

# Office of Human [hr.nih.gov](http://hr.nih.gov) Resources

## ANNUAL REPORT



A year of resilience for our people, our partners, and progress at NIH.

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

2020 brought unprecedented challenges for the world, our country and for our community at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Here in the NIH Office of Human Resources (OHR), we are proud of the work that we did to support the NIH workforce over the last year and continue to do. It became quickly apparent with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic that our role in supporting the NIH community would require OHR to be agile in completely unexpected ways to support NIH leadership and our workforce. Due to our strong embrace of workplace flexibilities and dynamic programs, OHR was prepared and ready with solutions to continue meeting our employees' and customers' needs.

One of OHR's greatest accomplishments in 2020 is a stronger and re-energized partnership with our customers across the NIH. There were numerous critical response efforts and national initiatives being led by our customers in the Institutes and Centers, which required OHR to be at the table ready to support recruitment, onboarding, and training needs. We recognized early on that greater communication and flexibility were necessary as we helped customers navigate new HR regulations and policies such as the Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and increased workplace flexibilities. All-Staff meetings with the Executive Officers were scheduled to answer questions staff might have as the situation continued to evolve.

I am also proud that we delivered on commitments such as launching the Total Compensation Tool. We also improved access to data analytics across programs and services areas through efforts to establish organizational standards, and completed the development of the SBRBPAS Framework, which will help NIH recruit and retain highly specialized candidates in the critical areas of biomedical and clinical research and product assessment. Together with our customers, OHR created opportunities, collaborated in new ways, modernized workflows, and successfully helped our customers meet their human resource needs.

In addition to our work to support the NIH workforce as a whole, I am incredibly proud we were able to support OHR staff in optimal ways. I recognize that 2020 presented complex and unique challenges for our staff as we shifted overnight to a completely virtual environment. In response, we offered virtual trainings and development sessions, had multiple touchpoints via virtual town halls and socials, and most importantly, helped OHR staff leverage workplace flexibilities to the greatest extent possible to support their work/life fit. I've been inspired by the resilience of our team here in OHR, and the entire OHR Senior Leadership team is steadfast in our commitment to cultivate a positive Employee Experience as we look towards the future of this organization.

The future will look different for all of us and in different ways. A priority for OHR is to improve our processes and create programs and services that will offer the best Customer Experience at the federal level and in the biomedical research community. I invite you to read ahead to see the progress we've made.

As we press on into 2021, the talented scientists and researchers at the NIH will continue their critical research to make important discoveries that improve health and save lives, and the NIH Office of Human Resources remain by their side and committed to support the NIH workforce.

We are the **PEOPLE** that build the **PARTNERS** to drive **PROGRESS** of the **National Institutes of Hope**.

Sincerely,



Julie Broussard Berko, MPA  
NIH Chief People Officer



# 2020 COVID-19 TIMELINE

✓ JAN 21

CDC Confirms first US Coronavirus case.

⚠ JAN 31

United States Declares Public Health Emergency.

📢 MAR 13

President declares COVID-19 a national emergency.

👤 MAR 13

NIH begins maximum telework.

🔬 MAR 23

NIH Intramural Research Program shifts to mission-critical work only.



NIH Training Center goes 100% online in response to maximum telework.

📺 MAR 16

OHR participates in first NIH All-Staff Virtual Town Hall Event.

👥 MAR 20

OHR Launches 'Ask OHR' to address HR policy changes and other workforce issues that emerged as a result of the pandemic.

💡 MAR 25

OHR participates in second NIH All-Staff Virtual Town Hall Event.

👥 APR 24

Throughout 2020 the NIH Training Center offered **650** virtual classes which is an increase in total classes from previous years.

**740** Questions submitted from staff to NIH leadership for Virtual Town Hall.

**19,998** NIH staff participate in April virtual town hall.

# 2020 COVID-19 TIMELINE



 JUN 22

NIH Group A Staff begin returning to physical workspaces in Maryland and Montana.

 JUL 20

NIH Group B Staff begin returning to physical workspaces in Maryland and Montana.

 DEC 22

HHS & NIH partner to host a COVID-19 Vaccine Kick-Off Event on NIH Bethesda Campus.

 DEC 18

FDA issues Emergency Use Authorization for Moderna/ NIAID co-developed COVID vaccine.

NIH Return to the Physical Workplace Framework video presented by OHR's Director is released to staff.

 MAY 15

OHR participates in third NIH All-Staff Virtual Town Hall Event.

