

OCFO TICKET

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20503

August 22, 2002

Mr. Jesse L. Funches
Chief Financial Officer
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
One White Flint North Building
11555 Rockville Pike, 17 FL
Rockville, MD 20852-2738

Dear Mr. Funches:

Each year, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) offers a select group of qualified Federal employees the opportunity to gain unique insight into the preparation, compilation, and production of the President's annual budget. These employees work with permanent OMB staff on a non-reimbursable detail assignment from sponsoring agencies for approximately 10 weeks in a variety of assignments associated with preparing the President's budget. We would like to ask you to consider nominating appropriate members of your agency for this year's temporary assignment, a professional training opportunity that would hopefully benefit not only the selected individual but your agency as well.

Subject to change, we are planning this year's assignment to run from December 2nd through mid-February. Annual leave during this period will be severely limited, and significant amounts of overtime, including weekend work, may be required.

The benefits of this unique training opportunity include exposure to the budget decision-making process at the agency, OMB, and White House levels and detailed involvement with the technical and conceptual underpinnings of the Federal budget. Particularly valuable is the hands-on experience gained through day-to-day use of OMB budget system applications to identify and resolve technical and conceptual discrepancies in the budget materials. In addition, participants learn how various requirements of the Budget Enforcement Act affect the development of the budget.

The work requires close daily contact with OMB program examiners and other OMB staff. Although permanent staff members and, in particular, team leaders provide training and support, we expect temporary staff members to be independent and self-motivated. Experience in working with computers and a large amount of data is helpful. In our consideration of candidates for this assignment, we will be looking for those who can quickly grasp complex and unfamiliar concepts, handle a number of activities or problems at the same time, and work as responsible and amiable team members.

The efficient preparation of the President's budget depends in large part on the willingness of agencies to provide qualified candidates for this unique assignment. We would like to be able to offer a member of your staff the opportunity to participate directly in the preparation of the President's FY 2004 Budget, and we would appreciate any help you can provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy S. Ridenour". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "N".

Nancy S. Ridenour
Deputy Chief, Budget Review Branch

Enclosure

PREPARATION OF THE FY 2004 BUDGET: DESCRIPTION OF TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT WITH OMB

You will be working for the Budget Review and Concepts Division (BRCD) or the Budget Analysis and Systems Division (BASD) of the Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, as a non-reimbursable detailee for "budget season." Budget season is a period of approximately 10 weeks during which the data and textual materials comprising the President's annual budget are compiled and produced. This year, the assignment is expected to run from December 2nd through mid-February.

BRCD is composed of two branches: the Budget Review Branch and the Budget Concepts Branch. For budget season, these two branches combine portions of their staffs and adopt a team approach for preparing the technical materials that comprise the Detailed Budget Estimates section of the Budget *Appendix*. BASD is also composed of two branches: the Budget Analysis Branch and the Budget Systems Branch.

As a temporary staff member in BRCD or BASD, you may be assigned to work on an *Appendix* preparation team, or on other assignments related to the preparation of the President's budget that are managed by the individual branches.

Budget Appendix Team Assignments

A team approach is adopted for preparing the Budget *Appendix*. Each team will have team leaders drawn from the Budget Review Branch and the Budget Concepts Branch. In addition to team leaders, teams generally will be composed of other permanent staff members and two to three temporary staff members.

As a member of an *Appendix* preparation team, you will be assigned a section of the Budget *Appendix* that will be your responsibility. For example, a typical assignment for a temporary staff member might be an *Appendix* chapter presenting the budget for a major cabinet agency and portions of the Other Independent Agencies chapter presenting the budgets for several small agencies.

The assignment involves resolving technical and conceptual problems in the agency budget submissions, monitoring the development of the computer database that supports the budget, and ensuring the error-free printing of assigned sections of the Budget *Appendix*. Early in the assignment, you will be introduced to the OMB program examiners responsible for your assigned sections and will be expected to work closely with them throughout the assignment.

Permanent staff in BRCD and BASD will offer help in specific areas. For example, certain people specialize in control of Federal credit data while others provide guidance on budget concepts or presentation issues. In addition, the team leaders will offer guidance, advice, and moral support at all times. Once you have been selected, you will be treated as a permanent employee in every way.

The work follows two parallel tracks. First, you will be responsible for the preparation of the materials presented in your assigned *Appendix* chapters. Concurrently, you will be responsible for the technical accuracy and conceptual integrity of the detailed database that supports the budget.

