



## A WORD ABOUT ETHICS

### RESTRICTIONS AFTER LEAVING FEDERAL SERVICE

#### Are there restrictions on me after I leave Federal service?

- Yes. After you leave the Government you cannot represent (see below) anyone before a Federal agency or Federal court regarding:
  - any specific-party matter (see below) on which you worked or
  - for 2 years after leaving the Government, any specific-party matter on which a subordinate worked.

#### Are these the only restrictions?

- No. You also cannot:
  - use protected nonpublic information,
  - receive payment for representational activities of others (such as a partner of yours) that took place during the period you worked for the Government, or
  - testify on matters related to your Government work.

#### What is a “specific-party matter”?

- Any matter in which those involved are identified by name, such as a contract, grant, patent, law suit, or license.

#### What is “representing”?

- Communicating to a Federal official to influence Government action on behalf of someone other than yourself.

#### Are there any additional restrictions?

- Yes. In addition to the general restrictions on all employees:
  - *senior employees* (employees with base pay of \$158,554.50 or more per year) are barred for 1 year (or 2 years for political appointees) from representing anyone before their former agency and for 1 year from representing or advising a foreign government;
  - *political appointees* are also barred from contacting as a registered lobbyist any political appointee during the President’s term;
  - *attorneys* are subject to bar rules;
  - *employees who received a buy-out* are barred for 5 years from re-employment with the Government;
  - *procurements official and project managers* for a procurement of \$10,000,000 or more are barred for 1 year from receiving compensation from the contractor;
  - *EDA employees* are barred for 2 years from working for EDA grantees; and
  - *USPTO employees* are barred for 1 year from obtaining patent rights.

#### How can I get advice and more information about these rules?

- By contacting the Ethics Law and Programs Division at 202-482-5384 or [ethicsdivision@doc.gov](mailto:ethicsdivision@doc.gov).

Ethics Law and Programs Division – Office of the General Counsel – United States  
Department of Commerce

202-482-5384 – [ethicsdivision@doc.gov](mailto:ethicsdivision@doc.gov) – [www.commerce.gov/ethics](http://www.commerce.gov/ethics)

June 23, 2015