 MAY 21

OHR participates in fourth NIH All-Staff Virtual Town Hall Event.

 JUN 19

OHR participates in fifth NIH All-Staff Virtual Town Hall Event.

 SEP 18

OHR host first virtual benefits fair for Open Season.

 NOV 13

OHR participates in sixth NIH All-Staff Virtual Town Hall Event.

 NOV 20

**16,783**

Applicants received for 100 COVID related announcements.

**3.6M**

hr.nih.gov

Page views across OHR's website with top hits to Jobs at NIH, HR Systems, and Working at NIH.

**13,800**

Total page views

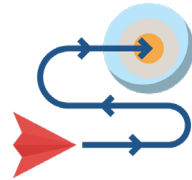
of OHR's redesigned Benefits Open Season webpage that included 3 new 'how-to' videos.

# NIH Office of Human Resources WHO WE ARE



## MISSION

To recruit and retain a highly skilled and diverse workforce for the NIH.



## VISION

To be a catalyst for a thriving workforce that best meets the ever-changing needs of biomedical research.



## VALUES

People,  
Partners,  
Progress.

# 362

OHR FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)  
as of 12/31/2020



OHR's goal is to be the **people** that build the **partners** to drive the **progress** of the NIH mission. This is achieved through the unique skills every staff member brings to the Office of Human Resources.

Office of Internal Management and Planning

Immediate Office of the Director



CPD

Compensation & Policy Division



CSD

Client Services Division



DSSEM

Division of Senior & Scientific Executive Management



SAID

Systems, Analytics, and Information Division



WRD

Workforce Relations Division



WSDD

Workforce Support & Development Division

74%

HR Specialists and HR Assistants make up 74% of OHR's workforce. These are the staff that customers commonly interact with completing activities such as recruitment, onboarding, benefits, etc.

26%

The remaining OHR workforce is comprised of various positions that directly contribute to the management and operations of HR. These include IT Specialists who support key HR systems and analytics, Training Specialists that oversee the technical and professional development of NIH staff, and NIH Presidential Management Fellows and Management Interns.



