



# Leaving Federal Service

## What You Need To Know

### SEEKING NON-FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT

In general, you may seek employment with any non-Federal person or organization. However, there are a few rules that you must to follow:

#### **Recusal (disqualification from working on a government matter)**

When you seek non-Federal employment you are not allowed to work on government matters involving a potential employer. Seeking employment begins when you apply for a non-Federal job or are contacted by a headhunter or non-Federal employer about a potential position and do not decline the offer. Written notice to your supervisor, recusing you from official involvement with a potential employer, is required while you are seeking employment. If you stop seeking employment with that employer, you must notify your supervisor that the recusal is revoked. If you accept the job offer, the recusal period extends until you leave Federal Service.

#### **Special Requirements for OGE 278 Form Filers (i.e. PAS, SES, SL, ST, some Schedule C)**

If you occupy a position that requires you to complete an OGE 278 Financial Disclosure Report you must:

- **Notify the Service's Ethics Office**, in writing, within three business days after starting negotiations or entering into an agreement to accept non-Federal employment or compensation. (See: [Stock Act notification and recusal form](#). Contact the Service's [Ethics Office](#) for assistance.); and
- **Complete** an OGE 278 Financial Disclosure Report within 30 days of leaving your Federal position.

For more detailed guidance see the DOI [Summary of the Ethics Rules for Seeking Employment](#).

### POST-GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT RESTRICTIONS

In general, you may accept employment with any non-Federal person or organization. However, a criminal Ethics statute ([18 U.S.C. 207](#)) applies even after you leave Government service. Key provisions include:

- **Life-time ban (applies to all Service employees)** on communicating to or appearing before the Federal Government, on behalf of another person, concerning particular matters (such as a contract, grant, permit, lawsuit, etc.) that you worked on personally and substantially as a Federal employee.
- **Two-year ban (applies to all Service employees)** on communicating to or appearing before the Federal Government, on behalf of another person, concerning a particular matter over which you had official responsibility (usually supervisory responsibility) within your last year of Federal service.
- **One-year ban (applies only to senior Service employees such as SES, SL, ST)** on communicating to or appearing before the Service, on behalf of another person, concerning any matter, regardless of your involvement.
- **Two-year ban (applies only to the DOI Secretary)** on communicating to or appearing before DOI employees, on behalf of another person, concerning any matter, regardless of involvement.
- **One-Year Ban on Contractor Compensation (applies to employees involved in the procurement process)** Employees who worked on a contract in excess of \$10 million cannot accept compensation from that contractor within one year of working on that contract.

For more detailed guidance see the DOI [Summary of the Ethics Rules for Post-Government Employment](#) and the [Office of Government Ethics website](#).

### QUESTIONS?

These laws and regulations are complicated and very fact specific. The Service Ethics Counselors will provide you with guidance on this topic before and after you leave Federal service. For contact information see the Service's Ethics webpage at: [www.fws.gov/progam/ethics/home](http://www.fws.gov/progam/ethics/home).