

## **Caveat Discipulus: Intern Beware A Warning for Applicants for Federal Career Intern Positions in OFCCP Southeast Region**

A difficult economy and high unemployment are complicating the prospects of most job seekers. Almost any job with the Federal government might seem a godsend. That's any job with the Federal government except a job as a Federal Career Intern for the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) in the Southeast Region (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee).

OFCCP Southeast Region is in the process of hiring 30 new Federal Career Interns. The Region currently employs fourteen interns, not one of whom received a timely promotion after their first year of service. These interns are bright, capable and motivated. Most of the interns' supervisors recommended them for promotion on their anniversary dates. But, the promotions were stymied by Regional Director Evelyn Y. Teague. Teague was asked why the interns had not been promoted and gave the following responses:

- She had not talked to any of her managers about Intern promotions.
- She had received no recommendations for promotion the Interns managers.
- She did not make promotion decisions.
- It had never "dawned" on her that interns should receive promotions after only a year.
- She had no budget to pay the increased wages if she promoted the Interns.

Uncaring? Disingenuous? Duplicitous?

Delayed promotions harm Federal Career Interns in a variety of ways. There are both immediate and long-term financial impacts from delayed promotions. There is also a professional stigma that attaches to anyone who is not timely promoted. Sadly OFCCP Federal Career Interns are trapped. If they attempt to move to other employment, they'll be forced to explain the unexplainable, "Why weren't you promoted timely when you worked for OFCCP?" Finally, Federal Career Interns serve the equivalent of a two year probationary period. If they complain about the mistreatment, they may be rejoining the rolls of the unemployed.

We know that everyone needs a job. But, nobody needs a Federal Career Intern position in OFCCP Southeast Region. You don't have to believe the Union. Find attached results of a survey of Federal Career Interns in OFCCP Southeast Region. Also find attached some of their comments.

Before you become one of the 30 new Federal Career Interns in OFCCP Southeast Region, explore every other option available to you. You deserve better.

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# **OFCCP Southeast Region Federal Career Intern Survey Responses**

**prepared by  
AFGE Local 2519 and the  
National Council of Field Labor Locals**

This Questionnaire was provided to fourteen Federal Career Interns in the OFCCP Southeast Region. Ten interns responded to the questionnaire. Not all interns responded to all questions.

When you were hired by OFCCP, were you provided a formal orientation session?

**Seven of nine intern respondents reported that they had not participated in a formal orientation session.**

When you were hired, did you receive a copy of the Federal Career Intern Program Policy?

**Nine of ten intern respondents reported that they had not been provided a copy of the Federal Career Intern Program Policy.**

When you were hired, did you receive a copy of your position description?

**Four of ten intern respondents reported that they had not been provided a copy of their position descriptions.**

When you were hired, did you receive and sign a copy of the Federal Career Intern Program Participant Statement of Understanding?

**Eight of nine intern respondents reported that they did not sign and receive a copy of the Federal Career Intern Program Participant Statement of Understanding.**

Does management maintain a training file on you?

**Nine of ten intern respondents reported that management maintained a training file on them.**

Have you ever been permitted to see the contents of your training file?

**Seven of nine intern respondents had never seen the contents of their training files.**

Have you been provided a copy of your two year training and development plan (Individual Development Plan [IDP])?

**All ten interns had been provided a copy of their IDPs.**

Have you received quarterly (or more frequent) performance and progress counseling from your supervisor?

**Five intern respondents reported that they had not received quarterly (or more frequent) performance and progress counseling from their supervisors. Five interns had received counseling.**

If you received quarterly (or more frequent) performance and progress counseling, were you provided with a written report of the counseling session?

**Nine of ten intern respondents reported that they had been provided no written reports of counseling sessions.**

Has your supervisor ever told you that you were ready for promotion?

**Seven of ten intern respondents reported that they had been told that they were ready for promotion.**

At the end of your first year of employment, did your supervisor meet with you to explain why you were not promoted on time and what actions you should take to ensure promotion?

**Six of ten intern respondents reported that they had not met with their supervisors to discuss non-promotion. Three interns reported that their supervisors had explained that Regional Administrator Teague was blocking promotions. One intern reported that his/her supervisor had met with and discussed her/his non-promotion.**

# **OFCCP Southeast Region Federal Career Intern Survey Comments**

**prepared by  
AFGE Local 2519 and the  
National Council of Field Labor Locals**

The comments excerpted below were taken from a survey conducted by the National Council of Field Labor Locals. Comments were taken from nine of the ten surveys submitted.

EMPLOYEE 01 “During my year-end performance appraisal for FY2009, I was told that I was both ready for promotion and being recommended for promotion. [My supervisor] said my performance was exemplary, and s/he felt I should be promoted to the next grade level. I am being given the assignments because I am very capable of doing the work; however, OFCCP is not compensating me at the appropriate grade level for the work I am completing.”

