

RYAN A. BIZZARRO, CHAIRMAN

116 MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING
P.O. BOX 202003
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2003
(717) 772-2297



HOUSE MAJORITY POLICY COMMITTEE

PAHOUSE.COM/POLICY
POLICY@PAHOUSE.NET
X f @ @PADEMPOLICY

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH *of* PENNSYLVANIA

House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing

Supporting Federal Workers

Wednesday, April 2, 2025 | 10:00 a.m.

Representative Malcolm Kenyatta

OPENING REMARKS

10:00 a.m. Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta, D-Philadelphia

PANEL ONE

10:05 a.m. Miranda Martin, Director of Talent Management
Pennsylvania Office of Administration

Amanda Crawford, Director of Enterprise Recruitment
Pennsylvania Office of Administration

Q & A with Legislators

PANEL TWO

10:35 a.m. Philip Glover, National Vice President, District 3
American Federation of Government Employees

Q & A with Legislators



Testimony

House Democratic Policy Committee

Public Hearing on Supporting Federal Workers

April 2, 2025

Office of Administration

Neil R. Weaver, Secretary

Chairman Bizzarro and members of the House Democratic Policy Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify and answer questions regarding the Commonwealth's efforts to hire talented federal employees for existing, vacant Commonwealth positions.

My name is Miranda Martin, and I serve as the Director of the Talent Management Office within the Office of Administration. Our Talent Management Office consists of four bureaus that are responsible for recruiting, hiring, classification, compensation, and talent development of the Commonwealth's workforce: the Bureau of Enterprise Recruitment, Bureau of Talent Acquisition, Bureau of Organization Management, and Bureau of Talent Planning and Development. I have been in this role for two years, and I have been with the Commonwealth for nearly 23 years, with most of that time primarily focused on hiring and recruitment.

Joining me today is Amanda Crawford, who serves as the Director of the Bureau of Enterprise Recruitment. Amanda has been in this role for one year, and with the Commonwealth for 24 years. This bureau is responsible for a range of programs and initiatives designed to attract talent from across the Commonwealth and is comprised of three divisions. The Enterprise Recruitment Division develops and implements enterprise wide recruitment strategies utilizing a team of recruiters assigned to different regions throughout the state; the Temporary Services Division administers a staffing organization (commonly referred to as the Temporary Clerical Pool) serving the Harrisburg area; and the Work-Based Learning Division creates and administers work-based learning programs that consist of enterprise internships, fellowships, apprenticeships, and other entry programs. The overarching mission of this bureau is to connect talented job seekers with the Commonwealth's workforce needs.

As you are aware, Executive Order 2025-01 – *Filling Critical Public Service Vacancies by Recruiting Federal Government Talent and Expertise* was signed by Governor Shapiro on March 5, 2025, with the purpose of ensuring that the Office of Administration (OA) considers relevant federal government work experience as equivalent to Commonwealth work experience. Through this Executive Order, OA is tasked with implementing three broad items: 1) creating a webpage for job seekers with federal government work experience, 2) developing and implementing a digital awareness campaign to promote Commonwealth employment opportunities, and 3) offering virtual and in-person recruitment events for individuals with federal government work experience.

As directed by the Executive Order, we have launched a "Careers for Federal Employees" page on our employment website (pa.gov/fedworkers). This dedicated resource outlines current recruitment needs and provides federal equivalencies for Commonwealth positions, helping federal job seekers understand how their experience aligns with our vacant positions. The page also includes guidance on how to apply, resources for veterans, and highlights the many benefits of a career with the Commonwealth. Additionally, it offers contact information for our recruitment team for those seeking further assistance and provides links to unemployment benefits available to former federal civilian employees. This webpage reflects our commitment to facilitating a seamless transition for federal employees into rewarding careers within the Commonwealth.

