yare prison, charged with 'terrorism' and 'incitement to hatred'.

A radiologist from Lara, detained on 19 July 2025 and held in Tocuyito prison, Carabobo state.

Two physicians from Trujillo arrested on 10 September 2025 and held in the headquarters of the Kidnapping and Anti-extortion National Command (CONAS, Comando Nacional Antiextorsión y Secuestro) in Caracas.[692](#)

- [678](#)

SWI swissinfo.ch, El Partido Comunista de Venezuela denuncia «despidos ilegales» de empleados públicos, 20 August 2024, [url](#); USDOS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2023: Venezuela, 22 April 2024, [url](#)

- [679](#)

SWI swissinfo.ch, El Partido Comunista de Venezuela denuncia «despidos ilegales» de empleados públicos, 20 August 2024, [url](#); Tal Cual, La represalia política de nuevo en Pdvsa: al menos 100 trabajadores obligados a renuncia, 21 August 2024, [url](#)

- [680](#)

Tal Cual, La represalia política de nuevo en Pdvsa: al menos 100 trabajadores obligados a renuncia, 21 August 2024, [url](#)

- [681](#)

Efecto Cocuyo, Instituciones públicas y privadas despiden a trabajadores por no apoyar resultados electorales, 18 August 2024, [url](#). See also: El Estímulo, María Corina Machado le habla a los empleados públicos: 5 frases claves de su mensaje, 21 August 2024, [url](#)

- [682](#)

Efecto Cocuyo, Instituciones públicas y privadas despiden a trabajadores por no apoyar resultados electorales, 18 August 2024, [url](#). See also: El Estímulo, María Corina Machado le habla a los empleados públicos: 5 frases claves de su mensaje, 21 August 2024, [url](#)

- [683](#)

UN, FFMV, Detailed findings of the independent international fact- finding mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 14 October 2024, [url](#), para. 604

- [684](#)

SWI swissinfo.ch, El Partido Comunista de Venezuela denuncia «despidos ilegales» de empleados públicos, 20 August 2024, [url](#)

- [685](#)

Tal Cual, La represalia política de nuevo en Pdvsa: al menos 100 trabajadores obligados a renuncia, 21 August 2024, [url](#)

- [686](#)

Tal Cual, La represalia política de nuevo en Pdvsa: al menos 100 trabajadores obligados a renuncia, 21 August 2024, [url](#)

- [687](#)

Quero Navas was considered a political prisoner. Relatives reportedly approached various authorities repeatedly and periodically seeking information on his fate and whereabouts, without receiving any response or being granted communication with him. UNOHCHR, Venezuela: UN Working Group gravely concerned by enforced disappearance and subsequent death in custody of Víctor Hugo Quero Navas, 11 May 2026, [url](#)

- [688](#)

Amaya, telephone interview, 12 May 2026. See also: Caracas Chronicles, The Chain of Command That Concealed Víctor Hugo Quero's Death, 10 May 2026, [url](#)

- [689](#)

SWI swissinfo.ch, El Partido Comunista de Venezuela denuncia «despidos ilegales» de empleados públicos, 20 August 2024, [url](#)

- [690](#)

OVCS, Venezuela- Primer trimestre 2026, 2026, [url](#), p. 20

- [691](#)

Médicos por la Salud, Encuesta Nacional de Hospitales , Reporte semi-anual 2024, November 2024, [url](#), p. 18

- [692](#)

Tal Cual, FMV pide liberación inmediata de cinco médicos detenidos por razones políticas, 19 January 2026, [url](#); El Diario, FMV exigió la liberación de cinco médicos detenidos por motivos políticos en Venezuela, 19 January 2026, [url](#)