WE  
BELIEVE  
IN OUR  
PEOPLE



# NIH WORKFORCE AT A GLANCE



**19,315**

**Total FTE Headcount**  
*1% increase since 2017*



**11.38**

**Average Number of Years at NIH**



**5.55**

**Average Number of Years FTEs Stayed Past Retirement Eligibility**



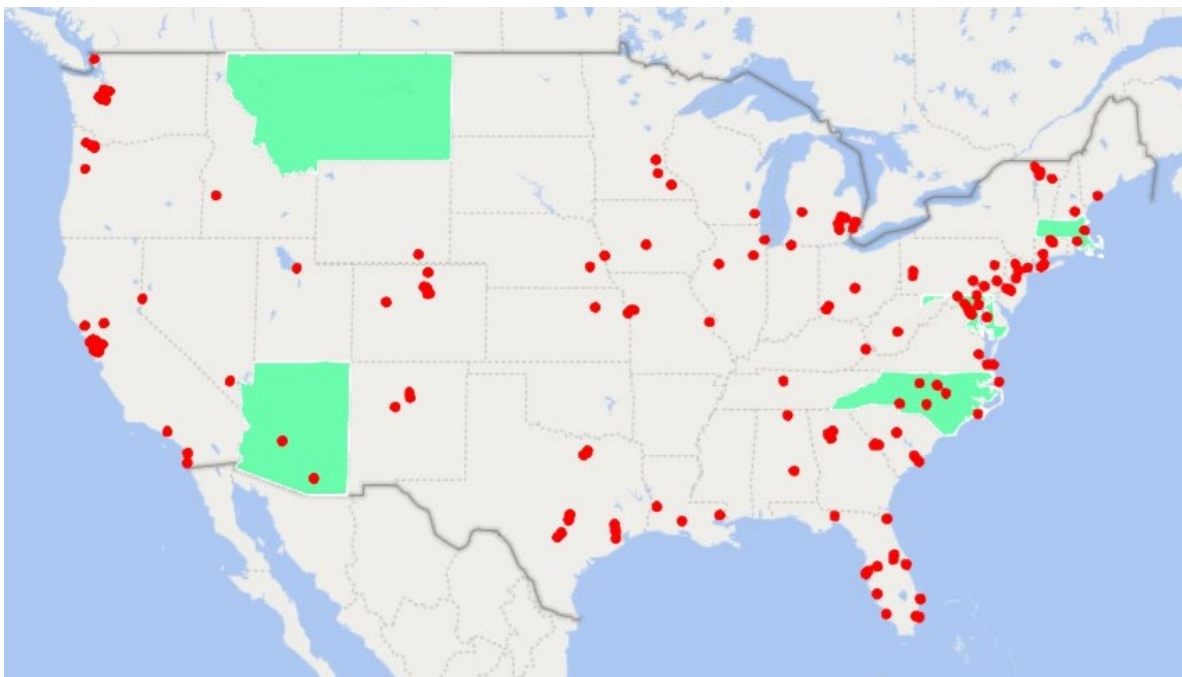
**21%**

**FTEs Eligible to Retire**  
*In 5 years, 37% of the current FTEs will be eligible to retire*

*Data as of 1/1/2021*

## Geographical Areas Where NIH Staff Are Located

*Data as of March 2020*



OHR services NIH staff located in federal facilities across five states:

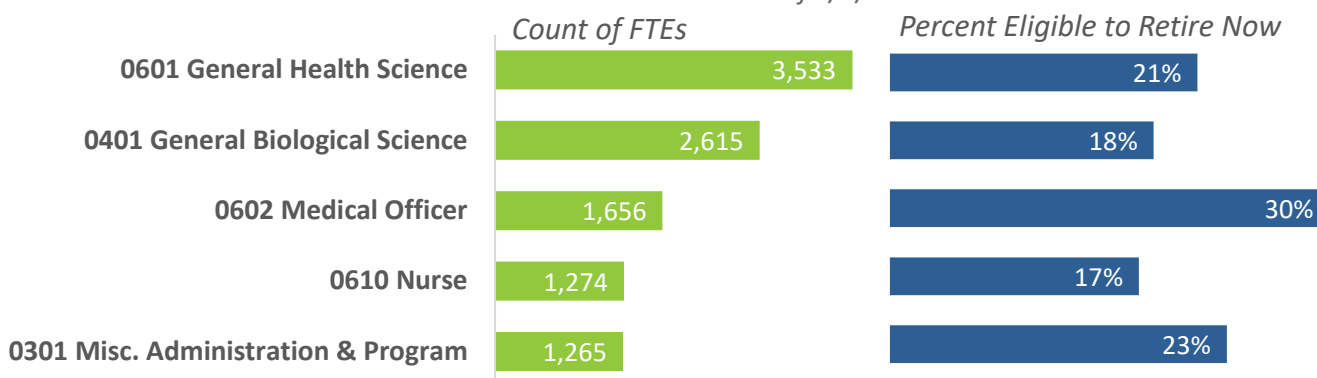
- Arizona
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Montana
- North Carolina

*Shown shaded in green.*

In addition, approximately 1.12% of the NIH federal workforce worked full-time remote prior to the COVID-19 pandemic across the US and internationally. *US remote worker locations are indicated by the red dots.*

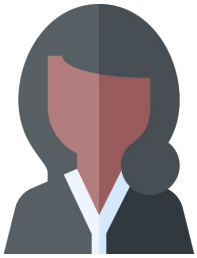
## Top 5 Most Populous Occupational Series

*Data as of 1/1/2021*



# SERVICING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

OHR provides full support over the course of the employee lifecycle to 11 of 17 different types of positions at NIH.



Title 5 - GS



Title 5 - WG



Title 38



SES / Executive



Title 42 Tenure Track & Tenured Investigators



Title 42 SSO or SPL-2



Title 42 Clinical or Research Fellow



Title 42 Staff/Senior Clinician or Scientist



Senior Biomedical Research Service



Commissioned Corps



Trainees Summer Interns



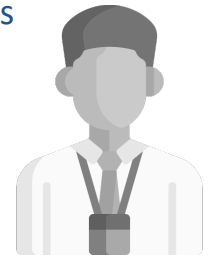
Trainee Visiting Fellows



Trainees IRTAs and CRTAs



Volunteers & Special Volunteers



Title 42 Undergrad Scholarship Program (WGSP)



Guest Researchers



Contractors



# GREAT SCIENCE BEGINS WITH A GREAT WORKFORCE

The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) is an annual survey administered by OPM that measures Federal Government employees' perceptions about their work experiences, organizations, and leaders. In 2020, OPM removed 34 of the 72 core questions to add questions related to the pandemic. Employee engagement data is then used by the Partnership for Public Service and the Boston Consulting Group to rank [The Best Places to Work](#) in the Federal Government.

