

- (B) include questions related to—
- (i) the employee's reasons for leaving;
 - (ii) job satisfaction;
 - (iii) work environment;
 - (iv) professional growth opportunities;
 - (v) leadership effectiveness;
 - (vi) suggestions for enhancing the Department's performance; and
 - (vii) if applicable, the name and industry of the employee's future employer.

(3) Compilation of results

The Secretary shall compile and analyze the anonymized exit survey data collected pursuant to this paragraph to identify trends, common themes, and areas needing improvement within the Department.

(d) Pilot surveys

Not later than 180 days after December 22, 2023, the Secretary shall conduct a Department-wide survey for Locally Employed Staff regarding retention, training, promotion, and other matters, including harassment, discrimination, and retaliation, that includes workforce perspectives on the accessibility and effectiveness of complaint measures.

(e) Report

Not later than 60 days after the conclusion of each survey conducted pursuant to this section, the Secretary shall make the key findings available to the Department workforce and shall submit them to the appropriate congressional committees.

(f) Retaliation prevention efforts

(1) Employee evaluation

(A) In general

If there is a pending investigation of discrimination or harassment against a superior who is responsible for rating or reviewing the complainant employee, the complainant shall be reviewed by the superior's supervisor or other Department employee as appropriate.

(B) Effective date

This paragraph shall take effect 90 days after December 22, 2023.

(2) Retaliation prevention guidance

Any Department employee against whom an allegation of discrimination or harassment has been made shall receive written guidance (a "retaliation hold") on the types of actions that can be considered retaliation against the complainant employee. The employee's immediate supervisor shall also receive the retaliation hold guidance.

(Pub. L. 118-31, div. F, title LXII, § 6211, Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 976.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

DEFINITIONS

For definitions of "Secretary", "Department", and "appropriate congressional committees" as used in this section, see section 6002 of Pub. L. 118-31, set out as a note under section 2651 of this title.

§ 2737. Department of State paid Student Internship Program

(a) In general

The Secretary shall establish the Department of State Student Internship Program (referred to in this section as the "Program") to offer internship opportunities at the Department to eligible students to raise awareness of the essential role of diplomacy in the conduct of United States foreign policy and the realization of United States foreign policy objectives.

(b) Eligibility

(1) In general

An applicant is eligible to participate in the Program if the applicant is enrolled at—

- (A) an institution of higher education (as such term is defined in section 1002(a) of title 20); or
- (B) an institution of higher education based outside the United States, as determined by the Secretary of State.

(2) Additional eligibility criteria

An applicant in the Program should be—

- (A) enrolled at least half-time in an institution described in paragraph (1) or have graduated from such an institution within the six months preceding application to the Program; and
- (B) eligible to receive and hold an appropriate security clearance.

(c) Selection

The Secretary shall establish selection criteria for students to be admitted into the Program that includes a demonstrated interest in a career in foreign affairs and gives preference as appropriate to individuals who have not previously completed internships within the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development.

(d) Outreach

The Secretary shall—

- (1) widely advertise the Program, including—
 - (A) on the internet;
 - (B) through the Department's Diplomats in Residence program; and
 - (C) through other outreach and recruiting initiatives targeting undergraduate and graduate students; and
- (2) conduct targeted outreach to encourage participation in the Program from—
 - (A) individuals belonging to an underrepresented group; and
 - (B) students enrolled at minority-serving institutions (which shall include any institution listed in section 1067q(a) of title 20).

(e) Compensation

(1) Housing assistance

(A) Abroad

The Secretary shall provide housing assistance to any student participating in the Program whose permanent address is within the United States if the location of the internship in which such student is participating is outside of the United States.

(B) Domestic

The Secretary may provide housing assistance to a student participating in the Program whose permanent address is within the United States if the location of the internship in which such student is participating is more than 50 miles from such student's permanent address.

(2) Travel assistance

The Secretary shall provide a student participating in the Program whose permanent address is within the United States with financial assistance that is sufficient to cover the travel costs of a single round trip by air, train, bus, or other appropriate transportation between the student's permanent address and the location of the internship in which such student is participating if such location is—

- (A) more than 50 miles from the student's permanent address; or
- (B) outside of the United States.

(f) Working with institutions of higher education

The Secretary, to the maximum extent practicable, shall structure internships to ensure that such internships satisfy criteria for academic credit at the institutions of higher education in which participants in such internships are enrolled.

(g) Transition period**(1) In general**

Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), beginning not later than 2 years after December 23, 2022—

(A) the Secretary shall convert unpaid internship programs of the Department, including the Foreign Service Internship Program, to internship programs that offer compensation; and

(B) upon selection as a candidate for entry into an internship program of the Department, a participant in such internship program may refuse compensation, including if doing so allows such participant to receive college or university curricular credit.

(2) Exception

The transition required under paragraph (1) shall not apply to unpaid internship programs of the Department that are part of the Virtual Student Federal Service internship program.

(3) Waiver**(A) In general**

The Secretary may waive the requirement under paragraph (1)(A) with respect to a particular unpaid internship program if the Secretary, not later than 30 days after making a determination that the conversion of such internship program to a compensated internship program would not be consistent with effective management goals, submits a report explaining such determination to—

- (i) the appropriate congressional committees;
- (ii) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and
- (iii) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(B) Report

The report required under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) describe the reasons why converting an unpaid internship program of the Department to an internship program that offers compensation would not be consistent with effective management goals; and

(ii)(I) provide justification for maintaining such unpaid status indefinitely; or

(II) identify any additional authorities or resources that would be necessary to convert such unpaid internship program to offer compensation in the future.

