



United States
Office of Government Ethics
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LEGAL ADVISORY

TO: Designated Agency Ethics Officials

FROM: Don W. Fox
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SUBJECT: A reminder that ethics laws and regulations continue to apply to Federal Government employees during furlough periods

On Friday, March 1, 2013, President Obama signed a Sequestration Order for Fiscal Year 2013, ordering an across-the-board reduction in Federal budgetary resources in all budget accounts that have not been exempted by statute. To meet this reduction, some agencies have begun notifying their personnel to prepare for the possibility of being furloughed.

The Office of Government Ethics (OGE) previously issued guidance on the ethics laws and regulations that govern Federal Government employees during furlough periods in June 2004. That guidance, which is available on the OGE website in [OGE Informal Advisory Letter 04 x 6](#), also provides a link to furlough guidance issued by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). On January 11, 2013, OPM updated its sequestration and administrative furlough guidance, which is available at <http://www.secnv.navy.mil/donhr/Employees/furlough/Documents/OPM%20Supplemental%20Administrative%20Furlough%20Guidance.pdf>.

Please remind your agency employees that they must continue to comply with all of the ethics laws and regulations, including the criminal conflict of interest laws at 18 U.S.C. §§ 203, 205, 207, 208, and 209, the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, and any agency-specific supplemental standards of ethical conduct, particularly provisions on outside activities, while they are in a furlough status. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact OGE.