## NIH 2020 RESPONSE RATE

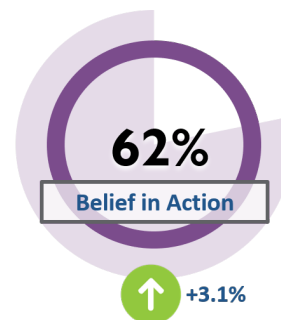
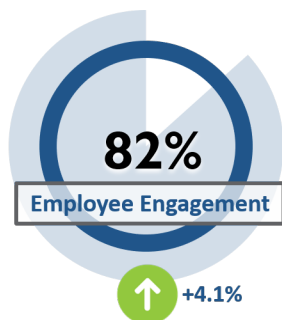
68.0%

+1.6%

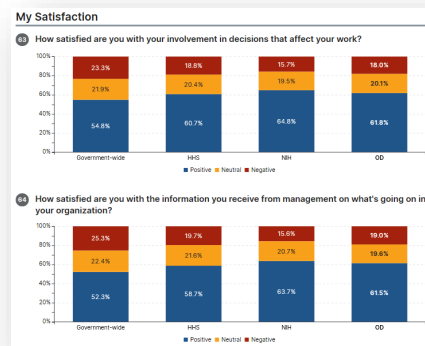
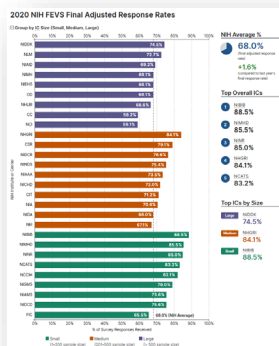


Following a 100% virtual FEVS campaign, NIH's response rate grew again in 2020 to our highest rate ever!

**ALL** of the original questions from the 2019 FEVS stayed the same or **increased**.



OHR also created interactive data visualization [tools](#) for NIH Institutes and Centers to better access and use FEVS data to create positive changes through the organization.



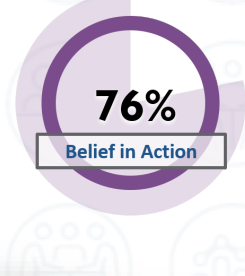
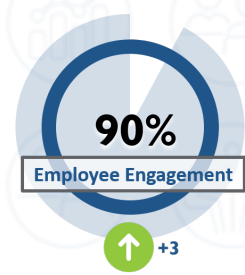
# VALUING PEOPLE STARTS WITHIN

In OHR we are passionate about people and the work begins within. We work diligently to support and engage the talented professionals that make up the staff of the Office of Human Resources, even when there is not a global pandemic. This focus on our people is reflected in OHR's 2020 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Results as shown to the right.

In addition to these impressive results, we are proud to say that **96%** of staff feel their supervisor supports their needs to balance work and other life issues and **94%** recommend OHR as a good place to work.

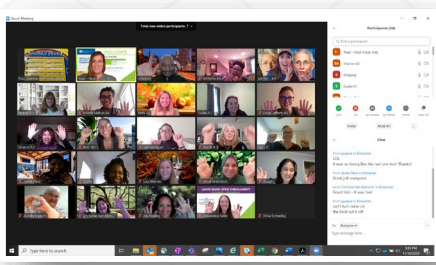
Over the past year, staff have showed true resilience as they transitioned to a fully virtual work environment all while continuing to provide excellent service to all our customers. In order to support this transition, OHR's own Administrative Services Branch (ASB) organized the first Supply Pick-up Event designed to provide staff with much needed supplies, while maintaining a safe distance!

OHR's Engagement and Development Branch delivered numerous trainings to increase overall comfort and effectiveness in our new virtual environment. In addition, staff engage in our 'OneOHR' Yammer group to stay connected with one another and even encourage physical activity through stretch breaks and team step challenges. Last, but not least, staff formed the OHR Social Committee to deliver quarterly OHR Social events to help form connections, lift spirits, and drive our commitment to elevating the OHR Employee Experience.



## OHR Take Your Child to (Tele)Work Day

OHR hosted our first Take Your Child to (Tele)Work Day which included a full day of facilitated and DIY sessions to educate #OHRKids about the important work being done at the NIH by their parents.



## OHR Fall Social

Staff-hosted virtual games or discussions to help facilitate important social connections outside of the physical workspace.

## OHR Supply Pick-Up Event

Supply kits prepared for staff to drive-by and pick-up from OHR staff including A surprise appearance by Julie Berko and myself! Despite the dreary weather, we helped deliver 50 kits and 20 special equipment requests.



