

Office of the
**GENERAL
COUNSEL**

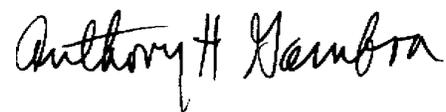


A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL COUNSEL

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) is a great place to work. Attorneys in GAO's Office of the General Counsel (OGC) support GAO's review of many high-profile matters before Congress and address serious legal issues facing federal agencies. The variety of legal issues is enormous, touching the whole range of federal activities. OGC attorneys bring an exceptional level of experience and quality to their work, and devote considerable attention to the professional development of summer associates and newer colleagues. OGC affords recent law graduates stimulating legal practice in a collegial setting unlike any other in the federal government.

A career in OGC enables an attorney to contribute meaningfully to matters of importance to the Congress and the American people. These attorneys also make a good living, enjoy greater job security, and keep a better balance between work and family life than is usually found in the private sector.

We have a great deal to offer: the challenge and satisfaction of public service in an atmosphere that is quite simply the best of the best. This brochure will tell you more about us.



Anthony H. Gamboa

Anthony H. Gamboa
General Counsel

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about GAO

GAO exists to support the Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and ensure the accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people. GAO is organized around four goals:

GOAL 1 Address Current and Emerging Challenges to the Well-Being and Financial Security of the American People *related to . . .*

- Health care needs and financing
- Education and protection of children
- Work opportunities and worker protection
- Retirement income security
- Administration of homeland security and justice
- Viable communities
- Natural resources use and environmental protection
- Physical infrastructure

GOAL 2 Respond to Changing Security Threats and the Challenges of Global Interdependence *involving . . .*

- Diffuse security threats
- Military capabilities and readiness
- Advancement of U.S. interests
- Global market forces

GOAL 3 Help Transform the Federal Government's Role and How It Does Business to Meet 21st Century Challenges *by assessing . . .*

- Roles in achieving federal objectives
- Human capital and other capacity for serving the public
- Progress toward results-oriented, accountable, relevant government
- Fiscal position and financing of the government

GOAL 4 Maximize the Value of GAO by Being a Model Federal Agency and a World-Class Professional Services Organization *in the areas of . . .*

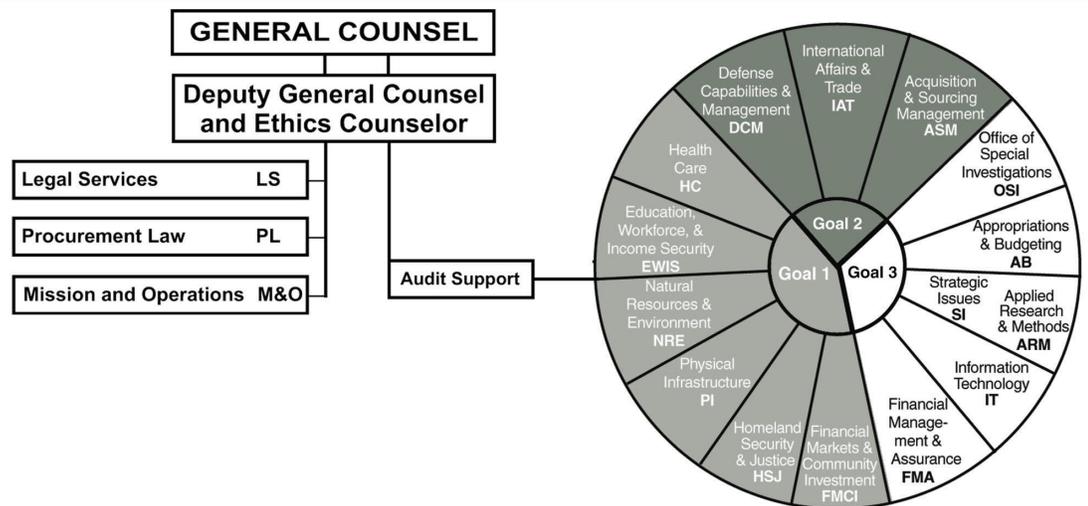
- Client and customer service
- Leadership and management focus
- Institutional knowledge and experience
- Process improvement

