

§ 721. Access to certain information

(a) No provision of the Social Security Act, including section 453(l) of that Act (42 U.S.C. 653(l)), shall be construed to limit, amend, or supersede the authority of the Comptroller General to obtain any information or to inspect any record under section 716 of this title.

(b) The specific reference to a statute in subsection (a) shall not be construed to affect access by the Government Accountability Office to information under statutes that are not so referenced.

(Added Pub. L. 115-3, §2(a), Jan. 31, 2017, 131 Stat. 7.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Social Security Act, referred to in subsec. (a), is act Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, 49 Stat. 620, which is classified generally to chapter 7 (§301 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 1305 of Title 42 and Tables.

SUBCHAPTER III—PERSONNEL

§ 731. General

(a) The Comptroller General may appoint, pay, assign, and remove officers (except the Deputy Comptroller General) and employees the Comptroller General decides are necessary to carry out the duties and powers of the Government Accountability Office.

(b) The Comptroller General may establish for appropriate officers and employees a merit pay system consistent with section 5401 of title 5, as in effect on October 31, 1993.

(c) The annual rate of basic pay of the General Counsel of the Government Accountability Office is equal to the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule.

[(d) Repealed. Pub. L. 110-323, §9(a)(1), Sept. 22, 2008, 122 Stat. 3548.]

(e) The Comptroller General may procure the services of experts and consultants under section 3109 of title 5 at rates not in excess of the daily rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule, except that the services of not more than 20 experts and consultants may be procured for terms of not more than 3 years, but which shall be renewable.

(f) The Comptroller General shall prescribe regulations under which officers and employees of the Office may, in appropriate circumstances, be reimbursed for any relocation expenses under subchapter II of chapter 57 of title 5 for which they would not otherwise be eligible, but only if the Comptroller General determines that the transfer giving rise to such relocation is of sufficient benefit or value to the Office to justify such reimbursement.

(g) The Comptroller General shall prescribe regulations under which key officers and employees of the Office who have less than 3 years of service may accrue leave in accordance with section 6303(a)(2) of title 5, in those circumstances in which the Comptroller General has determined such increased annual leave is appropriate for the recruitment or retention of such officers and employees. Such regulations

shall define key officers and employees and set forth the factors in determining which officers and employees should be allowed to accrue leave in accordance with this subsection.

(h) The Comptroller General may by regulation establish an executive exchange program under which officers and employees of the Office may be assigned to private sector organizations, and employees of private sector organizations may be assigned to the Office, to further the institutional interests of the Office or Congress, including for the purpose of providing training to officers and employees of the Office. Regulations to carry out any such program—

(1) shall include provisions (consistent with sections 3702 through 3704 of title 5) as to matters concerning—

(A) the duration and termination of assignments;

(B) reimbursements; and

(C) status, entitlements, benefits, and obligations of program participants;

(2) shall limit—

(A) the number of officers and employees who are assigned to private sector organizations at any one time to not more than 15; and

(B) the number of employees from private sector organizations who are assigned to the Office at any one time to not more than 30;

(3) shall require that an employee of a private sector organization assigned to the Office may not have access to any trade secrets or to any other nonpublic information which is of commercial value to the private sector organization from which such employee is assigned;

(4) shall require that, before approving the assignment of an officer or employee to a private sector organization, the Comptroller General shall determine that the assignment is an effective use of the Office's funds, taking into account the best interests of the Office and the costs and benefits of alternative methods of achieving the same results and objectives; and

(5) shall not allow any assignment under this subsection to commence after the end of the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this subsection.

(i) An employee of a private sector organization assigned to the Office under the executive exchange program shall be considered to be an employee of the Office for purposes of—

(1) chapter 73 of title 5;

(2) sections 201, 203, 205, 207, 208, 209, 603, 606, 607, 643, 654, 1905, and 1913 of title 18;

(3) sections 1343, 1344, and 1349(b) of this title;

(4) chapter 171 of title 28 (commonly referred to as the "Federal Tort Claims Act") and any other Federal tort liability statute;

(5) the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.);

(6) section 1043 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

(7) chapter 21 of title 41.

(j) Funds appropriated to the Government Accountability Office for salaries and expenses are available for meals and other related reasonable