(h) Reports

Not later than 18 months after December 23, 2022, the Secretary shall submit a report to the committees referred to in subsection (g)(3)(A) that includes—

(1) data, to the extent the collection of such information is permissible by law, regarding the number of students who applied to the Program, were offered a position, and participated, respectively, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, sex, institution of higher education, home State, State where each student graduated from high school, and disability status;

(2) data regarding the number of security clearance investigations initiated for the students described in paragraph (1), including the timeline for such investigations, whether such investigations were completed, and when an interim security clearance was granted;

(3) information on Program expenditures;

(4) information regarding the Department's compliance with subsection (g); and

(5) the number of internship participants subsequently employed by the Department, if any, following their participation in the Program.

(i) Voluntary participation**(1) In general**

Nothing in this section may be construed to compel any student who is a participant in an internship program of the Department to participate in the collection of the data or divulge any personal information. Such students shall be informed that their participation in the data collection under this section is voluntary.

(2) Privacy protection

Any data collected under this section shall be subject to the relevant privacy protection statutes and regulations applicable to Federal employees.

(j) Special hiring authority

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, with respect to the number of interns to be hired each year, may—

(1) select, appoint, and employ individuals for up to 1 year through compensated internships in the excepted service; and

(2) remove any compensated intern employed pursuant to paragraph (1) without regard to the provisions of law governing appointments in the excepted service.

(k) Work hours flexibility

Students participating in the Program may work fewer than 40 hours per week and a min-

imum of 24 hours per week to accommodate their academic schedules, provided that the total duration of the internship remains consistent with program requirements.

(I) Mentorship program

The Secretary and Administrator are authorized to establish a mentoring and coaching program that pairs Foreign Service or Civil Service employees with interns who choose to participate throughout the duration of their internship.

(Pub. L. 117–263, div. I, title XCII, §9201, Dec. 23, 2022, 136 Stat. 3861; Pub. L. 118–159, div. G, title LXXI, §7105(a), Dec. 23, 2024, 138 Stat. 2524.)

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2024—Subsec. (b)(2)(A). Pub. L. 118–159, §7105(a)(1), inserted “or have graduated from such an institution within the six months preceding application to the Program” after “paragraph (1)”.

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 118–159, §7105(a)(2), inserted “and gives preference as appropriate to individuals who have not previously completed internships within the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development” after “career in foreign affairs”.

Subsecs. (k), (l). Pub. L. 118–159, §7105(a)(3), added subsecs. (k) and (l).

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

DEFINITIONS

For definitions of “Secretary”, “Department”, “appropriate congressional committees”, and “Administrator” as used in this section, see section 9002 of Pub. L. 117–263, set out as a note under section 2651 of this title.

§ 2738. Mid-Career Mentoring Program

(a) Authorization

The Secretary, in collaboration with the Director of the Foreign Service Institute, is authorized to establish a Mid-Career Mentoring Program (referred to in this section as the “Program”) to assist in the retention of, and to decrease mid-career attrition of, employees, including those who have demonstrated potential for advancement and may be at risk of leaving the Department.

(b) Selection

(1) Nominations

The head of each bureau shall semiannually nominate participants for the Program from a pool of applicants in the positions described in paragraph (2)(B), including from posts both domestically and abroad.

(2) Submission of slate of nominees to Secretary

The Director of the Foreign Service Institute, in consultation with the Director General of the Foreign Service, shall semiannually—

(A) vet the nominees most recently nominated pursuant to paragraph (1); and

(B) submit to the Secretary a slate of applicants to participate in the Program, who shall consist of at least—

(i) 10 Foreign Service Officers and specialists classified at the FS-03 or FS-04 level of the Foreign Service Salary Schedule;

(ii) 10 Civil Service employees classified at GS–12 or GS–13 of the General Schedule; and

(iii) 5 Foreign Service Officers from the United States Agency for International Development.

(3) Final selection

The Secretary shall select the applicants who will be invited to participate in the Program from the slate received pursuant to paragraph (2)(B) and extend such an invitation to each selected applicant.

(4) Merit principles

Section 3905 of this title shall apply to nominations, submissions to the Secretary, and selections for the Program under this section.

(c) Program sessions

(1) Frequency; duration

All of the participants who accept invitations extended pursuant to subsection (b)(3) shall meet 3 to 4 times per year for training sessions with high-level leaders of the Department and USAID, including private group meetings with the Secretary and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

(2) Themes

Each session referred to in paragraph (1) shall focus on specific themes developed jointly by the Foreign Service Institute and the Executive Secretariat focused on substantive policy issues and leadership practices.

(d) Mentoring program

The Secretary and the Administrator each is authorized to establish a mentoring and coaching program that pairs a senior leader of the Department or USAID with each of the program participants who complete the Program during the 1-year period immediately following their participation in the Program.

(e) Annual report

Not later than one year after December 22, 2023, and annually thereafter for three years, the Secretary shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that describes the activities of the Program during the most recent year and includes disaggregated demographic data on participants in the Program.

(Pub. L. 118–31, div. F, title LXII, §6205, Dec. 22, 2023, 137 Stat. 973.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The General Schedule, referred to in subsec. (b)(2)(B)(ii), is set out under section 5332 of Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

DEFINITIONS

For definitions of “Secretary”, “Department”, and “appropriate congressional committees” as used in this