**“We are passionate about people and the work begins within.”**

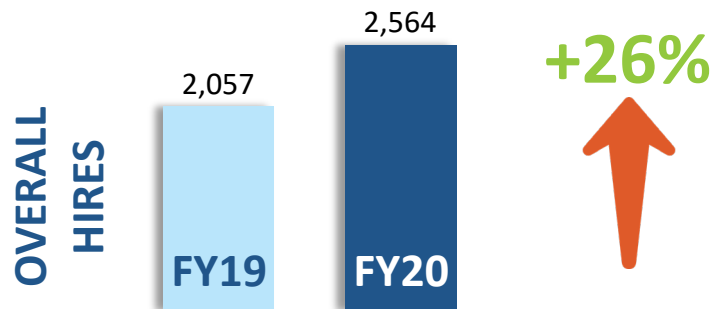
Beth Ilana Chandler  
Deputy Director, Office of Human Resources



# INCREASED NIH STAFFING LEVELS

Over the course of 2020, the Client Services Division (CSD) was able to increase NIH's staffing levels to their highest level since the hiring surge in Fiscal Year 2017. CSD accomplished this during an unprecedented time full of many unknowns. Nevertheless, hires outpaced separations for all but two months in Fiscal Year 2020. CSD's versatility and their established structure supported their ability to reach the NIH goal of raising its staffing levels even while adjusting to a full remote work environment.

In addition to hiring more staff, CSD received contract funding to set-up a shared service center of former HR staff to handle more routine work like building announcements, reviewing applicants, and building assessments. This internal growth allowed OHR to facilitate the vital work necessary to increase NIH staff levels and lead to success expected to continue into Fiscal Year 2021.



# NIH TRAINING GOES FULLY VIRTUAL

**10,750**

Individuals Served

**6,741**

Entirely Virtual

Even before maximum telework commenced, the NIH Training Center began to thoughtfully consider which courses could continue to run online and how to address the impact on leadership programs, mandatory training, and closed enrollment trainings. As a result, the NIHTC was able to quickly implement an enterprise-wide game plan almost instantly to take the all of their training and services virtual by March 16. In addition, the Strategic Workforce Analytics and Engagement Branch successfully converted the NIH's New Employee Orientation to a fully virtual format in order to sustain onboarding during maximum telework and beyond which has **received 13,335 pageviews since launch.**



**650**

Virtual Classes



**155**

Coaching Agreements



**15**

Leadership Program Cohorts



# THE FIRST VIRTUAL NIH DIRECTOR'S AWARDS

The NIH Director's Awards are prestigious awards which recognize the greatest achievements of all Institutes and Centers. Each nomination undergoes a rigorous review process which includes each IC Director, the NIH Awards Review Committee, and a selection by the NIH Director for special recognition. Approximately 2% of NIH staff are recognized for their notable accomplishments each year.

Despite restrictions preventing in-person gatherings, OHR developed an innovative and personalized virtual recognition program for over 660 award recipients. A [comprehensive website](#) lists recipients by category and IC and includes videos from each IC's senior leadership as well as a special message, *and song*, from NIH Director, Dr. Francis Collins.