A comprehensive digital awareness campaign was developed and implemented by the OA's

communications team to support and expand the reach of this effort. The awareness campaign is designed to raise visibility of Commonwealth job opportunities among individuals with federal government experience. It leverages targeted messaging across social media platforms, online advertising, and strategic partnerships to connect directly with this highly skilled talent pool. At the heart of the campaign is a commitment to accessibility, making it easier for former federal employees to understand how their experience aligns with our hiring needs and how to take the next step toward a career in state service. By using plain language, clear visuals, and user-friendly tools, we are ensuring this campaign not only informs, but truly empowers job seekers to take action. This effort reflects the Commonwealth's broader mission: to build a workforce rooted in experience, ready to serve, and reflective of the communities we support every day.

To provide additional, ongoing support to federal employees exploring career opportunities, the Bureau of Enterprise Recruitment is also scheduled to attend 87 upcoming events through the end of the year, with many more anticipated in the fall. The team is coordinating one virtual and two in-person Commonwealth job fairs, which will be promoted to talented federal workers. Members of our recruitment team recently participated in two virtual informational sessions for federal workers, hosted by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Rapid Response Team, reaching a total of 201 participants. They have also connected separately with 62 federal employees through various other means, providing clarification on the Executive Order, additional support on the application process, and employment counseling on job titles that align with their qualifications.

Additionally, two questions have been added to our employment application to capture federal employment experience. These questions allow job seekers the opportunity to specify their federal experience, enabling our evaluation team to efficiently crossmatch their qualifications with the minimum experience and training requirements of a specific Commonwealth job title. This enhancement ensures a more accurate assessment of eligibility and helps streamline the hiring process for applicants with federal experience.

Finally, our Bureau of Organization Management has been researching federal job titles and has created a crosswalk of Commonwealth job titles that have been determined to be equivalent based on the definition of the work. This work will be ongoing. This crosswalk assists recruiters in providing guidance to job seekers with federal experience and ensures consistency in the evaluation process when current or former federal employees apply to vacant positions with the Commonwealth.

In closing, thousands of Pennsylvanians have the potential to be impacted by federal layoffs, and their skills and experience in public service present a valuable opportunity to address the Commonwealth's staffing needs. The Commonwealth currently has a 6.8% vacancy rate in salaried positions and reducing critical vacancies is essential to maintaining the high-quality services Pennsylvanians rely on while also supporting our dedicated employees who are carrying an increased workload. This Executive Order will likely help us fill critical roles in nursing, accounting, engineering, IT, and other hard-to-fill positions by expanding our talent pool and leveraging an opportunity to connect experienced professionals with meaningful career opportunities while addressing the Commonwealth's most urgent hiring needs.

**TESTIMONY OF
PHILIP W. GLOVER
NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT
EMPLOYEES, DISTRICT 3, PENNSYLVANIA AND
DELAWARE
TO THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE HOUSE POLICY
COMMITTEE**

APRIL 2, 2025

Mr. Chairman Bizzaro and Policy Committee members:

My name is Philip W. Glover, and I am the National Vice President for the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (AFGE).

I have been the National Vice President since May 2017. I also serve on the PA AFL-CIO Executive Committee. Prior to this I have served as a National Organizer for AFGE in Pennsylvania and Delaware, an officer for the Council of Prison Locals, AFGE, from 1994 to 2014, a local officer of AFGE Local 3951 at the Federal Correctional Institution, Loretto, PA from 1991 to 1994.

I served in the United States Army at Ft. Bragg (Liberty), North Carolina from 1982-1985 and 1986-1990. I was a Military Policeman in the 118th MP Co (ABN) and then a Intelligence Analyst in the 505 Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division. I am also a disabled veteran who utilizes the VA for service-connected disabilities.

I reside in the Johnstown, PA with my wife and father-in-law.

BACKGROUND ON FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

On January 20, 2025 at 12:01pm, Donald Trump was sworn in as President of the United States. Almost immediately attacks on the federal workforce began. He signed an order to create the Department of Government Efficiency, DOGE, except the people put in charge of it, Elon Musk and people from some of his companies (coders mostly) do not understand how the federal government functions.

On January 20, 2025, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) directed all agencies to “identify all employees on probationary periods...[and] promptly determine whether those employees should be retained at the agency.”