EMPLOYEE 02 At the end of my first year my supervisor “informed me I was doing extremely well and on track”. I am “wondering what my employment status will be after working two years in this program. Will I have anything to show for it?”

EMPLOYEE 03 I discussed promotion with my supervisor “after my performance review. [My supervisor] asked had I seen my promotion yet, I said no, and s/he said that s/he sent in the recommendation for promotion. [My supervisor] said that I completed all of the required training indicated in the IDP and I was ready for the next level and that the next level would be more complex and that I would be conducting independent compliance assistance and case reviews and s/he felt I was ready. Later [my superior] said that a discussion was ongoing with RD about the promotion and s/he didn’t know when it would happen, but s/he wanted to make sure I was did everything RD was looking for.”

[Later] I approached [my supervisor] and asked about my promotion since our last discussion. At that time s/he said that they meet with the RD and the RD indicated that she did not have the time to look at the recommendations yet. The next month or so, I approached [my supervisor] again, and s/he asked me to come in [and] close the door. S/he said that the managers had a telephone conference call with the RD, and that the DDs and other managers, who were in a position of authority to speak up and said that they are fighting for our promotion.”

The RD appears to be putting her own twists, ideologies or/and standards in place for the FCIP Interns, creating her own skill-sets and requirements.”

Employee 04 “When I received my performance evaluation, I was told that I’m ready for promotion. After giving me my performance evaluation, [my supervisor] said that with increase pay that I will be given more responsibilities (cases/assignments). So, I think s/he thought I was going to be promoted... on my anniversary date. S/he told me that s/he did recommend and put me in for promotion..., and s/he didn’t know what the hold up was - of me receiving my promotion. She said that she did her part and she doesn’t know why we are not being promoted,

because we were already taking on more assignments/cases (assigning the interns their own cases just like she was assigning cases to the Sr COs).”

EMPLOYEE 05 My IDP “is a list of different things I need to experience or complete while I am an intern. I have completed almost every item on the list.”

My supervisor “gave us the impression around the time of our one year anniversaries with OFCCP that we were getting our own cases so we could “earn our [promotions]”. At that time, both of us had had our own cases for months, and since that we have had several more of our own cases, we have been onsite, performed conciliation agreements, and more, all on our own cases. We were told we could expect our promotions, but over 6 months later, we are still at grade 7.”

Management is clearly trying to see how little they can pay us to do work that should be compensated at a higher rate. We were not told from the outset that we would need to complete DIGs, Pre-JRCs, etc. to be promoted to 9s. The management seems to be making up the rules it goes along, and the interns are tired of it.”

My supervisor said that s/he had sent in the necessary paper work to the region, and that it should only be a matter of time before I received my promotion. That was in October. It is now April, and my supervisor says we have to demonstrate that we’re ready for our 9s, but she is very vague about what it would actually take to get there. I feel as though we have been lied to and manipulated. As you might expect, rumors are circulating as to why we were not given the raise and the promotion that so many of us feel we have earned and deserve. At first we were told it was a budget issue. However, that cannot be true because the agency is currently hiring more interns and the continuing resolution was lifted.”

EMPLOYEE 06 “The feedback [from my supervisor] has been that I am doing a great job and s/he is please with my performance. My supervisor informed me of [my readiness for promotion] a month or so before performance evaluations. When we met for performance eval, s/he said so again. I “met” my standards but on work management and training standards I exceeded so s/he said based on that I deserve that grade and step increase.” Later, my supervisor said that s/he “didn’t know why I didn’t receive the grade increase but it was not due to her/him.”

EMPLOYEE 07 I was told in October 2009 that I would be recommended for promotion... and that the recommendation would go to the Regional Director. I received high marks on my performance evaluation. S/he said all s/he could was recommend me for promotion and that the Regional Director would to have approve the promotion.”

I was then told that I “could not receive promotion because of the continuing resolution budget. Once a new budget took effect in December 2009 s/he told me to be patient.”

“This program is being mismanaged by the Regional Director. During an “intern update” on April 7, 2010, RD Teague claimed that it had never “dawned” on her that interns would receive promotions during the 2-year training period.”

EMPLOYEE 08 “[My supervisor] told me that my performance exceeds all other senior COs. I take that as a potential for promotion. The evaluation was completed but after 90 days went by I asked. S/he had no answers, s/he insisted that s/he had done the paperwork to process the promotion.”

EMPLOYEE 09 “I was told that the promotion would or should occur around the new fiscal year, which has come and gone. I was told that I had exceeded all of [my supervisor’s] expectations, but [that I] still had a lot to experience... . As far as support, I feel like my aspirations have constantly been stifled... .”