# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# Assistant Secretary for Economic Development, Department of commerce

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Environment and Public Works |
| Agency Mission | To create the conditions for economic growth and opportunity |
| Position Overview | The assistant secretary of commerce for economic development has primary responsibility for the department’s domestic economic development activities and is the secretary’s principal advisor on economic development responsibilities and activities. |
| Compensation | Level IV $155,500 (5 U.S.C. § 5315)[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Position Reports to | Secretary of Commerce |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | The Economic Development Administration had a budget of $38 million in fiscal 2016 and 206 employees.[[2]](#endnote-2) |
| Primary Responsibilities | * Oversees the department’s domestic economic development activities and is the secretary’s principal advisor on economic development responsibilities and activities
* Proposes general federal policies relating to economic development of undeveloped or underdeveloped portions of the country
* Designates economic development districts and terminates such designations when conditions require
* Assists state and local agencies in planning and carrying out economic development programs for designated districts
* Establishes guides on the nature, scope and content of any Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS), and acts upon CEDS requests
* Assists state and local agencies in developing applications for technical and financial assistance through grants and cooperative agreements
* Acts on requests for approval of economic development projects, and develops, issues and interprets policy guidance and criteria that agencies must follow in performing functions under these financial assistance programs
* Maintains relationships with federal agencies and national organizations concerned with economic development
* Assures the administration of Title I of the Public Works Employment Act of 1976, as amended by P.L. 95-28, including monitoring and servicing of grants
* Assures administration of loans and grants provided under the Community Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1977. P. L. 95-31[[3]](#endnote-3)
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | * Previous government experience (a plus)
* Track record as an effective manager in a large and diverse organization
* Knowledge in the areas of finance, personnel, planning and evaluation
* Understanding of the legislative and federal budgeting process
* Knowledge of the division’s functions and policies
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| Competencies | * Strong leader
* Ability to work across party lines
* Well-developed communication skills useful for delivering an economic message to stakeholders, the private sector and Congress
* Ability to translate complicated economic information in a format usable for the secretary, deputy secretary and the administration’s economic team
* Strong communication and collaboration skills to work extensively across U.S. government agencies and with other relevant stakeholders
* Ability to work under high pressure
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Roy K. J. Williams (2014 to 2017): Deputy Director, White House Office of Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Affairs; Executive Director, Office of Recovery for Auto Communities and Workers, Department of Labor; Mayor, Youngstown, Ohio[[4]](#endnote-4)  |
| John R. Fernandez (2009 to 2012): Of Counsel, Krieg DeVault Alexander & Capehart, LLP; Senior Vice President and Partner, First Capital Group; Director, Board of Directors, Bloomington Economic Development Corporation[[5]](#endnote-5) |
| Santanu K. Baruah (2005 to 2009): Chief of Staff, Economic Development Administration; Deputy Assistant Secretary, Economic Development Administration;[[6]](#endnote-6) Corporate Mergers and Acquisitions Consultant, Performance Consulting Group[[7]](#endnote-7) |

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)
2. Leadership Directories [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. OPM [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. https://www.eda.gov/archives/2016/news/press-releases/2014/05/14/williams.htm [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Leadership Directories [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. http://rncnyc2004.blogspot.com/2008/06/santanu-sandy-k-baruah-biography.html [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. http://www.detroitchamber.com/sandy-baruah-4/ [↑](#endnote-ref-7)