# POSITION DESCRIPTION

**administrator of the drug enforcement administration, Department of justice**

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| **OVERVIEW** | |
| Senate Committee | Judiciary |
| Agency Mission | The mission of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is to enforce the controlled substances laws and regulations of the United States and bring to the criminal and civil justice system of the United States, or any other competent jurisdiction, those organizations and principal members of organizations, involved in the growing, manufacture, or distribution of controlled substances appearing in or destined for illicit traffic in the United States; and to recommend and support non-enforcement programs aimed at reducing the availability of illicit controlled substances on the domestic and international markets. |
| Position Overview | The administrator of the DEA leads the office in its mission to enforce the controlled substances laws and regulations. |
| Compensation | Level III $165,300 (5 U.S.C. § 5314)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Reports to the Attorney General, through the Deputy Attorney General or the Associate Attorney General, as directed by the Attorney General (28 CFR 0.102) |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** | |
| Management Scope | In fiscal 2015, the DEA had a budget of $2,033 million, 8,197 positions and 4,899 special agents. |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Investigation and preparation for the prosecution of major violators of controlled substance laws operating at interstate and international levels. * Investigation and preparation for prosecution of criminals and drug gangs who perpetrate violence in our communities and terrorize citizens through fear and intimidation. * Management of a national drug intelligence program in cooperation with federal, state, local and foreign officials to collect, analyze and disseminate strategic and operational drug intelligence information. * Seizure and forfeiture of assets derived from, traceable to, or intended to be used for illicit drug trafficking. * Enforcement of the provisions of the Controlled Substances Act as they pertain to the manufacture, distribution and dispensing of legally produced controlled substances. * Coordination and cooperation with federal, state and local law enforcement officials on mutual drug enforcement efforts and enhancement of such efforts through exploitation of potential interstate and international investigations beyond local or limited federal jurisdictions and resources. * Coordination and cooperation with federal, state and local agencies and with foreign governments, in programs designed to reduce the availability of illicit abuse-type drugs on the United States market through non-enforcement methods such as crop eradication, crop substitution and training of foreign officials. * Responsibility, under the policy guidance of the secretary of State and U.S. ambassadors, for all programs associated with drug law enforcement counterparts in foreign countries. * Liaison with the United Nations, Interpol and other organizations on matters relating to international drug control programs. * The development and implementation of a procedure to release property seized under section 511 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 881) to any innocent party having an immediate right to possession of the property, when the administrator, in his discretion, determines it is not in the interests of justice to initiate forfeiture proceedings against the property (28 CFR 0.101). * Payment of awards (including those over $10,000) under 28 U.S.C. 524(c)(2) and purchase of evidence (including the authority to pay more than $100,000) under 28 U.S.C. 524(c)(1)(F) (28 CFR 0.101). * Preventing the diversion of pharmaceutical controlled substances from legitimate channels. |
| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** | |
| Requirements | * Strong background and credibility in narcotics enforcement * Strong management skills to run a large and complex agency with a substantial foreign footprint |
| Competencies | * Strong interpersonal and communication skills * Ability to work under high pressure * Ability to handle sensitive matters * Able to work cooperatively with the attorney general, the deputy attorney general and other members of the federal, state and local law enforcement community, as well as foreign partners to combat drug trafficking and illegal drug use |
| **PAST APPOINTEES** | |

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| Chuck Rosenberg (2015 to present) (Acting) – Chief of Staff and senior counselor to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Comey; Partner at a Washington, D.C. law firm; U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Texas |
| Michele Leonhart (2007 to 2015) – Deputy DEA Administrator; Special Agent in Charge, Los Angeles Field Division; Special Agent in Charge, San Francisco Field Division; Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Los Angeles Field Division |
| Karen Tandy (2003-2007) – Associate Deputy Attorney General, responsible for developing national drug enforcement policies; Criminal Division, Department of Justice; Assistant U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of Virginia; Assistant U.S. Attorney, Western District of Washington |

1. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31, May 5, 2017), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials at 2013 levels during calendar year 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)