about OGC

Office of the
GENERAL
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OGC provides a wide variety of legal services that help ensure efficient, effective, and economical government operations. OGC attorneys assist the Congress, federal agencies, and GAO analysts in interpreting the laws that govern the expenditure of public funds and the myriad of government programs and activities. GAO is non-ideological, non-partisan, and fact-based in its work. This independence ensures that OGC's approximately 130 attorneys can reach impartial and unbiased judgments, consistent with the agency's core values of accountability, integrity, and reliability.

The organization of OGC mirrors that of GAO:



The practice areas for GAO attorneys are the many laws applicable to the functional areas of the respective teams and groups.



work of OGC
ATTORNEYS

No other federal agency can offer attorneys an opportunity to deal with as wide a range of legal issues as GAO's Office of the General Counsel. An attorney can become involved in legal questions encompassing the entire range of federal activities, such as housing, drug enforcement, urban development, transportation, energy, power generation, consumer and environmental protection, homeland security, national defense, weapons procurement, international trade, and foreign aid. OGC attorneys advise GAO analysts, auditors, accountants, and other professionals who review these and other federal programs. Attorneys may answer legal questions for congressional committees, agency heads, and other leaders on such government matters as homeland security, executive privilege, appropriations, or government procurement. The work of GAO's attorneys makes a major contribution to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, and the economy of government operations.

OGC attorneys frequently assist Members of Congress and their staffs in drafting legislation or analyzing government activities. They may, on occasion, testify before a congressional committee, and their work may require them to meet with individuals from other federal agencies or departments or one of GAO's field offices. Attorneys may also review legislative proposals before the Congress, report to the Congress on proposed rescissions and deferrals of government funds, or prepare reports on the adoption of major federal regulations. Attorneys also advise GAO's criminal investigators and resolve bid protests challenging federal agency procurement decisions and government contracts. Attorneys also provide advice to the agency on a wide range of human capital issues and represent the agency in litigation before administrative tribunals and in court.



impact of OGC WORK

OGC's legal support for GAO's analyst community is instrumental not only in ensuring the legal sufficiency of their products, but also in the success, impact, and effectiveness of all GAO studies. OGC is a player on every GAO team effort, and has particular impact whenever significant legal issues are involved. For example, in voting to remain in the World Trade Organization, the House of Representatives used our finding that U.S. business has gained more than it has lost by U.S. participation in the Organization. As another example, GAO investigated reports of an unusual number of deaths in several nursing homes in California and, when some of the homes refused to let us see patient records, GAO subpoenaed those records. Our report found numerous instances of patient abuse and neglect, which led to closer monitoring by state and federal authorities, less predictable inspections and, where patients were in immediate harm, immediate sanctions against the nursing homes.

OGC's resolution of complaints about the award of government contracts--GAO's bid protest function--increases the transparency and protects the integrity of the federal procurement process. GAO's work has resulted in a body of decisions that essentially set out, for agencies and companies interested in doing business with the government, the standards for basic fairness in federal procurement competitions. Legal publications like OGC's Principles of Federal Appropriations Law, a treatise drawing on GAO's appropriations case law, provides essential guidance to federal agencies on the proper spending of funds appropriated to them by the Congress. OGC's in-house guidance and ethics counseling ensure that GAO's work and personnel practices comply with all applicable laws and that GAO is a model for other agencies.