On January 20, 2025 the President issued another Executive Order “The Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), assisted by the Attorney General and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), shall coordinate the termination of all discriminatory programs, including illegal DEI and “diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility” (DEIA) mandates, policies, programs, preferences, and activities in the Federal Government, under whatever name they appear. To carry out this directive, the Director of OPM, with the assistance of the Attorney General as requested, shall review and revise, as appropriate, all existing Federal employment practices, union contracts, and training policies or programs to comply with this order. Federal employment practices, including Federal employee performance

reviews, shall reward individual initiative, skills, performance, and hard work and shall not under any circumstances consider DEI or DEIA factors, goals, policies, mandates, or requirements.”

“(b) Each agency, department, or commission head, in consultation with the Attorney General, the Director of OMB, and the Director of OPM, as appropriate, shall take the following actions within sixty days of this order: (i) terminate, to the maximum extent allowed by law, all DEI, DEIA, and “environmental justice” offices and positions (including but not limited to “Chief Diversity Officer” positions); all “equity action plans,” “equity” actions, initiatives, or programs, “equity-related” grants or contracts; and all DEI or DEIA performance requirements for employees, contractors, or grantees.”

This EO, caused firings across the government for any employee working in DEI or what the Trump administration considers work under that acronym.

On January 22, 2025 President Trump then issued an order on return to office. “Heads of all departments and agencies in the executive branch of Government shall, as soon as practicable, take all necessary steps to terminate remote work arrangements and require employees to return to work in-person at their respective duty stations on a full-time basis, provided that the department and agency heads shall make exemptions they deem necessary.” This was to put stress on federal workers who were either on approved tele-work or hired fully remote. This has caused many employees to seek other work or the union to fight these actions in grievance/arbitration costing the government and union time and money.

Deferred Resignation Email to Federal Employees

January 28, 2025

During the first week of his administration, President Trump issued a number of directives concerning the federal workforce. Among those directives, the President required that employees return to in-person work, restored accountability for employees who have policy-making authority, restored accountability for senior career executives, and reformed the federal hiring process to focus on merit. As a result of the above orders, the reform of the federal workforce will be significant.

“If you choose to remain in your current position, we thank you for your renewed focus on serving the American people to the best of your abilities and look forward to working together as part of an improved federal workforce. At this time, we cannot give you full assurance regarding the certainty of your position or agency but should your position be eliminated you will be treated with dignity and will be afforded the protections in place for such positions.

If you choose not to continue in your current role in the federal workforce, we thank you for your service to your country and you will be provided with a dignified, fair departure from the federal

government utilizing a deferred resignation program. This program began effective January 28 and is now closed. If you resign under this program, you will retain all pay and benefits regardless of your daily workload and will be exempted from all applicable in-person work requirements until September 30, 2025 (or earlier if you choose to accelerate your resignation for any reason). The details of this separation plan can be found below.”

The results of this action, on January 28th was pure confusion to the federal workforce. OPM has no legal status to engage individual employees with hiring or firing. By multiple statutes, the specified Executive Agencies created by Congress have this authority. This also caused some employees to “resign” only to be told by their agency heads that they were exempt from the program after the fact. The Social Security Administration, Bureau of Prisons, Veterans Affairs and other essential agencies notified employees after the fact they were ineligible.

On February 13, it was found that a conference call took place with OPM and multiple agency representatives. It resulted in the illegal firing of thousands of probationary federal workers on February 14th. (Probationary workers are in a status of a one year to two-year period where their work is evaluated, and they can be terminated for poor performance with less rights than full time employees of the federal government.)

Our union and others proceeded to file in federal court in two jurisdictions, California and Maryland with the following results:

February/March 2025, Here is the breakdown of how many employees were fired and then reinstated at 18 agencies:

- **Environmental Protection Agency:** 419 probationary workers were terminated and all received notices informing them that the removals were rescinded. The EPA's director of the Office of Human Capital Operations said "most" returned on paid administrative leave.
- **Department of Energy:** 555 employees were fired, and termination notices were canceled for 319 of the 555 affected employees by 1 p.m. on March 17. They were placed on retroactive administrative leave. The process was completed for the rest of the fired employees by 1:35 p.m. on March 17.
- **Department of Commerce:** 791 were terminated out of 9,000 total probationary and trial-period employees. Of those, 27 employees had been reinstated for operational reasons and 764 received notification of their reinstatement.
- **Department of Health and Human Services:** 3,248 probationary workers were fired, and all were sent notifications of reinstatement by email or letter.
- **Department of Homeland Security:** 313 probationary employees were terminated, and the agency is taking steps to place all of them on administrative leave, it said in a declaration. One worker declined reinstatement, one is employed in another component

of the department and a third was returning to service to participate in the deferred resignation program, Homeland Security's chief human capital officer wrote.