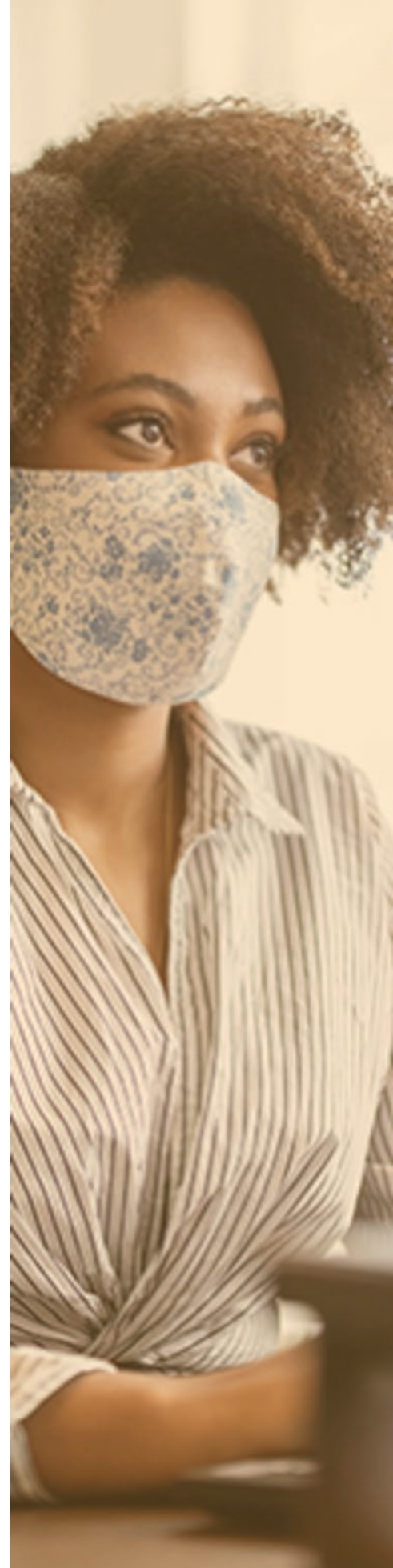
## SAFELY RETURNING NIH STAFF TO THE PHYSICAL WORKSPACE

In the face of an unprecedented pandemic, a major responsibility was the development of a framework that would help the NIH workforce navigate a slow and steady return on site to support the NIH mission and continue time sensitive research such as that being done on the SARS-COV-2 virus, patient care responsibilities, and other critical campus functions. The NIH Return to the Physical Workspace Framework was designed when the world was still trying to understand a novel virus and the COVID-19 illness. No firm models for this process existed, although preliminary plans and emerging information about numerous medical facilities, universities, and other businesses and government organizations were reviewed in the development of the NIH framework.

To facilitate a gradual return on site, the Framework identified key Groups aligned with carefully considered guidelines for return. Each Group required vigilant data collection, review, and analysis. In order to have the necessary data, OHR partnered with NIH's Center for Information Technology (CIT) to accurately record each employee's status in the NIH Employee Directory (NED).

To accommodate staff in the voluntary return group, OHR staff worked internally to rapidly develop a web-based application for automated processing for a more efficient review and approval process.

As the situation continues to evolve, and NIH's plan to return employees to the physical workspace develops, OHR remains agile and at the ready to best support the workforce and the life-saving mission of the NIH.



# PARTNERS ARE OUR PURPOSE





# OPTIMIZE NIH TITLE 42 PROCESSING

Title 42 Processing was chosen by NIH leadership to be part of Phase II of the initiative in January 2018. The overall goal of the initiative has been to streamline the Title 42(f) hiring process and improve time to hire by reducing bottlenecks and unnecessary layers between the Institutes and Centers (ICs), the Office of Human Resources (OHR), the Office of Intramural Research (OIR), and the Office of Extramural Research (OER) in addition to sharing best practices. To accomplish the work of this initiative, they stood up three working groups:



EVALUATE CURRENT STATE



STANDARDIZE PROCESS



ENTERPRISE-WIDE SYSTEM

In 2020, the [Evaluate Current State Workgroup](#) completed their current state assessment and documented their findings in a detailed report. The [Standardize Processes Workgroup](#) developed detailed process maps that were used to identify opportunities to remove or streamline steps in the recruitment process. **The recommendations they identified could significantly reduce the time to hire by approximately 37%.** These workgroups presented their findings and recommendations to the initiative's Advisory Committee which were then approved in November.

In 2021, the team will present the recommendations to key stakeholders in OIR, OER, and the NIH community. In addition, they will work to develop new tools and guidance that will support the streamlined process to be implemented throughout the year. This initiative has demonstrated the importance of trans-NIH partnerships and the power of combining HR subject matter experts with those in our Institutes and Centers executing these processes.

## SBRBPAS LAUNCH

The Silvio O. Conte Senior Biomedical Research and Biomedical Product Assessment Service (SBRBPAS) is a mechanism designed to recruit and retain outstanding and qualified scientific and technical experts in the fields of biomedical research, clinical research evaluation, and biomedical product assessment. Following HHS guidance issued in late 2020, OHR convened a workgroup with key stakeholders to develop guidance, outline the slot allocation process, develop position statements, recruitment and peer/pay review processes.

*OHR deployed SBRBPAS on March 31, 2021.*

# PROVIDING SPECIAL POLICY SUPPORT IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

COVID-19 brought about many changes to the way we do work, which prompted the need for new policy and guidance for both leadership and staff. OHR has played an essential role in reviewing and interpreting new policy as well as developing NIH-specific policy necessary to support the workforce during these unprecedented times. OHR's Workforce Relations Division (WRD) and the Compensation and Policy Division (CPD) partnered across NIH to provide guidance and even create new policies which were critical in the early stages of the pandemic.



