

**U.S. Department of Labor  
Office of Workers' Compensation Programs  
Advisory Board on Toxic Substances and Worker Health  
Charter**

**1. Advisory Committee's Official Designation**

Advisory Board on Toxic Substances and Worker Health (the Advisory Board or Committee)

**2. Authority**

The establishment of the Advisory Board was authorized by Section 3141(a) of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015, Pub. L. 113-291 (December 19, 2014), which added Section 3687 to Pub. L. 106-398, Executive Order 13699 (June 26, 2015), as updated by the National Defense Authorization Act of 2020, Pub. L. 116-92 (December 9, 2019), and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024, Pub. L. 118-31 (December 22, 2023). The Advisory Board is governed by the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) (5 U.S.C. 10) and its implementing regulations, which set forth standards for the formation and use of advisory committees.

**3. Objectives and Scope of Activities**

The Advisory Board provides specifically enumerated categories of technical advice to the Secretary of Labor (Secretary) regarding aspects of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA), 42 USC § 7384 *et seq.*

Since World War II, hundreds of thousands of men and women have served our Nation in building our nuclear defense. Thousands of these courageous Americans, however, paid a high price for their service, developing disabling or fatal illnesses as a result of hazards unique to nuclear weapons production and testing. The Federal Government enacted EEOICPA to provide fair and timely benefits to workers who contracted illnesses related to exposure to radiation or other toxic substances while employed by the Department of Energy (DOE) or its predecessor agencies, and certain of its vendors, contractors, and subcontractors. The statute specifically provides lump-sum compensation and health benefits to eligible DOE nuclear weapons workers (including employees, former employees, contractors, subcontractors, and certain vendors) and lump-sum compensation to certain survivors if the worker is deceased.

**4. Description of Duties**

The Advisory Board advises the Secretary with respect to:

- a. the Site Exposure Matrices (SEM) of the Department of Labor (DOL);

- b. medical guidance for claims examiners for claims with the EEOICPA program, with respect to the weighing of the medical evidence of claimants;
- c. evidentiary requirements for claims under EEOICPA subtitle B related to lung disease;
- d. the work of industrial hygienists and staff physicians and consulting physicians of DOL, and reports of such hygienists and physicians to ensure quality, objectivity, and consistency;
- e. the claims adjudication process generally, including review of procedure manual changes prior to incorporation into the manual and claims for medical benefits; and
- f. such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

The Advisory Board, when necessary, coordinates exchanges of data and findings with the Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health.

## **5. Agency or Federal Officer Receiving the Advisory Committee's Advice/Recommendations**

The Advisory Board reports and submits its recommendations to the Secretary of Labor.

## **6. Support**

The Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) will provide administrative services, funds, facilities, staff, and other necessary support services, and perform the administrative functions under the FACA to enable the Advisory Board to carry out its duties.

The Secretary of Energy will ensure that the members and staff of the Advisory Board, and the contractors performing work in support of the Advisory Board, are afforded the opportunity to apply for a security clearance for any matter for which such a clearance is appropriate and should provide a determination on eligibility for clearance within 180 days of receiving a completed application.

The DOE will provide support to the Advisory Board as required by the Pub. L. 106-398, Section 3687(f) (security clearances and related costs) and Section 3687(g) (information including Restricted Data under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 and Privacy Act data).

## **7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years**

Estimated annual costs for operating the Advisory Board, including travel expenses for members and 2.5 person-years of staff support, is approximately \$400,000 for each fiscal year of operation.

