

An Orientation to Resources Available at NIH

Office of the Ombudsman
Employee Assistance Program
Civil

Presenters:

- Samantha Levine-Finley, *NIH Office of the Ombudsman*
- Eva Chen, *Employee Assistance Program*
- Jessica Hawkins, *NIH Office of Human Resources*

Objectives

- Summarize the nature of the Ombudsman, Employee Assistance, and Civil programs
- Outline key features of the services offered
- Encourage contacting services early and whenever needed

Services at a glance

Office of the Ombudsman

- Confidential, impartial, informal, voluntary
- Resource for all NIH employees to address any workplace concern or question
- Can serve as mediators, facilitators, coaches

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- Confidential
- Staffed by licensed behavioral health professionals
- Consultation, short-term counseling, referral and follow-up services for any individual, family or work issue impacting personal or professional wellness

Civil

- A coordination of NIH resources to address threats and actual acts of violence in the workplace
- Can also respond to cases of intimidating or harassing behavior
- Part of Human Resources
- Not confidential



NIH Office of the Ombudsman
Center for Cooperative Resolution

Getting to Know the NIH Office of the Ombudsman

Presented by Samantha Levine-Finley
Associate Ombudsman



The Ombudsman's Office is:

A resource for all NIH employees to address any workplace concern or question.

- Confidential
- Neutral (non-administrative)
- Informal/ Flexible
- Voluntary
- Independent



How Do Ombuds Work?

- Listen and understand concerns
 - Identify needs
- Clarify desired outcomes
 - Challenge assumptions
- Explore and evaluate options
 - Facilitate understanding and resolution



How We Assist

- Coaching, strategizing
- Facilitate or mediate difficult discussions
- Shuttle diplomacy
- Use of scientific consultants
- Mediation of discrimination (EEO) complaints when grievant selects Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- Conduct workshops, trainings; facilitate other group processes



What We Do **NOT** Do

- Accept or provide notice of an alleged violation
- Serve as part of any formal grievance or complaint process
- Advocate for any individual or outcome
- Share information with others without an individual's knowledge or permission
- Conduct formal investigations
- Issue formal, written investigative reports of any kind
- Testify or serve as a witness
- Make or change policy or administrative decisions
- Make binding decisions or determine rights
- Require anyone to follow ombudsman recommendations



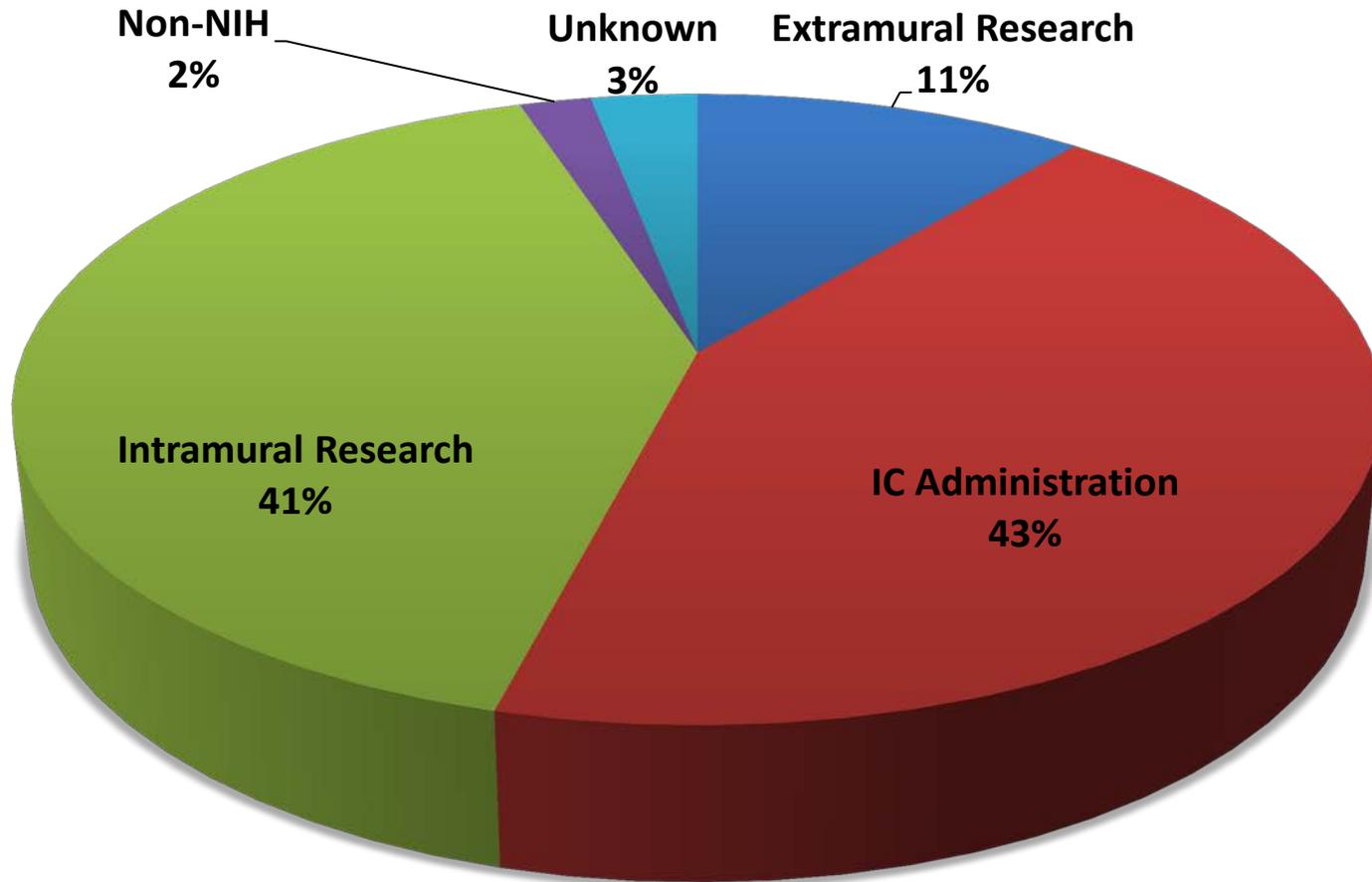
What issues are commonly dealt with in the Ombudsman's Office?