- **Department of Transportation:** 775 were probationary employees removed from their roles. All have been told that their terminations are rescinded, according to its declaration.
- **Department of Education:** 65 probationary workers were terminated, and all have been reinstated and placed on paid administrative leave, the department's chief human capital officer said.
- **Department of Housing and Urban Development:** 312 probationary employees were fired. Thirteen have since been fully reinstated and reinstatement actions have been initiated for the remaining 299 workers, according to HUD's declaration.
- **Interior Department:** 1,712 employees were terminated, and the department's deputy assistant secretary for human capital, learning and safety said 90% of 1,710 workers who were fired have since been rehired. The department said it is not rehiring two workers who qualify for exclusions under the judge's temporary restraining order.
- **Department of Labor:** 170 probationary employees were removed, and all termination notices were rescinded, the Labor Department said.
- **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau:** 117 workers were terminated, and all have been reinstated and placed on administrative leave, according to the bureau's acting chief human capital officer.
- **Small Business Administration:** 304 employees were fired. Six of those workers were rehired on Feb. 18, according to the agency's declaration. Five probationary workers remain employed with the Small Business Administration, and one voluntarily resigned. Notices were sent to 298 workers informing them that they were reinstated.
- **Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation:** 156 probationary workers were fired, and all have been reinstated, the FDIC's deputy to the acting chairman and chief operating officer said in a declaration.
- **U.S. Agency for International Development:** 270 probationary employees were fired. USAID sent emails to all affected workers telling them that they are reinstated and will be on administrative leave, according to the agency's senior deputy assistant administrator for the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management.
- **General Services Administration:** 366 probationary employees were fired, but they have since been rehired, the agency said in a declaration. But two declined to take their jobs back.

- **Treasury Department:** 7,613 workers were terminated. The department's deputy assistant secretary for human resources provided a breakdown of reinstatements by each of its components:
 - The **Bureau of Engraving and Printing** sent email notices of rehiring to 48 of its impacted workers.
 - At the **Bureau of the Fiscal Service**, all 169 affected workers received email notices of reinstatement.
 - The **U.S. Mint** informed its eight probationary employees of reinstatement.
 - The **IRS** sent email notices to 6,387 of its 7,315 affected workers by Monday afternoon.
 - At the **Office of the Comptroller of the Currency**, it had not yet processed the firings of 73 probationary workers, so they were placed on administrative leave status on Sunday, according to the department's declaration.
- **Department of Agriculture:** 5,714 probationary employees were terminated and all were reinstated by March 12 because of proceedings before the Merit Systems Protection Board, the acting principal deputy assistant secretary for administration said.
- **Department of Veterans Affairs:** 1,683 probationary workers were fired and all were reinstated, according to its declaration.

March 4th, Department of Veterans Affairs outlined plans to fire 80,000 additional workers after having already removed 6,000. the plan is to implement a reduction in force (RIF) in August to reduce staff to 399,957 employees, the staffing level in fiscal 2019 prior to the passage of the PACT Act, which expanded veterans' benefits. The PACT Act since 2022 has added 1 million veterans to the VA both in disability and healthcare.

The VA has been severely understaffed for years, causing veterans to have to wait too long for the care they need. New hiring waves took place after Congress passed the PACT Act that promises benefits to veterans who either died or became ill as a result of exposure to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances.

The federal government is the largest employer of veterans, who make up about 30% of the federal workforce compared to only 6% in the civilian workforce. More than 640,000 veterans worked for the federal government before Trump's layoffs. More than half of them are disabled.

This will impact all of AFGE's represented VA and VBA offices across PA. Pittsburgh, Altoona, Lebanon, Wilkes-Barre, Coatesville, Philadelphia are all areas affected.

