

Ali Khawar

WORK EXPERIENCE

Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for National Operations

11/2019-Present

Chief of Staff, Office of the Assistant Secretary

10/2018-10/2019

Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Program Operations

01/2017-10/2018

Provide advice and direction to agency leadership on a variety of strategic, policy, legal, ethics, administrative, budgetary, planning, personnel, and programmatic matters, including interagency work on multiemployer pension reform and ongoing regulatory projects. Convey leadership positions to EBSA staff. Develop and lead innovative projects to improve the agency's enforcement, compliance assistance, and other programs without increasing budget or staff. Review external and internal correspondence, as well as regulatory, budgetary, and strategic planning documents on behalf of agency leadership.

Key accomplishments:

- Coordinated implementation of a surprise agency reorganization that impacted 13 out of 19 EBSA component offices. Led planning of further changes needed to minimize impacts on the agency's ability to fulfil its mission and make implementation successful.
- Managed development and implementation of changes to improve plain language use throughout the agency, including changes to performance standards for senior EBSA staff and arranging for an expert detailee to conduct a review of agency templates and provide training.
- Served as EBSA's representative on a multiagency taskforce to examine solutions to and develop the Administration's position on the multibillion dollar multiemployer plan funding crisis.

Office of the Secretary, U.S. DOL

Counselor to the Secretary

04/2015-01/2017

Senior advisor to the Secretary of Labor with responsibility for overseeing the agencies with jurisdiction over retirement policy, health policy, welfare employee benefits, federal workers' compensation, labor-management standards, and international labor issues. Communicated with agency heads and other employees to ensure that the Secretary's priorities were understood and effectively implemented in a timely manner. Represented the Secretary in discussions with DOL agencies, other Federal Agencies, the White House, Members of Congress, Congressional staff, and nongovernmental stakeholders.

Key accomplishments:

- Led intensive policy development process to accommodate competing concerns, and coordinated policy development with media strategy, Congressional strategy, and stakeholder outreach for DOL's Conflict of Interest final rule. This rule addressed a lack of accountability in investment advice provided to retirement savers that resulted in problematic compensation practices estimated to cost savers \$17 billion a year in aggregate.
- Successfully worked with DOL agencies and White House staff to improve cost controls in federal workers' compensation program related to compounded prescription medication, resulting in monthly savings of approximately \$19.5 million.
- Managed an initiative to develop and publish rules that explained how states and some cities or counties can create their own retirement savings programs for private-sector employees, while minimizing their risk of preemption by Federal law. Represented the Secretary in a White House-led interagency policy process leading up to the 2015 White House Conference on Aging that resulted in the President directing DOL to issue these rules.

EBSA, U.S. DOL

Chief of Staff, Office of the Assistant Secretary

11/2013-04/2015

Special Assistant, Office of the Assistant Secretary

10/2009-11/2013

Principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary for a wide range of strategic, policy, legal, ethics, administrative, budgetary, planning, personnel, and programmatic matters. Conveyed the Assistant Secretary's positions to EBSA's senior executives and other personnel, and ensured that priorities were appropriately staffed and successfully implemented. Represented DOL in a variety of interagency settings and coordinated work to respond to requests resulting from White House initiatives. Supervised the agency's work as the Secretary's representative on Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation matters and as the Secretary's representative on the Social Security and Medicare Trustees Working Group. Communicated existing and potential EBSA positions to external stakeholders, including industry groups, consumer groups, and Congressional staff. Managed EBSA's press strategy and coordinated with the DOL Office of Public Affairs on responses. Oversaw handling of sensitive personnel matters and agency's overall crisis management. Served as EBSA's representative on numerous DOL and interagency working groups. Managed development, clearance and publication of EBSA regulations, subregulatory guidance, and educational materials, and DOL/OMB clearance processes in order to obtain EBSA clearance of documents created by other DOL or Executive Branch agencies. Reviewed external and internal correspondence, as well as regulatory, budgetary, and strategic planning documents on behalf of the Assistant Secretary.

Key accomplishments:

- Publication of unprecedented rules mandating fee transparency by service providers to their retirement plan clients.
- Publication of over twenty regulations implementing the Affordable Care Act, as well as multiple sets of Frequently Asked Questions providing technical guidance.
- Developed new channels of communication between the Assistant Secretary and EBSA staff, in particular an annual in-person and virtual all-hands meeting for approximately 1,000 staff nationwide.

Led national enforcement project on issues related to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) faced by companies in financial distress or who have declared bankruptcy, and oversaw the enforcement work of one of EBSA's ten regional field offices. Developed agency enforcement policies and enforcement program strategy; conducted program evaluation and implemented program improvements; provided technical and procedural guidance to field offices on enforcement matters; and coordinated litigation with the Office of the Solicitor. Briefed enforcement leadership on high-level or novel policy issues arising from assigned project or field office cases. Provided training and technical, policy, and procedural guidance to field offices. Evaluated field office performance with respect to enforcement statistics, management, and policy implementation, and made recommendations for improving performance.

Key accomplishments:

- Identified an emerging nationwide bankruptcy issue involving takeover of employee benefit plans and identified a multi-pronged solution, including litigation, initiation of regulatory project, issuance of internal guidance, and training for field investigators.
- Successfully worked with other EBSA and DOL offices to conclude technical interpretation questions needed to resolve a long-running significant and complex employee benefit plan investigation.

Investigator, Atlanta Regional Office

06/2006-09/2008

Assistant Investigator, Atlanta Regional Office

06/2005-06/2006

Conducted investigations to determine whether private-sector employment-based pension and welfare benefit plans were in compliance with Title I of ERISA. Drafted correspondence to fiduciaries identifying violations and followed up to ensure violations were satisfactorily corrected; researched ERISA and associated administrative and case law as well as other sources to determine whether particular fact-specific scenarios constituted violations of ERISA. Drafted internal memoranda discussing areas of concern when supervisory input was required; discussed violations as well as proposed corrections with other EBSA staff and with fiduciaries; briefed management officials on current investigations. Prepared referrals to other EBSA components, the IRS, or other government agencies when warranted. Participated in group, regional office, and EBSA meetings regarding changes in organizational policy, specific cases, statutory changes, and enforcement initiatives. Developed and presented training at group and regional office meetings on statutory and enforcement policy changes.

EDUCATION

Emory University School of Law

Juris Doctor

05/2006

The Johns Hopkins University

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science and Economics

05/2003

LANGUAGES

Punjabi (fluent spoken), Urdu (fluent spoken), Arabic (novice), French (novice).

SELECTED AFFILIATIONS/VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Center DC – Board Member (2019-Present).
- Two Rivers Public Charter School – Board Secretary (2017-Present).
- Election Protection Hotline (866-OUR-VOTE) – English and Urdu Volunteer, Call Center Captain (2020).
- Karamah Virtual Law and Leadership Program – Participant (2020).
- California Bar Association – Member.