

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EEOC LOCALS No 216, AFGE, AFL-CIO
Office of the President
c/o Denver District Office, EEOC
303 East 17th Avenue, Suite 410, Denver, Colorado 80203
Tele: (303) 866-1337 Fax: (303) 736-3964

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Gabrielle Martin
(303) 725-9079

EEOC UNION ISSUES TOP 10 CHALLENGES FOR NEW AGENCY CHAIR

On July 17, 2009, President Obama announced the nomination of Jacqueline Berrien to become Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEOC). The beleaguered civil rights agency has suffered from frozen budgets, the loss of 25% of its workforce, and mounting case backlogs. According to Gabrielle Martin, President of the National Council of EEOC Locals, No. 216, AFGE/AFL-CIO, the Union representing EEOC employees, "EEOC's new leader has her work cut out for her trying to revitalize this decimated and restore the public's confidence."

Here is the list of the Union's top ten challenges facing the new EEOC Chair:

1. Budget- The new Chair must be an outspoken advocate for fully funding EEOC. Modest increases in FY09 and FY10 have not overcome five years of level funding.
2. Backlog/ Hiring- The new Chair must prioritize the hiring of frontline staff to dig itself out of its rising [backlog](#) of 82,561 cases. The public now waits on average almost 9 months for help.
3. Overtime- The new Chair must clean up the EEOC's own overtime abuses, [ruled to be willful violations by a Federal Arbitrator](#), including paying backpay to deserving employees.
4. Model Employer- Rather than a "[laughingstock](#)," the new Chair should actually make EEOC the model employer by repairing relations with the Union and. improving [employee morale](#).
5. Intake Overhaul- The new Chair should create an agency-wide solution for the intake of new charges that integrates the in-house call center and can absorb the flood of intake questionnaires.
6. Attract and Retain Talent- The new Chair needs to ensure EEOC is competitive with other agencies by making career grades commensurate with increasing complexity of the law and duties.
7. Training-EEOC employees need comprehensive annual training, including on EEOC's three new laws, i.e., GINA, ADAAA, and the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009.
8. Federal Sector-Proposed changes to the Federal EEO process that jeopardize a Federal employee's rights to discovery and a hearing should comply with the regulatory process.
9. Reign in Micromanagement- The new Chair should reduce supervisor: employee ratio to 1:10.
10. Fix Restructuring- The new Chair should fix the worst results of the 2006 EEOC field restructuring, which split states and downgraded offices in cities with high minority population.