Reviews from Our Summer Associates:

*“Greatest work
environment I’ve
encountered.”*

*“A top-tier
program at a top-
tier agency.”*

*“Everyone was
friendly, generous
with their time,
and patient, and
my assignments
were interesting
and substantive.”*

OGC

SUMMER ASSOCIATE PROGRAM

Each summer, OGC hires up to 12 law students to serve as summer associates. In most instances, the summer associates will have completed their second full year of law school. Ordinarily, the summer associates serve a minimum of 10 weeks, but may work longer if their schedules permit. Typically, summer associates work in equal periods in two of OGC’s teams, including Procurement Law.

Summer associates perform duties similar to those of newly-hired attorneys. The work not only involves legal research and writing, but can include direct and primary responsibility for all legal aspects of a project, including those arising in its design, implementation, and report preparation. For example, a summer associate may serve as a member of an audit team or fully participate in a bid protest decision. Summer associates will also interact with GAO analysts and congressional staff.



ACCOUNTABILITY INTEGRITY RELIABILITY

Reviews from Our Summer Associates:

“Everyone in the OGC, as well as the GAO in general, was extremely helpful and supportive. I think this contributed to a wonderful, relaxed environment where summer associates are treated like professionals and felt appreciated.”

“Great place to work!”

“It was a great summer. Don’t change a thing.”

OGC

SUMMER ASSOCIATE PROGRAM

The summer associate program may also include group activities such as weekly staff meetings, private meetings with a Member of Congress and a Committee Counsel, exclusive tours of the Supreme Court and the Congress, and attendance at special meetings of the Federal Bar Association and the American Bar Association.

Since the summer program exposes associates to OGC’s actual work and working conditions, they are able to arrive at informed decisions about working for GAO. At the same time, we have the opportunity to observe the associates’ performance under actual working conditions. Summer associates who meet our criteria have a substantial advantage over other entry-level applicants for entry-level positions.



OGC

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Starting salaries for attorneys in the Office of the General Counsel are commensurate with education and experience. The base salary for entry-level attorneys is approximately \$60,000. This may be adjusted depending on an individual's qualifications. OGC's banded pay system provides pay potential that allows for compensation based on performance. We also offer incentive awards to recognize high-performing individuals.

Starting Salaries

Subject to the availability of appropriated funds and other factors, OGC participates in a student loan repayment program. The program will repay up to a limit of \$6,000 per eligible employee per calendar year with a lifetime aggregate of \$40,000. More information about the student loan program information is available on the Office of Personnel Management's [website](#).

Student Loan Repayment

Annual leave (vacation) is based on length of government service--employees earn 13 days of vacation each year for the first 3 years of service, 20 days for 3 to 15 years of service, and 26 days after 15 years. GAO recognizes 10 legal holidays each year. Employees earn 13 days of sick leave each year.

Leave



OGC

SALARY AND BENEFITS

GAO offers an excellent health insurance program, for which GAO pays a portion of the premium; the opportunity to select life insurance coverage; and excellent retirement benefits through the Federal Employees Retirement System.

*Insurance
and
Retirement*

OGC invests in employee's continuous learning, providing the information and resources they need for professional growth. Intensive training programs enable attorneys and staff to handle a wide range of assignments and keep them up-to-date on challenges in the law and major public policy issues. OGC also provides partial reimbursement for active state bar membership.

*Continuing
Legal
Education*

Attorneys in OGC work at GAO's Washington headquarters, which features its own fitness center, day-care center, credit union, cafeteria, and snack bar. GAO has flexible work schedules and encourages business casual dress at the office. GAO's headquarters is located just blocks from the Capitol, in the heart of Washington's vibrant Penn Quarter/Chinatown neighborhood. Our location affords easy access to numerous restaurants, shops, and museums, as well as to sports and entertainment at the nearby MCI Center.

*Other
Factors*



GAO's Office of General Counsel is an interesting, stimulating, and collegial office in which attorneys continuously hone their expertise. GAO is presented with an enormous variety of provocative legal issues, and our attorneys provide the critical legal support to the agency's work, bringing an exceptional level of experience and quality to aid in addressing these issues. If you're interested in learning more about joining our team, please contact Kathleen Wannisky at:

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