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2015 *BEST PLACES TO WORK IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT* RANKINGS REVEAL INCREASE IN EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND COMMITMENT FOR FIRST TIME IN FOUR YEARS

WASHINGTON — The nonprofit, nonpartisan Partnership for Public Service today released the 2015 *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government*[®] (<http://www.bestplacestowork.org>) rankings that revealed a slight increase in federal employee satisfaction and commitment with their jobs and workplaces. The 2015 score of 58.1 out of 100 represents a 1.2-point increase from 2014 and follows four years of declining employee satisfaction.

Produced by the Partnership and Deloitte, the *Best Places to Work* rankings provide critical information to help agencies, the Obama administration and Congress assess workplace health and performance. In addition to overall satisfaction and commitment, the rankings measure employee attitudes on 10 workplace categories, including effective leadership, innovation, support for diversity, work-life balance and pay.

“The employee voice is one of the most powerful tools that federal leaders have to understand their organizations,” said Max Stier, president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service. “The Best Places to Work in the Federal Government data can be used to increase employee commitment and improve performance as agencies strive to better serve the American public.”

Stier added, “Kudos to the Obama administration for placing greater emphasis on strengthening federal employee satisfaction and commitment. I hope this effort is sustained and expanded.”

For the 10th time in a row, the primary factor influencing federal employee satisfaction and commitment is effective leadership, and in particular, senior leadership. In 2015, the score for senior leaders remains low, but improved 1.4 points to 43.8 after dropping three points in 2014. Two other key factors that influence employee satisfaction and commitment are how well employees believe their skills match their agency missions, and pay.

The *Best Places to Work* rankings include 391 federal agencies and their subcomponents, which represent 97 percent of the federal executive branch workforce. Organizations are rated within one of four groupings: large agency (15,000 or more employees), mid-size agency (1,000-14,999 employees), small agency (100-999 employees) and agency subcomponent (subagency, bureau, division, center or office). Rankings and scores are for all agencies and subcomponents, from first to worst.

The top five large federal agencies:

1. National Aeronautics and Space Administration
2. Intelligence Community
3. Department of Justice (tie)
3. Department of State (tie)
5. Department of Commerce

The top five mid-size federal agencies:

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

The top five small federal agencies:

1. Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service
2. Overseas Private Investment Corporation
3. Federal Labor Relations Authority
4. National Endowment for the Humanities
5. Surface Transportation Board

The top five agency subcomponents:

1. Office of the Inspector General (Tennessee Valley Authority)
2. Office of the General Counsel (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission)
3. U.S. Army Audit Agency (Army)
4. Environment and Natural Resources Division (Justice)
5. Office of Budget, Finance, and Award Management (National Science Foundation)

For the first time, the *Best Places to Work* rankings compare 75 federal organizations by six mission areas: law enforcement, public health, national security, oversight, energy and environment, and financial regulation. The data show a wide range of scores among agencies with similar workforces and responsibilities.

The FBI, for example, tops the law enforcement category with a *Best Places to Work* satisfaction and commitment score of 69.9, while the Secret Service is at the bottom with a score of 33.4. Among financial regulatory agencies, there is a 32.3-point gap between the top scoring Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the agency last in this category.

“Federal leaders should assess the strengths, weaknesses and successful practices of peer organizations and adopt the strategies from agencies that are achieving consistently high employee satisfaction and commitment rates,” said Stier.

The *Best Places to Work* data also gives insights into federal workforce demographics, including age, gender, race, ethnicity and those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), which is a new grouping for 2015. The complete rankings are available at bestplacestowork.org.

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

The most improved large agency for the second year in a row is the Department of Labor, which raised its score by 4.4 points, enough to jump from 10th to eighth in the rankings. The Department of Housing and Urban Development is the most improved mid-size agency, raising its score eight points to 52.3. HUD, however, still ranks 21 out of 24 mid-size agencies. The Federal Maritime Commission is the most improved small agency, with a 14.8-point increase; its overall score is 56.8, placing it 21 out of 28 small agencies.

Additional findings:

- Among individual federal organizations, 70.4 percent saw their employee satisfaction and commitment scores increase in 2015, compared to only 43.1 percent in 2014 and 24 percent in 2013.
- While the government-wide *Best Places to Work* score increased to 58.1, it is still well below the private sector. According to Sirota, a survey research organization, the 2015 satisfaction rate for private sector employees is 76.7.
- The 2015 government-wide data show increases in employee satisfaction in all 10 workplace categories, an improvement from 2014 when the scores dropped in seven of these categories. The biggest increases came in training and development, pay and performance-based rewards and advancement.
- For the first time, the *Best Places to Work* rankings include results for five mission-critical occupations across government: auditors, contract/acquisition specialists, economists, human resources specialists and information technology/cybersecurity specialists. Economists have the highest overall government-wide satisfaction and commitment score (68.1 out of 100). IT specialists have the lowest score (56.2), nearly two points below the overall government-wide score for all employees.
- Members of the Senior Executive Service (SES), the federal leadership corps, have a job satisfaction score of 82.9, a 1.1-point increase from 2014. The data show a gap of 24.9 points between the satisfaction of members of the SES and the satisfaction of the rest the workforce (58.1).

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 2015 to permanent executive branch employees. Additional survey data from eight agencies plus the intelligence community are included in the results. This is the 10th edition of the *Best Places to Work* rankings, which began in 2003.

The Partnership for Public Service is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that believes good government starts with good people. It works to revitalize the federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and transforming the way government works by strengthening the civil service and the systems that support it. Visit ourpublicservice.org for more information.

Deloitte Consulting LLP is the world's largest consulting firm based on revenue and market share (2014). More than 7,300 professionals are dedicated to serving federal clients with wide-ranging missions. Deloitte brings a deep understanding of government requirements, processes and systems, as well as insights into the workforce and technology issues that affect day-to-day operations. By drawing on industry-leading practices across government and business, Deloitte applies a mix of private-sector perspective and public-sector experience to help federal agencies in their efforts to address today's biggest challenges while building a stronger foundation for tomorrow. To learn more, visit deloitte.com/us/federal.

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