Quick answer – **all kinds!** The most common concerns:

- Mentoring, authorship, and scientific collaboration
- Difficult management situations
- Concerns about discrimination or harassment
- Interpersonal misunderstandings
- Performance appraisals, disciplinary actions
- Specific information about a rule, law, or policy
- Poor communication



NIH Program Areas Served



(Center for Cooperative Resolution Case Data 2009-2010)



Ombuds resources for scientists

teamscience.nih.gov



Contact us **early**, or at any point

- Find information
- Think through options
- Address complex intra-organizational issues
- Obtain appropriate referrals



Contact Information

Phone number: (301) 594-7231

Website: ombudsman.nih.gov

Location: Building 31, Room 2B63



Getting to Know the NIH Employee Assistance Program

Presented by Eva Chen, Lead Senior EAP Consultant

EAP: Core Functions and Principles

- **Consultation, assessment, short-term counseling & referral services**
- **On-site training and workgroup support**
- **All NIH employees, managers, immediate family members eligible**
- **For any individual, family or work issue impacting personal or professional wellness**

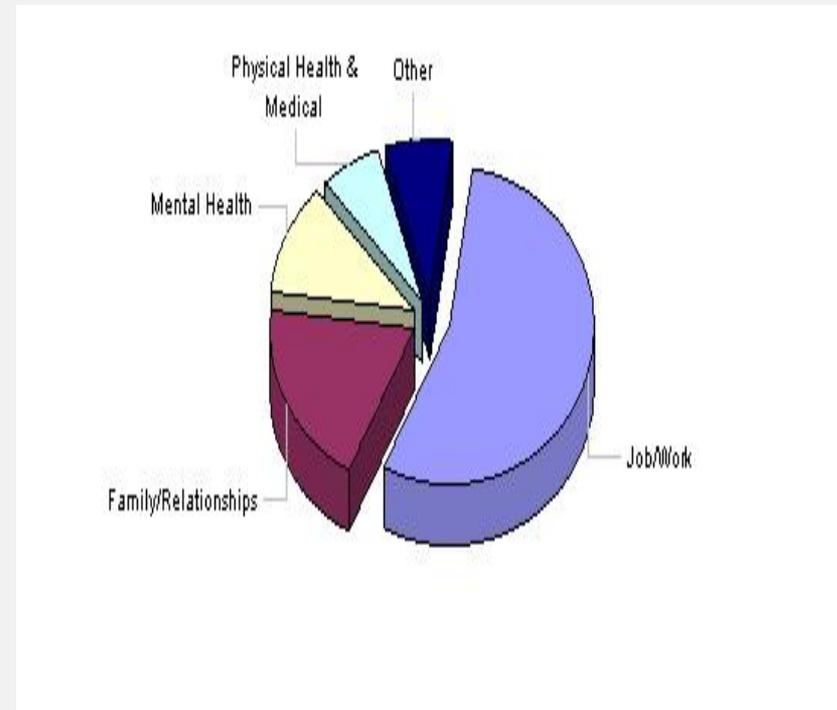


'Wellness Wheel' © 2010 University of Washington

EAP Mission: To foster individual and organizational productivity

Examples of Issues Addressed at EAP

- **Personal growth**
- **Life transition stress**
- **Interpersonal conflicts**
- **Financial & legal difficulties**
- **Dependent care challenges**
- **Mood issues & mental health**
- **Substance abuse**
- **Work issues:**
 - Restructuring stress
 - Organizational skills
 - Performance stress
 - Time management
 - Work / life balance



Personal Issues and Work

Having an EAP is not only ‘the right thing to do’; it’s good for business:

- Roughly 12–18% of employees in an organization experience personal problems that interfere with job performance
- Unmanaged personal problems increase illness, absenteeism & turnover; lower productivity & morale; raise medical and legal costs
- Mood distress costs U.S. industry up to \$300 billion annually
- Alcohol-related problems cost at least \$185 billion annually
- EAP Return on Investment estimated at 5-15 times the cost of providing services

Key Features of EAP Practice

- Confidential
- Voluntary
- Supportive, non-disciplinary
- Free to NIH employees and family members
- Neutral and non-administrative
- Strengths-based & solution-focused counseling approach
- Specialists in matching employee needs to appropriate resources
- Non-diagnostic and not treatment by design



EAP Myths and Misconceptions

- **Thinking that an issue is ‘not bad enough’ for EAP**
- **Believing that reporting to EAP is providing official notice of a grievance to NIH**
- **Interpreting EAP consultation as a directive**
- **EAP as “therapy”; only for “crazy” or “naughty” employees**
- **Believing using EAP services is a distraction from work productivity**



- **Stress Management**
- **Workplace Communication**
- **Work/Life Balance**
- **Interpersonal Dynamics at Work**
- **Tools for Supervisors**

Phone number: 301-496-3164

Website:

