



NNSA EEO Counselor Program

Counselor Tidbits

Presented by: Service Center EEO and Diversity Office
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EEO and Diversity, Collaborating for Mission Success

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Welcome

- In our efforts to provide greater service to you, our EEO Counselors and customers, we are initiating this first issue of *Counselor Tidbits*.
- The intent will be to provide you with current information from EEOC, the DOE Office of Civil Rights and Diversity, or from this office, that may affect your pre-complaint counseling.
- All issues will be archived on your EEO Counselor website.
- Inside this first issue: tips on conducting the initial interview; plans for an iComplaints training session; document review requests; updates to the [EEO Counselor website](#); and a question/answer page.
- The action buttons in this volume will take you back ← or to the next slide →
- As always, I close with a sincere thank you for taking on the role of EEO Counselor for the NNSA. *Happy reading,*

Yolanda Girón
Manager, EEO and Diversity Program



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The Initial Interview

Counselor skill building tips for dealing with the complainant who wants to include a long history. Many of you have been there, the question is, *how do I know what to listen to, what to cut off, what to include in the report?* Try some of these statements to the counselee:

- My focus for today is the 45 days prior to your initial contact, which will be (have the date ready).
- Get a list ahead of time. When you receive the initial contact call, ask for a list of issues by date or approximate date.
- I have blocked out 1 hour for today's meeting, so let's try and focus on what has been occurring in the 45 days leading up to (date of initial contact).
- My role as EEO Counselor is to conduct a limited inquiry into your allegations, it is not a formal investigation.
- CAUTION: if you hear the words, "continuing violation" from the counselee, then they know the process and want to make the history a part of an existing complaint. In that case, listen and take notes for all the history that they share with you.
- Other suggestions? Let us know what works for you in pre-complaint counseling, we will share those with the other counselors. Email your suggestions to kharger@doeal.gov



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EEO Counselor Webpage



- As you know we have posted documents for your counsees on the EEO Counselor webpage. Additionally, documents and templates for you as Counselor to use in completing your counseling process are also there. We appreciate those that have utilized the forms and provided feedback. As soon as we get recommendations for improvement to the forms, we are putting them up on the web for you.

Some current updates you will want to be aware of:

1. It is no longer necessary to secure the complainant's initials on the Counselor's Report, per MD110, Chapter 2, VIII, A. However, you must send, via certified mail a copy of the report to the complainant. So, when the Service Center EEO Office notifies you a complaint has been filed formally, and requests your counselor's report, remember you submit it, per the MD110 within 15 calendar days to the EEO Office and send a copy to the complainant at the same time.
2. Changes to the Counselor Report template: we now have a spell check feature (*thank you for the feedback George Gould!*). Others with feedback on the Counselor Website or any of the documents, please email or phone Karen Harger (505) 845-6668, kharger@doeal.gov or Patty Padilla (505) 845-4976 or ppadilla@doeal.gov. We are working on the paragraphs which currently automatically give you a bullet format listing. We are working to remove that. In the meantime, just go ahead and keep using your return key to enter paragraphs.
3. INSTRUCTIONS for Opening and using the Counselor Intake Form/Report document:
 - Go to the Service Center [EEO and Diversity Programs Website](#)
 - On the left menu, click on [SC EEO Counselors](#)
 - Use the right scroll bar and scroll down to *Information for counselors*
 - Click on *Pre-Complaint Counseling Intake/Counselor Report*
 - At the question "Open" or "Save", click on save as, and save to your documents location (e.g., your "C" drive, "My documents", naming the file under the complainant's name.
 - Once the file is downloaded, you will get a question if you want to open now, if you're ready to work the report, click on open folder. If not, at a later time, you will go into Word, locate your file from wherever you saved it and are now ready to work on it.



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Document Requests

Review of documents is a normal part of the pre-complaint counseling process. A number of questions have recently arisen regarding what to get from Human Capital Management (formerly known as HR) specifically on non-selections. Here is the HCM policy:

- Counselors at the Service Center, make an appointment with HCM to go to HCM (Bldg 392) and review the Official Personnel Folder and or Merit Promotion File. You will not take copies, as once the complaint is filed formal, the investigator will require official copies. For your information, you don't take copies, since you would be accountable for an official record, securing the personal identifier information (PII) and the entire file. This is for your protection.
- Counselors at Site Offices requesting review of files and documents from HCM contact the HCM supervisor of the unit that processes actions for the [site office that your complaint](#) is at. Rita Garcia (505) 845-6227 or Harriet Garcia (505) 845-6700.



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Upcoming

iComplaints

- iComplaints is the Department of Energy system for tracking EEO Contacts, Pre-Complaint Counseling, and Formal Complaints. The system is mandatory. Therefore, we are planning an iComplaints training session for all counselors. The session will provide you with steps on how to enter your pre-complaint counseling into the system; enter events throughout the counseling; and close out the counseling in the system.
- **What we need from you:** Would the week of January 8 or week of January 22 work for a training session? We are looking at 2 to 4 hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday of one of those weeks. This would be via video-conference so that you can see the entries real-time. **Please respond no later than November 30, 2006** to kharger@doeal.gov with which week and day of the week would work best. We will go with a majority vote and utilize 9 am Mountain time as a start.

Encrypting and PII

- There has been a lot of discussion about Personal Identifier Information (PII) and the counseling process. Yes, the documents you generate, namely your Counselor Report can potentially have PII data. Therefore, if you haven't done so already, please contact the Information Technology help desk to get Entrust Encryption on your email. This way if you are going to be sending in your report via email, you will encrypt it first. For more information, contact Debbie Allison at (505) 845-6021

Counselor Feedback and Q&A:

- In the future this is your spot to have your questions posted and responded to. Also, any suggestions, tips, skills that you've developed over your course as a counselor that might be of help to other counselors. Please share your questions, ideas, and suggestions via email to: kharger@doeal.gov. We'll be sure and get them posted.



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Hit "Enter" to exit

