



At a Glance

Why We Did This Review

In reaction to an October 17, 2014, U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, *FEDERAL PAID ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE, Additional Guidance Needed to Improve OPM Data*, a member of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary and a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform sent a letter on October 21, 2014, to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator requesting information concerning administrative leave taken by EPA employees. As a result of that request, this early warning report provides information identified during the EPA Office of Inspector General's time and attendance audit (still in process) in connection with administrative leave.

This report addresses the following EPA goal or cross-agency strategy:

- *Embracing EPA as a high-performing organization.*

Send all inquiries to our public affairs office at (202) 566-2391 or visit www.epa.gov/oig.

The full report is at:
www.epa.gov/oig/reports/2014/20141119-15-N-0025.pdf

Early Warning Report: Some EPA Employees Found to Be on Paid Administrative Leave for Years

What We Found

We provided to the EPA Administrator data on eight employees who had recorded significant amounts of administrative leave. The amount of administrative leave recorded by these eight employees totaled 20,926 hours and cost the government an estimated \$1,096,868. Each of these employees was on extended administrative leave for 4 or more months. For four of the eight employees, the administrative leave covered more than a year.

According to GAO, there is no general statutory authority for the use of paid administrative leave, which is an excused absence without loss of pay or charge to other (annual or sick) leave. However the U.S. Office of Personnel Management has provided direction on the permissible use of administrative leave.

This early warning report is for informational purposes only; therefore, there are no recommendations for the agency to address. Our audit work on EPA time and attendance is in process and could result in additional matters reported to the agency regarding the EPA's use of administrative leave.

Briefing With the Administrator and Agency Response

The EPA Inspector General met with the EPA Administrator on October 30, 2014, to brief her on our currently ongoing work related to this matter. The Administrator subsequently requested the background information on the employees for follow-up by the EPA's Office of Administration and Resources Management. We provided the requested information on November 3 and November 5, 2014.