<http://www.ors.od.nih.gov/sr/dohs/EAP/Pages/index.aspx>

Location: Building 31, Room B2B57



National Institutes of Health
Office of Management

Office of Human Resources

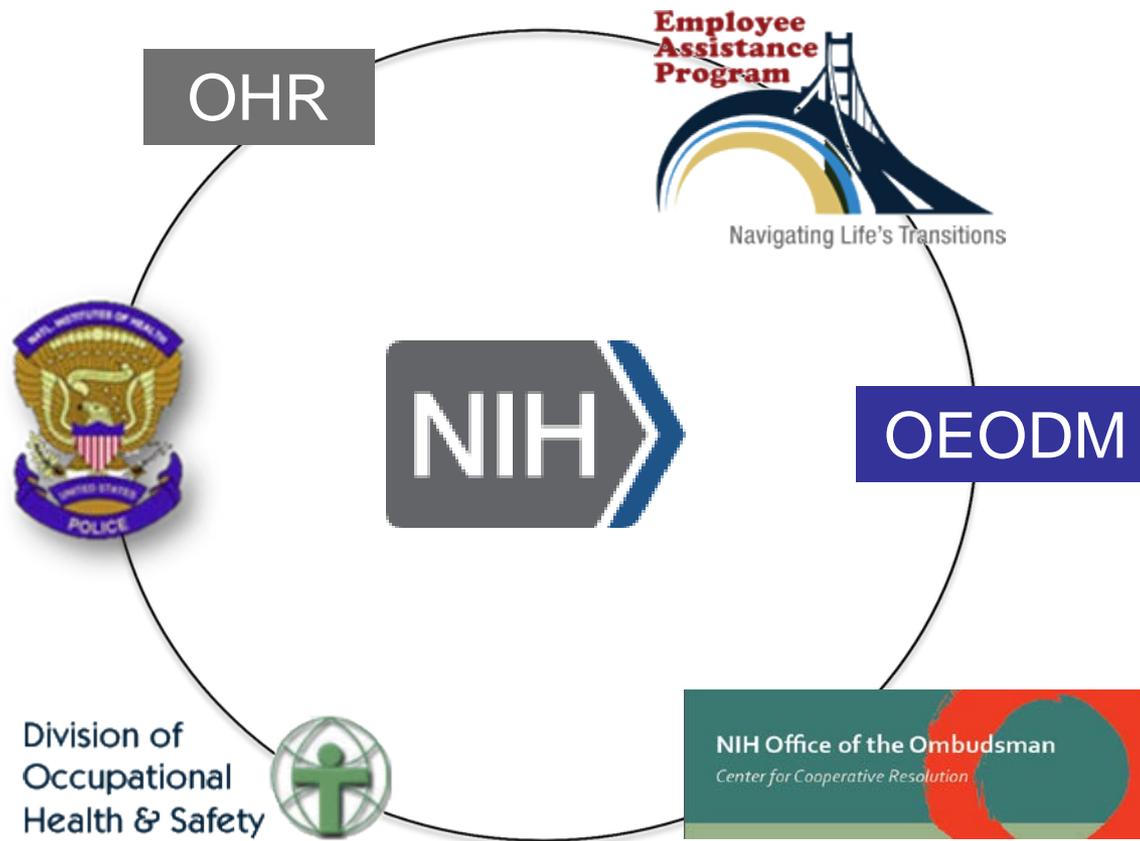
Getting to Know the NIH Civil Program

Presented by Jessica Hawkins, Employee Relations Specialist
Workforce Relations Division, Office of Human Resources, NIH

The NIH Civil Program

A coordination of NIH resources to address threats and actual acts of violence in the workplace.

CIVIL Response Team Collaboration



Response Team

Civil Coordinator

- Conducts intake interview
- Assesses situation
- Provides guidance
- Coordinates convening of appropriate team members

Core team members

- Office of Human Resources
- Employee Assistance Program
- NIH Police Department

Will work with the Institute's Executive Officer and involved supervisors to resolve problems.

What is violence?

- An action that constitutes a threat of harm
- Harm to a person or property
- Intimidating, harassing, bullying, or violent behavior

What is intimidating or harassing behavior?

- Malicious or disrespectful behavior that creates a hostile environment and/or impairs agency operations
- Physical intimidation or contact causing injury, pain, and/or distress
- Insubordinate statement(s)



Violence is Real at NIH

NIH Police have been called by both staff and managers who each felt threatened.

- “This is what gets managers killed.”
- Intentionally bumping into people, yelling, pushing, grabbing, etc.
- Fights
- Suicides – real and threatened
- Weapons and controlled substances
- Direct threats
- Indirect threats/frightening behavior
- Domestic violence effects/stalking



Early Warning Signs

When a person...

- Refuses to cooperate with immediate supervisor
- Spreads rumors and gossips to harm others
