



## PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

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### **IMPROVING FEDERAL EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT MUST BE TOP PRIORITY FOR TRUMP ADMINISTRATION**

*Partnership for Public Service releases 2016 Best Places to Work in the Federal Government rankings, revealing the next administration faces a substantial challenge in improving federal employee engagement to meet best in class private sector standards*

**WASHINGTON** – The nonprofit, nonpartisan Partnership for Public Service today released the [2016 Best Places to Work in the Federal Government®](#) rankings that show a 1.3-point rise in federal employee engagement compared to 2015, for a score of 59.4 out of 100. This builds on last year’s 1.2-point increase, but still leaves the government well short of its all-time best score of 65.0 in 2010 and lagging far behind the private sector when it comes to how employees view their jobs and workplaces.

The *Best Places to Work* rankings, produced by the Partnership and Deloitte, provide vital information to help federal agencies, the White House and Congress assess federal employee engagement and provide a roadmap for federal leaders to improve the management of the workforce and employee performance.

While there have been modest gains in employee engagement during the past two years, there remains an urgent need for additional progress, presenting both a challenge and an opportunity for the incoming Trump administration.

“Best in class private-sector organizations understand that improved employee engagement leads to better performance and improved outcomes” said Max Stier, Partnership president and CEO. “People are our government’s greatest asset, and the new administration should commit itself to strengthening the federal workforce and improving the workplace culture.”

According to Sirota, a survey research organization, the 2016 employee engagement score for private sector employees is 77.1 out of 100, representing a 17.7-point gap with the federal government. However, 12 federal agencies scored above the private sector average this year.

The *Best Places to Work* rankings include 379 federal agencies and their subcomponents: 18 large federal agencies, 27 midsize agencies, 29 small agencies and 305 subcomponents. Organizations are rated within one of four groupings: large agency (15,000 or more employees), midsize agency (1,000-14,999 employees), small agency (100-999 employees) and agency subcomponent (subagency, bureau, division, center or office). Rankings and scores for all agencies and subcomponents, from first to worst, are available at [bestplacestowork.org](http://bestplacestowork.org).

The Partnership and Deloitte today will honor the five top-ranked *Best Places to Work* agencies, as well as the most improved agencies and subcomponents, in each of the four groupings.

**The top five large federal agencies:**

1. National Aeronautics and Space Administration
2. Department of Commerce
3. Intelligence Community
4. Department of State
5. Department of Health and Human Services

**The top five midsize federal agencies:**

1. Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
2. Peace Corps (tie)
2. Government Accountability Office (tie)
4. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
5. Federal Trade Commission

**The top five small federal agencies:**

1. National Endowment for the Arts
2. Overseas Private Investment Corporation
3. Office of Management and Budget
4. Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service
5. Federal Labor Relations Authority

**The top five agency subcomponents:**

1. Office of the Inspector General (Tennessee Valley Authority)
2. Environment and Natural Resources Division (Department of Justice)
3. Office of Financial Management (Securities and Exchange Commission)
4. Office of Energy Market Regulation (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission)
5. U.S. Army Audit Agency (Department of the Army)

In addition to overall federal employee engagement, the rankings measure employee attitudes regarding 10 workplace categories, including effective leadership, innovation, work-life balance, pay and support for diversity.

The 2016 data was analyzed to determine which of these workplace factors have the greatest influence on employee engagement. The Partnership and Deloitte found that the federal government has a highly mission-focused workforce, but poor leadership. This is troubling because effective leadership remains the key motivating force for employees as it has been every year since the rankings were launched in 2003, followed by the match between agency mission and employee skills, and satisfaction with pay.

The *Best Places to Work* data also gives insights into federal workforce demographics, including gender, race, ethnicity and those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

**Additional findings:**

- Among individual federal organizations, 72.3 percent saw their overall employee engagement scores improve in 2016, compared to 70.4 percent in 2015 and only 43.1 percent in 2014 and 24 percent in 2013.
- The 2016 government-wide data show increases in employee engagement in all 10 workplace categories for the second straight year. The biggest improvement came in effective leadership, which still ranks 9th out of the 10 workplace categories.
- For the fifth year in a row, NASA increased its *Best Places to Work* score (2.5 points) and has retained its standing as the number one large agency.

- The most improved large agency is the Department of Agriculture, which raised its score by 3.7 points and has moved in the rankings from 16th in 2013 to 9th this year.
- The Department of Homeland Security had the second biggest increase for large agencies, improving 2.7 points for a score of 45.8. This is the first increase for DHS since 2010, although it still ranks last out of 18 large agencies.
- For the 5th straight year, the Secret Service's *Best Places to Work* score dropped and now stands at just 32.8 out of 100, placing it last among 305 subcomponents.
- Employees at the Social Security Administration experienced the biggest decrease in employee engagement among large agencies, with a drop of 2.9 points. No other large agency saw its score fall by more than 0.7 points in 2016.
- The Securities and Exchange Commission is the most improved midsize agency, with a 7.5-point increase and a score of 76.1. The biggest decline for this grouping occurred at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which dropped 3.5 points for a score of 70.2 and a rank of 12th out of 27 agencies. NRC's score has declined five times in the last six years.
- Among small agencies, the National Endowment for the Arts saw the most improvement, with a 16.6-point increase, and the Surface Transportation Board had the largest decline, dropping 14.9 points.
- The Federal Election Commission ranks last among the 29 small agencies and has the lowest score, 28.4 out of 100, in the entire federal government.

**The *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government*® rankings** offer the most comprehensive assessment of how federal public servants view their jobs and workplaces, providing insights into worker engagement on issues ranging from leadership and pay to innovation and work–life balance. Employee engagement refers to the satisfaction and commitment of the workforce and the willingness of employees to put forth discretionary effort to achieve results.

The *Best Places to Work* rankings are based on data from the Office of Personnel Management's annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, which was administered April through June 2016 to permanent executive branch employees. Additional employee survey data from 12 agencies including the intelligence community are included in the results. This is the 11th edition of the *Best Places to Work* rankings, which began in 2003.

For 15 years, the nonpartisan, nonprofit **Partnership for Public Service** has been dedicated to making the federal government more effective for the American people. We work across administrations to help transform the way government operates by increasing collaboration, accountability, efficiency and innovation. Visit [ourpublicservice.org](http://ourpublicservice.org) to learn more.

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