

**De Soto National Memorial  
OIG Findings of Sexual Harassment, Policy and Ethical Violations | March 2017**

**MEDIA HOLDING STATEMENT (SERO USE ONLY)**

“The National Park Service is weighing appropriate actions in response to the OIG’s findings. We take these findings very seriously and are committed to holding employees accountable for misconduct. We are working aggressively to catch issues early and foster workplaces where sexual harassment and violations to the public’s trust are not tolerated.”

For background: The employee is currently on a non-supervisory detail assignment away from the park. Privacy concerns and the right to due process prevent us from disclosing specific information about personnel matters.

**MESSAGE POINTS**

**The Situation**

OIG issued a summary of findings from its investigation into sexual harassment, misconduct and violations at DeSoto National Monument.

The report describes conduct unbecoming a National Park Service management official.

- Sexual harassment
- Policy violations
- Misuse of position and appearance of conflicts of interest

**NPS’ Position**

We take these findings very seriously and are committed to holding employees accountable for misconduct.

- Sexual harassment and misconduct are not tolerated and should be reported immediately.

Employees of the National Park Service deserve a healthy and respectful working environment.

**What Happens Next**

Personnel Action

The agency is weighing appropriate actions in response to the OIG’s findings.

- A decision is expected this month.
- The National Park Service is obligated to follow the laws and policies governing discipline for federal employees.

The employee is currently on a non-supervisory detail assignment away from the park.

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## NPS-wide Actions

Harassment/Hostile Work Environment- The National Park Service is responding in a comprehensive and thoughtful way to address harassment and hostile work environments.

- The agency is taking actions to hold employees accountable for misconduct.
- NPS has increased awareness of sexual harassment and rolled-out training agency-wide.
- The Southeast Region has implemented an expedited process to investigate allegations of harassment immediately. This inquiry does not replace an employee's right to access other complaints and grievance processes.
- The agency has launched a "Civility Training" program, which was recommended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and is now mandatory for all NPS supervisors and managers.
- National Park Service now has an ombuds, an additional confidential and independent resource available to employees.

## **Why This Is Important**

We are working aggressively to catch issues early and create workplaces where sexual harassment, misconduct and violations of any kind are not tolerated.

Employees should feel empowered to report misconduct, inappropriate behavior, and violations of any kind so that issues can be addressed immediately.

- Disclosures are protected by law and necessary for agency health.
- Reporting options: Management, complaints processes, ombuds, OIG among others

Employees of the National Park Service deserve a healthy and respectful working environment.

Transparency and accountability are the greatest tools we have to ensure the agency's wellbeing and create a National Park Service worthy of the American people.

We all contribute to making the agency the best it can be.

## **TUIN/TUAI/SEMO**

The agency takes these findings very seriously and is committed to holding employees accountable for misconduct.

NPS is weighing appropriate actions in response to the OIG's findings.

Privacy concerns and the right to due process prevent the agency from disclosing specific information about personnel matters.

What I can say is that the employee has made a substantial contribution to our work at \_\_\_\_.

- Outline a few contributions

We, at TUIN/TUAI/SEMO, are a team. Everyone here deserves an opportunity to work in a safe, productive and respectful environment.

We all contribute to making the agency the best it can be.