



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on August 22, 2017

Inspector General Says the IRS is Rehiring People Who Were Fired for Illegal Behavior

The IRS ignored a report issued in *December 2014* by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) that revealed that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) was rehiring people it had previously fired for misconduct. That misconduct included failure to file and pay their own income taxes, falsifying documents, and theft of and illegal use of sensitive taxpayer information. What's to keep the IRS from ignoring that report's update, released in late July?



[The latest report from the TIGTA](#) scorned the IRS for continuing the practice:

TIGTA found that more than 200 of the more than 2,000 former employees who were rehired between January 2015 and March 2016 were previously terminated from the IRS or separated while under investigation for a substantial conduct or performance issue....

Four ... had been terminated or resigned for willful failure to properly file their Federal tax returns; four separated while under investigation or unauthorized accesses to taxpayer information; and 86 separated while under investigation for absences and leave, workplace disruption, or failure to follow instructions.

Investigators learned that part of the reason these people were rehired is because those doing the hiring didn't know, or weren't informed, that they had a previous severely blemished record with the IRS:

Although the IRS follows specific criteria to disqualify applicants for employment, past IRS employment history is not provided to the selecting officer for consideration.... IRS officials stated that it would be cost prohibitive to review prior issues before a hiring decision ... has been made.

However, the IRS was unable to provide documented support for this position.

In addition, some of those reapplying for a position lied on their applications, omitting damning information:

TIGTA also found that 27 former employees failed to disclose a prior termination or conviction on their application, as required, and were rehired by the IRS.

The report made the same recommendations as it did in its previous report, which recommendations were ignored:

TIGTA recommended that the IRS Human Capital Officer provide the selecting official with access to former employee conduct and performance issues, and require that the basis for rehiring employees with prior employment issues be clearly documented.

IRS Human Capital Officer E. Faith Bell dutifully responded that, yes, she would make sure this time



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that the report's recommendation will be followed in the future: She has "commissioned a team" to begin implementing those recommendations.

Ed Feulner, founder of the Heritage Foundation, asked rhetorically: "Would you hire someone who had falsified documents or been convicted of theft? Probably not. But then again, you're not the Internal Revenue Service."

Representative Jim Jordan (R-Ohio), a leader of the House Freedom Caucus and a fierce critic of the IRS, summarized all of this for Radio America:

You could simplify all that and say they rehired 200-some people who were cheating, lying, and snooping on the American taxpayer. That's what they were doing and, "Oh, we're going to rehire them now and let them work in the Internal Revenue Service."

You can't make this stuff up, can you? Just when you think you've heard it all about the IRS, they go and rehire people who have had this kind of background. It is truly unbelievable.

Jordan then reminded Radio America's listeners:

Remember what they did when they got caught targeting, systematically, for a sustained period of time, they were going after people based on their political beliefs. Political speech rights were under attack by an agency with the power, the clout, and the potential influence on your life that the IRS has, that's what they were doing.

Jordan said that the double standard drives taxpayers crazy:

There are a lot of things that make taxpayers mad, but a couple in particular: one is when politicians don't do what they said. A second one is when you have this kind of egregious behavior from the people whose salaries we pay.

And, frankly, the third is — and it goes along with the second — is this idea that there are two standards: one set of rules if you and I do something wrong, but a different set if you're part of the politically connected class.

If your name is Clinton, Comey, Koskinen, Lerner, Lynch, you get a different set of rules than [we] regular folk. That's the part that really bugs the American taxpayer, as well it should.

Five members of the House Ways and Means Committee wrote a letter to one of the connected politicoes named by Jordan: IRS Commissioner John Koskinen, who still works at the IRS despite moves to impeach him. The letter urged Koskinen to stop hiring those with performance and conduct issues:

We write today to voice our concern about the rehiring of such employees and to stress to you that the IRS must immediately stop rehiring employees who were previously involuntarily separated from service for misconduct.

It's unknown if the letter is keeping Koskinen up at night. Probably not, as the IRS is part of the Treasury Department, which is under the executive branch of the federal government. Therefore, only pressure from the president would be likely to have any impact on hiring actions in the future. So far, President Trump has been busy with other matters.

The real solution, of course, is the termination of the agency altogether, allowing those with tainted employment histories to try to find real work in the real world outside of the Washington swamp. It would also relieve the American taxpayer of concerns that the IRS may be watching, using private information to threaten them.



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