## **8. Designated Federal Officer**

The agency head must designate a federal officer or employee who must be either full-time or permanent part-time to be the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Advisory Board and its subcommittees. The Secretary will appoint staff to facilitate the Advisory Board's work and will also appoint a Director under subchapter VIII of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, who will serve as the DFO. This person will be a career employee in the Senior Executive Service (SES), appointed in accordance with agency procedures. A member of the SES from OWCP, but not the Program Director for the EEOICPA program, will serve as DFO. The DFO must:

- a. Ensure Advisory Board activities comply with FACA, the FACA Final Rule, agency administrative procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations;
- b. Approve or call all Advisory Board meetings and subcommittee meetings;
- c. Prepare and approve all meeting agendas;
- d. Attend (or designate someone to attend) all Advisory Board meetings and subcommittee meetings for their duration;
- e. Fulfill the requirements under section 10(b) of FACA (codified at 5 U.S.C. 1009(b)), to include carrying out the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552) with respect to Advisory Board records;
- f. Adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest;
- g. Chair meetings when directed to do so by the official to whom the Advisory Board reports;
- h. Assemble and maintain the reports, records and other papers of the Advisory Board; and
- i. Ensure Advisory Board members and subcommittee members, as applicable, receive the appropriate training (e.g., FACA overview, ethics training) for efficient operation and compliance with FACA and the FACA Final Rule.

## **9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings**

The Advisory Board will meet at least twice per year.

Meetings will be open to the public except as otherwise determined by the Secretary, in accordance with the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. 552b(c)) and Section 1009(d) of the FACA. Notice of all meetings will be given to the public.

## **10. Duration**

As provided in Pub. L. 106-398, Section 3687(i), as amended in 2023, the Advisory Board will terminate on December 19, 2029.

## **11. Termination**

This charter will expire two years from the date of filing.

## **12. Membership and Designation**

The Secretary will appoint 12 to 15 members, one of whom the Secretary will appoint as Chair. In accordance with Section 3687(a)(2), Advisory Board appointments will be made in consultation with organizations with expertise on worker health issues to ensure that membership reflects a proper balance of perspectives from the scientific, medical, and claimant communities, and to address the tasks assigned to the Advisory Board.

Except as otherwise required by law, and in accordance with the Advisory Board membership balance plan, Advisory Board membership will be consistent with the applicable FACA regulations as follows. Membership on the Advisory Board will be fairly balanced. Members will come from a cross-section of those directly affected, interested, and qualified as appropriate to the nature and functions of the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board's composition will therefore depend on several factors, including (i) the Advisory Board's mission; (ii) the geographic, ethnic, economic, or scientific impact of the Advisory Board's recommendations; (iii) the types of specific perspectives required, as previously outlined; (iv) the need to obtain divergent points of view on the issues before the Advisory Board; and (v) the relevance of State, local or tribal governments to the development of the Advisory Board's recommendations.

Pursuant to Section 3687(d) of Pub. L. 106-398, no Advisory Board member, employee, or contractor can have any financial interest, employment, or contractual relationship (other than a routine consumer transaction) with any person who has provided or sought to provide, within two years of their appointment or during their appointment, goods or services for medical benefits under EEOICPA.

Members are Special Government Employees. A high degree of independence is important to maintain public trust of the Advisory Board, which is statutorily required to evaluate and offer opinions independently of the DOL compensation program. Members do not receive compensation for serving on the Advisory Board, but are allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5703.

Members serve two-year terms. At the Secretary's discretion, members may be appointed to successive terms and removed at any time. The Secretary may designate an Advisory Board member to preside at an Advisory Board meeting if the Chair is not able to attend.

### **13. Subcommittees**

The Secretary may create any number of subcommittees and informal work groups for the purpose of assisting the Advisory Board in carrying out its functions. Subcommittees and informal work groups must report back to the Advisory Board and must not provide advice or work products directly to the Secretary.

### **14. Recordkeeping**

Detailed minutes are prepared for all Advisory Board, subcommittee, and informal work group meetings. In addition, the records of the Advisory Board and any established subcommittees or other subgroups of the Advisory Board will be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2, Federal Advisory Committee Records, or other approved agency records disposition schedule. Those records will be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the FOIA.

### **15. Filing Date**

This charter is filed on the date indicated below.



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Lori Chavez-DeRemer  
Secretary of Labor

June 13, 2025

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Date