Weather & Safety Leave  
Administrative Leave



Payroll Tax Withholding  
Deferment



Restoration of Annual  
Leave for COVID Purposes



Hazard Duty Pay and  
Environmental Differential Pay



Modified HHS Telework  
Policy: Dependent Care



Families First Coronavirus  
Relief Act: Emergency Paid  
Sick Leave Act



National Defense  
Authorization Act (NDAA)



Special Hiring Authorities

## EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT AND ONBOARDING

Recruitment of critical positions did not slow down in the midst of COVID-19. In 2020, the Division of Senior Scientific and Executive Management's (DSSEM) Recruitment and Onboarding Teams successfully completed 22 executive recruitments and onboarded 16 executives in 2020, with most completed totally virtually.

The 22 recruitments, included a record number of five IC Directors during a one-year period, resulting in the Onboarding Team scheduling a full-day of 2<sup>nd</sup> level interviews for over 23 candidates in addition to providing synthesizing duties.

**22**

Executive  
Recruitments  
including

**5**

Institute/Center  
Directors



# PROGRESS DRIVES THE NIH MISSION





# OHR TAKES ON **WORKPLACE CLIMATE & HARASSMENT SURVEY**

As part of the NIH Anti-Harassment Program, a Workplace Climate and

Harassment Survey is administered to NIH staff including NIH employees, contractors, fellows, and trainees. In 2020, OHR assumed responsibility for this vital tool for assessing workplace climate and in identifying elements of NIH's organizational climate associated with harassment. First administered in 2019, OHR will administer the next survey planned for 2022 in close partnership between OHR's Strategic Workforce Analytics team and the NIH Civil Program.



# **PERFORMANCE AWARDS REPORTING SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION**

HRSAID, in partnership with WRD and CSD, moved the annual data call module from SMARTHR to the Performance Awards Reporting System (PARS). PARS provides IC customers a secure and efficient way to submit PMAP ratings and awards to OHR. It enforces business rules, eliminates inconsistencies, and establishes a single version of PMAP activity across the organization. PARS officially launched in January 2021 and ICs began submitting their PMAP data electronically through PARS for the 2021 PMAP season.

ICs were provided with some new functions, which included:

- + Confirming IC awards percentages prior to PMAP data submission
- + Adding the flexibility of incremental Excel spreadsheet uploads
- + Redesigning the Summary Awards Dashboard

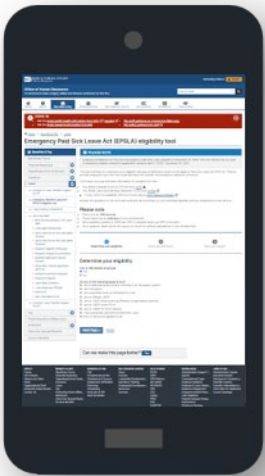
**PARS First Impression: Testing Feedback**

- Clean page; not too busy.
- Best part about PARS is interface and graphics.
- Easy navigation and input.
- The look of it is easy to follow.

# DEVELOPMENT OF COVID-SPECIFIC WEB TOOLS

In support of several new, and often complex, pay policies OHR's Systems, Analytics, and Information Division (SAID) accelerated development of new web tools designed to help staff determine eligibility and even calculate complex pay changes.

In partnership with other OHR Divisions, the SAID team developed web-based guidance for NIH staff on OHR's website for use of Hazardous Duty Pay, Environmental Pay, and Evacuation Pay. **This page received 12,184 page visits since its launch in June 2020.**



