

NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFER LETTERS AND NOTICES TO SUPERVISORS Effective January 1, 2017

Office of Government Ethics regulations impose a new notice requirement on Human Resources offices as noted below. See 5 C.F.R. §§ 2638.105(b)(3), 2638.303, and 2638.306.

Notice to Prospective New Employees

All employment offers must include the following language:

As an employee of the Department of Commerce, you have been placed in a position of trust and you will be held to a high standard of ethics conduct. The Department of Commerce is committed to the highest ethical standards, and as an employee, you will be covered by the criminal conflict of interest statutes and the Standards of Ethics Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch. For your convenience, the following link is to a summary of the Federal conflict of interest statutes, the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, and other ethics laws: [link to Department of Commerce Summary of Ethics Rules on the Ethics Law and Programs Division web page – https://ogc.commerce.gov/sites/ogc.commerce.gov/files/commerce-summary_of_ethics_rules-2017.pdf]. You should retain this summary for use as a reference. You may also visit the Ethics Law and Program Division at www.commerce.gov/ethics for more information about the ethics rules. If you have any questions on applicable ethics requirements, please contact the Commerce ethics office at 202-482-5384 or ethicsdivision@doc.gov.

Also, please note that you are required to complete new employee ethics training within three months of entering on duty. We strongly recommend that you attend this training as soon as possible.

[For employees required to file financial disclosure reports:] Please note that you are required to file a financial disclosure report and your report will be due within 30 days after entering on duty. If you have any questions, please contact the ethics office at 202-482-5384 or ethicsdivision@doc.gov.

Notice to New Supervisors

All notices to new supervisors should include the following language:

Congratulations on your initial appointment to a supervisory position which comes with important new responsibilities. The Department's Ethics Law and Programs Division wants you to aware that a Government-wide ethics regulation, 5 C.F.R. Section 2638.103, imposes the following responsibilities on all supervisors:

Every supervisor in the executive branch has a heightened personal responsibility for advancing Government ethics. It is imperative that supervisors serve as models of ethical behavior for subordinates. Supervisors have a responsibility to help ensure that subordinates are aware of their ethical obligations under the Standards of Conduct and that subordinates know how to contact agency ethics officials. Supervisors are also responsible for working with agency ethics officials to help resolve conflicts of interest and enforce Government ethics laws and regulations, including those requiring certain employees to file financial disclosure reports. In addition, supervisors are responsible, when requested, for assisting agency ethics officials in evaluating potential conflicts of interest and identifying positions subject to financial disclosure requirements.

To refresh your understanding of the ethical values underlying Federal service, you should review the summary of the Principles of Ethical Conduct, Federal conflict of interest statutes, the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, and other ethics laws which can be accessed through this link: [link to Department of Commerce Summary of Ethics Rules on the Ethics Law and Programs Division web page – https://ogc.commerce.gov/sites/ogc.commerce.gov/files/commerce-summary_of_ethics_rules-2017.pdf]. You should retain this handout for use as a reference. If you need additional information, you may also visit the Ethics Law and Programs Division at www.commerce.gov/ethics. If you have any questions on applicable ethics requirements, please contact the ethics office at 202-482-5384 or ethicsdivision@doc.gov.