Budget Concepts Branch Assignments

Several individuals will be assigned to the Budget Concepts Branch to analyze data, coordinate legislative proposals, and prepare reports. Specific assignments may include preparing reports used in congressional hearings on the budget, working directly with senior OMB staff to produce specific sections of the *Analytical Perspectives* volume (e.g., the chapters on investment and Federal debt or Federal and trust funds), coordinating legislative proposals that would apply to the government as a whole rather than one department or agency, and preparing special reports to accompany the President's budget. A typical day often includes analyzing computer reports and contacting other OMB staff to assist them in resolving technical and conceptual problems or inconsistencies in the database. The assignments in the Budget Concepts Branch generally last two weeks longer than those of *Appendix* preparation team members.

Budget Systems Branch Assignments

This assignment with the Budget Systems Branch will provide insight into the technical side of budgeting as well as exposure to cutting-edge information technology and can be identified as an excellent IT development opportunity. The primary project will be to assist with the systems development for a pilot project for the automation of the *Appendix* text process. The pilot will automate the current manual text collection, which is conducted at the same time as the automated collection of non-textual budget data. The project involves research and implementation of new collaborative technologies including document management, workflow, and XML editing and publishing.

Tasks may include agency on-site requirements gathering for the *Appendix* text process, developing business rules for workflow processes, creating entity relationship diagrams, designing document templates and style sheets and working with the collaborative features of editing word processing packages. The position requires someone with an aptitude for computer software usage who enjoys researching and experimenting with new software packages and working with the user community to identify their requirements.

This assignment may be last for up to six months depending on the availability and interest of the candidate. More than one position may be available. If you are specifically interested in an assignment in the Budget Systems Branch, please indicate so on your application. For more information, please contact Sahar Taman at (202) 395-3531 to discuss the position.

Schedule of Events

Upon your arrival at OMB, you will receive orientation and training sessions on the scope of the assignment, contents and uses of the budget, and the basic elements of the budget preparation process. These sessions are typically held during the mornings of the first week, with the afternoons reserved for reading, hands-on sessions with the database, and individual team or branch meetings.

Work Environment

Staff will be located in close physical proximity. This can mean a high level of noise and visual distraction. Telephones ring, and people are constantly in and out of the room. The assignment can tax patience and good humor. In addition to intelligence, dedication, and talent, we seek those individuals with very good "people" skills and the personal maturity and flexibility necessary to deal effectively with a hectic work environment.

Annual leave will generally not be available to you for the duration of the assignment because of the demands of the work. The amount of overtime varies, depending on the timing of budget decisions, the quality of the work done by the agencies and the program examiners, and requirements of the production schedule. Your own agency's policies and rules will govern your accounting for any overtime pay or compensatory time that may result from the assignment.

Despite all of this, the assignment can be a lot of fun. The long hours, close proximity, and shared stress create close friendships and a "team spirit" that is invaluable. The sense of personal satisfaction when the assignment is completed cannot be emphasized enough. Professionally, the assignment provides an opportunity to participate in a fascinating policy-making process, learn something about the budget process and the underlying budget concepts, make valuable professional contacts, and learn a great deal about the computerized network linking OMB and the agencies, as well as the automated photocomposition process used to print the budget documents.

Selection Process

The selection process has become increasingly competitive over the last several years. Approximately 10 to 12 temporary employees will be selected for work on the Budget *Appendix*, while additional candidates will be selected to work on assignments in various BRCD and BASD branches. While helpful, previous budget experience is not required. We encourage applicants from all areas of government. For example, in the past we have selected as temporary employees State government employees, administrative officers, and program and management analysts. This assignment can also serve as an excellent rotational assignment for those participating in the Presidential Management Intern Program, the Executive Leadership Program, the Executive Potential Program, or other similar internship programs.

We plan to conduct interviews from mid-September to early October and should be able to notify you of our selections by mid-October so that you will have several weeks to plan for the assignment.

How to Apply

To apply for the assignment, please fax a resume and/or an SF 171 (or "Optional Application for Federal Employment -- OF 612"), along with a letter of approval/recommendation from your supervisor to Darrell Park, Budget Review Branch, by Friday, September 13th. The fax number is (202) 395-4768. If you have any additional questions, you may contact Darrell Park at (202) 395-6816 or Arline Dell at (202) 395-3878.