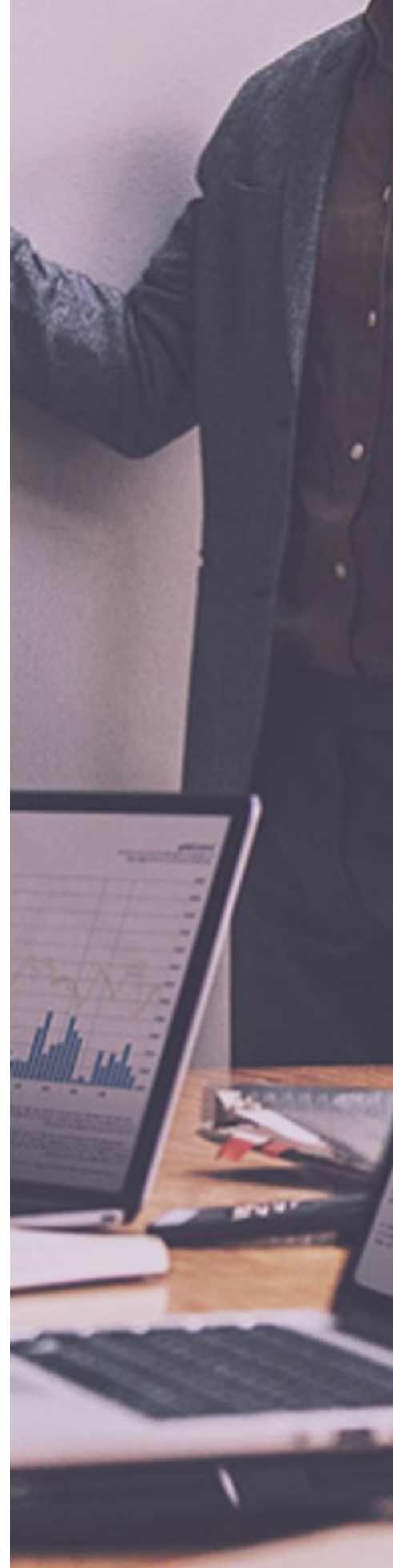
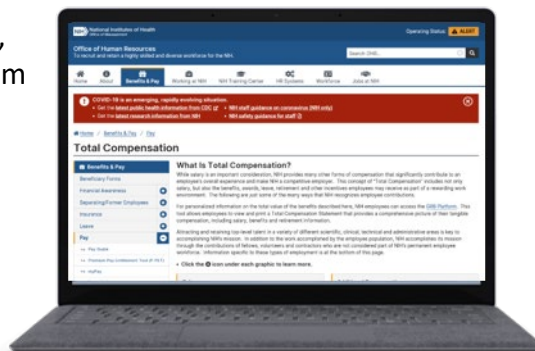
In addition to guidance on new pay policies, OHR's SAID team developed a dynamic online tool in response to the announcement of the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPLSA), which provided employees up to 80 hours of paid sick leave for specific circumstances related to COVID-19. The [EPLSA Eligibility Tool](#) was designed to allow NIH Employees to quickly determine eligibility and pay entitlements under this new act. **This new tool received 7,417 page visits since its launch in June 2020.**

## TOTAL COMPENSATION

### WEBPAGE LAUNCH

In the Spring of 2020, OHR launched the [Total Compensation](#) website designed to

provide details on the full array of available compensation as an NIH employee. The web tool compiles details about not just salary, but also the benefits, awards, leave, retirement and other incentives employees may receive as an NIH employee. **Since launch, the page has had over 3,780 hits** and is linked directly from USA Jobs to allow job seekers to easily access this information. Employees can also access a more comprehensive picture of their tangible compensation, including salary, benefits and retirement information from the page.



# OHR's STRATEGIC PLAN

YEAR TWO

The OHR Strategic Plan is a multi-year process designed to serve as our organization's cornerstone and support OHR's 3 core values: People, Partners, and Progress. The plan serves to remind all OHR staff of our organization's long-term priorities while allowing us to remain agile to external requests and the changing needs of our customers.

In 2020, the three Strategic Plan working groups each successfully completed their goal, despite the pivot to maximum telework and shifting priorities that arose with the COVID-19 pandemic. 29 OHR staff members actively participated in these efforts.

Specifically, the People group developed a process, guidelines, and implementation plan for ICON – an informal shadowing and project-based collaboration program; the Partners group developed recommendations for improving the OHR customer experience and designating currently siloed efforts as a cohesive program; and the Progress group identified opportunities to enhance OHR staff application and understanding of analytic tools to ensure consistent data reporting and improve awareness and usage of such tools.

The OHR Strategic Plan is developed with input from all levels of staff and continues to become a stronger foundational component of OHR every year. It is OHR leadership's commitment that we will *be the people that build the partners to drive progress for NIH*.



## PEOPLE

Cultivate OneOHR Culture



## PARTNERS

Be the Customer's First Choice



## PROGRESS

Plan for the Future of Work

## THE FUTURE OF WORK

Change is inevitable, and 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic have dramatically altered the way many organizations approach work. The NIH workforce has relied on many workplace flexibilities to meet the needs of staff and their families, while continuing the critical lifesaving work at the core of the NIH's mission.

Over the last year, OHR has formed a committee dedicated to examining updated guidance and policies as well as lessons learned as a result of the pandemic and our maximum telework experience. OHR recognizes that flexibility will continue to be key in not just recruitment, but also the retention, of our diverse workforce. OHR will continue to review and update policies to support a hybrid workforce of the future.