The VA fired probationary employees handling the “VA Crisis Hotline” prosthetics labs, transportation scheduling and other critical needs. These affect patient care, whether they are doctors or nurses.

March 6th, Trump administration order strips all collective bargaining rights from 47,000 Transportation Security Officers over 1000 in Pennsylvania.

short due to increased amounts of disability and retirement applications.

The Trump administration has given federal agencies until March 13 to deliver their plans to dramatically slash their workforces through layoffs as the Trump administration moves to the second phase of its initiative to cut federal employees.

The plans will focus on the “maximum elimination” of functions not required by law, Office of Management and Budget director Russell Vought and Office of Personnel Management acting Director Charles Ezell said in new guidance on Wednesday and include a resulting “significant reduction” in employees. As a starting point for the cuts, Vought and Ezell said, agencies should focus on employees whose jobs are not required in statute and who face furloughs in government shutdowns—typically around one-third of the federal workforce, or 700,000 employees.

President Trump said during a cabinet meeting on Wednesday that the Environmental Protection Agency is planning to slash 65% of its workforce, or nearly 11,000 employees many of these in Philadelphia Region 3. Social Security has stated a goal to remove 7,000 employees while eliminating various programs to assist disabled and seniors from filing for benefits.

On March 5, 2025, Governor Josh Shapiro signed Executive Order 2025-01 help fill critical vacancies in the Commonwealth workforce with experienced former federal employees who have specialized expertise in important fields like civil engineering, nursing, corrections, accounting, and more. The Governor’s Executive Order directs the Office of Administration to accept federal government experience as equivalent to Commonwealth work experience for civil service roles, ensuring former federal employees with valuable experience can more easily apply for essential vacant positions with the Commonwealth. The Executive Order focuses on adding workforce in already-funded job positions to serve Pennsylvanians more efficiently and effectively.

As part of this Executive Order, the Shapiro Administration will also begin an aggressive effort to recruit federal employees into Pennsylvania’s workforce, launching a new website (opens in a new tab) with key information about exciting state government opportunities that align with their experience and hosting virtual and in-person job fairs for federal employees. That effort builds on the Shapiro Administration’s work to streamline Commonwealth hiring processes, open the doors of opportunity for those who want to serve, and recruit a team that represents all of Pennsylvania. As a result of that work so far, the Shapiro Administration has reduced hiring times by 32 percent and filled nearly 600 previously vacant permitting, licensing, and certification (PLC) jobs.

The Governor signed the Executive Order at the second annual Commonwealth Job Fair in Harrisburg, where over 40 state agencies provided job seekers with information about public service careers and hundreds of open positions to nearly 900 registered attendees. To this date at least 700 federal employees have applied for state positions.

Since February 28, 2025 AFGE has had the assistance of the PA Labor and Industries Rapid Response team which is an early intervention service that assists workers and employers affected by layoffs, plant closures, or natural disasters. The program is mandated by the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and administered in Pennsylvania by the PA Department of Labor & Industry. Pennsylvania's Rapid Response Coordination Services has specialists in twelve regions throughout the state that promote services for dislocated workers, including access to services in the Commonwealth's PA CareerLink® and Unemployment Compensation systems, and other partner agencies to help transition workers into reemployment. These services are provided at no cost. The primary objective of the Rapid Response program is to provide workers with the resources and services they need to allow them to find new jobs, or get the training and education needed for new careers so that they can get back to work.

Information made available through the Rapid Response Program includes:

- Unemployment Insurance
- Health insurance options
- Job search assistance
- Education services
- Training programs
- Social services programs
- Community and economic development activities
- Emergency assistance

So far, over 500 federal workers have filed for unemployment compensation. 200 attended virtual meetings to go over assistance with UC and Career link resources.

In closing, we ask that everyone stand in solidarity with our Federal Workforce. We ask that state statutes continue to be updated for easy access to benefits available to federal employees. They are the people who ensure that the American public have access to all the services of their government. These public servants deserve the same treatment that we expect from them when they perform their vital roles. So, please come together in any way that lifts them up in their time of need.