

Summary: Allegations of Retaliation and Nepotism by BLM Management Official Unfounded

Report Date: October 18, 2017

The OIG investigated allegations that a senior management official within the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), retaliated against a BLM employee. The complainant alleged that after he made disclosures about the official, the official retaliated against him by implementing a workplace climate assessment that resulted in the complainant being placed on an extended detail. The complainant also alleged that two members of the official's family worked within the official's chain of command and that the official directed BLM officials to intervene on an overtime matter related to one of those family members. Finally, the complainant claimed that the official knew he told BLM leadership about his nepotism allegations.

Our investigation found no correlation between the workplace climate assessment or the complainant's subsequent detail positions and his disclosures. We concluded that the official's predecessor, not the official, had proposed and approved the workplace climate assessment in response to complaints made against a group of managers. Based on the assessment results, the official coordinated with another senior official and human resources personnel before placing the complainant on detail.

We found that the official inquired about overtime distribution where his family member worked, but we found no indication that the official improperly intervened on the family member's behalf. We also concluded that BLM management took actions to avoid the official's family members working in his direct line of supervision and to avoid any appearance of nepotism.

This is a summary of the report we provided to the Acting Director of the BLM for any action deemed appropriate.

