



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EEOC LOCALS, NO. 216, AFGE/AFL-CIO
Executive Summary: Workplace Issues Survey For EEOC Employees - January 2009

Conclusions of the Survey

The conclusion of the survey is that EEOC's employees are demoralized, because offices are short-staffed, top heavy, and overwhelmed with new and old responsibilities. The new responsibilities include processing a flood of mail-in and electronically transmitted intake questionnaires (EAS). EEOC's former Chair Earp unfortunately planned for EEOC's new in-house call center to be "a complete mirror of what we had at the outsourced center." *Daily Labor Report*, 1/27/09. The outsourced call center was a failure, which Congress shut down. The new in-house call center should be customer oriented, providing more substantive help to the public and to EEOC's dwindling staff. Employees responding to survey questions would find it helpful if properly trained in-house call center staff were given expanded intake duties, rather than simply phone answering duties, thereby allowing investigative staff more time to devote to pending case investigations.

Survey Method

The survey was posted on the Council 216 public website. EEOC employees were informed of its presence. The results contained in this summary and accompanying report were collected from the posting of the survey on January 14, 2009 through January 26, 2009. During this period 200 employees responded from EEOC's field and Headquarters' offices.

Survey Respondents

Of the persons responding, 62% were Investigators.¹ The remaining were mostly Investigative Support Assistants, Office Automation Assistants, Trial Attorneys, Mediators and Administrative Judges. Thus, a marked majority of participants were investigators, whose investigations are impacted by new intake processes and procedures.

Summary of Results

Employees rated the adequacy of the number of frontline employees in their offices:

- According to 57%: the number of frontline employees is inadequate.
- According to 35%: the number of frontline employees is so low it's a crisis.
- According to only 9%: the number of frontline employees is just right.

Therefore, 92% of those responding believe that the number of frontline employees in the offices is either inadequate or so low it is a crisis. These ratings were consistent with the comments received.

Employees rated the morale in their offices on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest):

- 59% rated the morale either at the lowest end of the scale, i.e., a 1 or a 2.
- Just 9% rated the morale at the highest end of the scale, i.e., a 4 or a 5.

¹ All percentages reported are based on the number of respondents for that question, excluding those who did not respond.

Employees reported on the supervisor to employee ratio in their offices:

- 56% responded that the ratio was one supervisor to every 5-9 employees.
- 11% responded that the ratio was one supervisor to every 1-4 employees.
- **16% responded that the ratio was one supervisor to every 10 employees (the agency's alleged goal pursuant to the 2006 field restructuring).**
- 18% responded that the ratio was one supervisor to every 11-15 employees.

Employees responded that the time spent processing intake work has increased due to changes:

- 54% responded that the EAS questionnaires have greatly increased intake work.
- 52% responded that the *Holowecki* decision has greatly increased intake work.

Employees responded in overwhelming numbers that they would have more time to focus on their substantive job responsibilities if properly trained staff of the new in-house call center could assist with some intake related work:

- Return cold call messages left on the local front-desk telephone.
- Return calls from individuals with general status questions about pending cases.
- Make appointments for potential charging party interviews.
- Call individuals who completed questionnaires to clarify incomplete or confusing responses.
- Draft charges.

Highlights of Comments of Survey Respondents

“The morale in the office is low because we have lost staff and have an increase in our case load.”

“Office morale is directly related to the increase in time spent on intake work due to EAS filings and Holowecki decision.”

“The EAS system was implemented without an increase in staff to process the huge volume which is being received.

“Hire more staff & establish intake unit.”

“The office needs more front-line personnel, especially ISAs and investigators, in order to handle the work load.”

“Increasing public access by offering online questionnaires (which is a good thing), has increased intake volume. We are not staffed to handle the increase in volume.”

“Ideally, enough staff to handle all intake duties at all times should be hired. This would enable investigators to focus on case processing duties.”

“We need more investigators and not supervisors especially because everyone in the office other than the CRTIU have over 5-20 years experience working in the office.”

“With respect to the legal unit, we need more support staff. We have too many cases and not enough paralegals and no legal tech to provide support for our litigation.”