Federal Agency Placements

Federal agency placements are not available until further notice. Learn more about past placements here.

Previously placed within the Department for Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C., federal agency fellows learned how U.S. executive branch agencies made decisions on policies and programs authorized by Congress. Depending upon the type of office, fellows learned how to write funding announcements, communicated research to agency staff and leadership, or worked on regulations or policy initiatives.

State Placements congressional Placements

"I had so much time in my fellowship to explore and develop myself. I wish I could go back and do it again."

– Jameela Conway-Turner, Federal Agency Fellow (2016-2018)



About the Former Federal Agency Placements

Federal agencies have had the most variability of any placement. In the past, fellows that were invited to come to Washington, D.C. to interview with SRCD met with prospective federal agencies to hear about their work. Then, after agencies and applicants had indicated their preferences, applicants were possibly invited

to interview with multiple interested placement agencies and received an offer to work with a specific agency. Most years, placements were available in multiple agencies within the U.S. Department for Health and Human Services (HHS). In prior years, placements have also been available in the Department of Justice and the Department of Education.

Former federal agency fellows, worked in a hybrid pattern, with a few days per week in the agency's D.C.-area office and some worked-from-home. Former federal fellows worked side-by-side with career civil servants with deep expertise. They also worked with other SRCD fellows or fellows from other programs.

The Work Previously Done at Each Agency

Placement opportunities varied based on the agency needs. Several agencies had consistently offered placements for decades, including: the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE), the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE). Placements had also been available in the Office of Head Start and the Office of Child Care.

We differentiated between federal agencies that primarily conduct research and evaluation (NICHD and OPRE) and those that primary focus on the implementation of a specific social program (the Office of Head Start and Office of Child Care.)

- Research and evaluation offices - NICHD and OPRE - focus on funding research and evaluation activities. Their work includes assessing evidence, overseeing grants and contracts with researchers, assessing future research grant notices, and hosting expert meetings.
- Program offices like the Office of Head Start and the Office of Childcare are more involved in federal program operations and policy development. Here, former fellows contributed to regulatory revisions, policy memos, and coordination with technical assistance contractors. They also worked on translating existing research into program operations and policy implementation.
- ASPE, situated between research/evaluation and program offices, supports the HHS Secretary in policy and planning. Former ASPE fellows, engaged in budget and legislation review, collaborated with program offices, and coordinated HHS programs addressing common issues. They also oversaw contractors, grantees, or developed new research funding opportunities.



"Getting to learn the inner workings of an executive branch research office [has been my favorite part of the Fellowship]. There was a lot I did not know that I thought I did. But beyond the work, I really love my cohort and have also learned a great deal from them."

– Tamarie Willis, Executive Branch Fellow at OPRE (2022-2024)

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"The exposure to careers in government has been truly invaluable, and the exposure to many scientific fields beyond my own expertise has been very beneficial."

– Diane Gumina, Executive Branch Fellow at NICHD (2022-2024)

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