- Consistently argues with supervisor or co-workers
- Is belligerent toward co-workers or customers
- Frequently swears or yells at others
- Makes unwanted sexual comments

Signs of more immediate danger

A person in crisis may:

- Make recurrent suicidal threats
- Have recurrent verbal altercations and/or physical fights
- Destroy property
- Attempt to or use a weapon to harm self or others
- Commit assault, arson, or other serious illegal act



Supervisors' and Employees' Responsibilities

If you see/hear something, *speak up*:

- Talk to your supervisor(s)
- Contact your IC Administrative Officer or HR Liaison
- Reach out to applicable NIH Resource(s)

❖ NIH Police

911 for emergencies

(301) 496-5685 for non-emergencies

❖ Civil

(301) 402-4845

❖ Employee Assistance Program

(301) 496-3164

❖ NIH Ombudsman

(301) 594-7231

What Else Can You Do?

- Value each others' work and roles
- Understand expectations
- Behave in ways that show respect
- Develop relationships built on trust
- Promote a climate that is fair, supportive, and responsive
- Encourage open and honest communication
- Celebrate our differences

Contact Information

Civil Line: 301-402-CIVIL (301-402-4845)

Jessica Hawkins, Workforce Relations Division,
Office of Human Resources, 301-402-8006,
jessica.hawkins@nih.gov

For more information, please visit
<http://hr.od.nih.gov/hrguidance/civil>

Spotlight: OITE Resources

Julie Gold, LCSW-C, MA
NIH Office of Intramural Training & Education
goldje@mail.nih.gov



Some OITE Resources

- Stress management and support
- Culture discussions
- English programming, including Mango languages
- “Getting What You Want and Need” (assertiveness)
- Five-part “Workplace Dynamics” series including Conflict (part IV)
- Career counseling and career-guidance workshops (including many archived videocasts)