

National Security Biotechnology Workforce Act of 2026

Overview

The **National Security Biotechnology Workforce Act of 2026** would direct the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish, at each appropriate federal agency, an annual biotechnology training program for designated federal employees.

Background

The National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology (NSCEB) assessed in April 2025 that a properly trained U.S. government workforce is necessary to secure U.S. leadership in biotechnology and other emerging technologies.

Federal agencies consistently highlight a growing demand for skilled biotechnology professionals, as well as for leaders who, while not experts, have enough understanding of biotechnology to make policy or programmatic decisions. Biotechnology experts are in demand across the interagency—from laboratory staff to program managers to regulators to facility inspectors. Government officials cannot design or execute policies and programs affecting biotechnology without a general understanding of the underlying concepts. Not all government employees need to be biotechnology experts, but they do need to be “bioliterate.”

New technologies and concepts emerge in biotechnology all the time, and biotechnology is increasingly converging with other emerging technologies, including AI and quantum. The U.S. government needs its biotechnology experts to remain technologically current.

Available for House introduction

Available for Senate introduction

Congress established the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology (NSCEB) to assess biotechnology’s national security impact and recommend strategies to ensure American leadership.

Read the NSCEB’s April 2025 report at <https://www.biotech.senate.gov/final-report>

Legislative Details

01 Establishment

Within 360 days, OPM shall establish annual training programs at each appropriate federal agency for designated covered employees, which include supervisors and officials responsible for program management, research and development, procurement, logistics, or similar functions.

02 Consultation

In establishing the training programs, OPM shall consult with leadership and workforce training managers at each appropriate federal agency.

03 Training Content

Training shall, at a minimum, include:

- The fundamental science underlying biotechnology, AI, and other critical and emerging technologies;
- Biotechnology's applications to health, agriculture, energy, and other relevant areas;
- The ways in which AI, quantum, and other technologies can be leveraged to advance biotechnology;
- Federal mechanisms for funding, procuring and deploying biotechnology;
- Ethical, legal, and social implications of biotechnology;
- Risk mitigation, biosafety, and biosecurity; and
- Future trends in biotechnology and their national security relevance.

04 Agency-Specific Requirements

- Department of Defense must train servicemembers, civilian personnel, and contractors and provide access to the training program at institutions such as the National Defense University.
- Department of Homeland Security must train employees on biosafety, the prevention of illicit technology transfer, and biotechnology-related border security.
- The Intelligence Community must train employees on how to assess and interpret biotechnology-related intelligence in open-source and classified contexts.
- Department of State must deliver biotechnology diplomacy training at the Foreign Service Institute, addressing global biotechnology policy and collaboration.

05 Evaluation and Reporting

OPM shall track participation rates across agencies, collect and use participant feedback to improve training, and submit an annual report to Congress on implementation.

06 Funding and Sunset

\$50 million is authorized for fiscal years 2026-2030. The training programs established under this legislation sunsets after 5 years.

Interested in leading or co-sponsoring this bill?

Please contact ideas@biotech.senate.gov

