



The Force

Chapter 73's Award Winning Hard Hitting Newsletter

A publication of NTEU, Chapter 73 Vol.10, No. 8 November, 2007

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Melinda Haubner drawing the winning ticket for NTEU's CFC laptop! See page 7 !!!

FMLA Part II

By: Lona Rackley

FMLA is a legal entitlement. This means it is a provision of law. You may need an FMLA if you or a family member are experiencing specific family or medical needs. FMLA is most commonly associated with a serious medical condition but the scope, intent and spirit of this legal entitlement do not limit its application only to this specific application.

FMLA provides up to 480 hours of leave for a serious condition. A serious condition is defined as one which makes renders a



person unable to perform the essential duties of his/her position. This incapacity may be a physical or mental illness, injury, pregnancy (which is also covered as a targeted disability under the American Disabilities Act), childbirth and care of a new born.

Also covered is placement of a child for foster care or adoption. Additionally the care of a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition is covered.

You begin the FMLA process by invoking (asking) for leave and providing management with the reason for your request. This can be done initially with an informal discussion with your manager. Front line managers have the ability to grant 40 hours of leave immediately based on the need. Management can re-

YOUR 2008 PAY RAISE

NTEU needs your support in helping get affair and equitable pay raise of 3.5 percent for federal employees. Last year federal employees received an average of 2.2 percent pay raise, the lowest pay raise for civil servants since 1988!!! For the fiscal year 2008 budget submission the President asked for a 3 percent raise for federal civil servants and the military.

Thankfully the proposed pay increase is not as low as last year or worse even lower, but we as federal employees are



still victims of the widening pay gap with the private sector. The pay increase should be at least be 3.5 percent to begin bridging this gap. A 3.5 percent increase would equal the Employment Cost Index plus 1/2 percent, which was the standard for federal

employees before last year.

The Federal Employees Pay Comparability Ave was enacted in 1990 to close the gap between federal and private sector pay and has never been fully implemented. On average federal employees are paid less than 13 percent less than their private sector counterparts.

Write you congress person and house representative; tell them you want a fair and equitable pay raise!!!



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

BY: JACKIE HUFF

Article nine of the National Agreement begins by stating “The Employer and the Union recognize that the use of official time to conduct authorized representational activities is in their mutual interest” This is a statement that NTEU believes, and management is supposed to uphold, yet they are systemically ignoring.

You may have noticed that NTEU stewards are being illegally denied official time to meet with employees, write grievances, attend meetings with management or TIGTA officials. We feel what management is trying to do is union bust. Chapter 73 stewards are not standing idly by and allowing management to strip our rights away. Your Chapter is fighting supervisors, department managers, and Official time keeper to ensure your rights are protected. We are forcing management to follow the Local Official Time Utilization Plan, (LOTUP). We are ensuring we are available to you. Our stewards are ensuring that management is giving proper documentation each time management tries to implement one of these union busting maneuvers. This forces management to extend any deadlines for filing grievances and forces management to reschedule meetings. Your Chapter is fighting management to follow the contract, but we need your help.

Has your manager denied you time to go to the union? Have you been denied you contractual rights to meet with your union representative? Is management telling you that you will have to use your own time to speak to a union representative? Let us know! Under Article nine (9) sections 2P of the National Agreement, if management denies a steward OR an employee their right to go to the union there are procedures they MUST follow. Come to the union office! Get to know your contract and your rights. Dwight D. Eisenhower said, “Only a fool would try to deprive working men and working women of their right to join the union of their choice.” I’d go further to say that only a fool would consider such lame attempts to bust a Chapter as strong as NTEU Chapter 73.



“We paid you 2 million dollars to break the union and the best you could do was dent it a little?”

NTEU 73 RESPONDS TO EMPLOYEE HEALTH CONCERNS

Distressed employees flooded the union office with their concerns about bedbugs and roaches found in various work areas. These same concerns were expressed to management. In fear of being exposed to immediate contact and related health issues with the pests the affected employees wanted an immediate response. Many employees also feared that they would contaminate their homes by inadvertently carrying the pests out of the building. The concerns were valid to the employees, the health issues from disease, bites and allergic reactions and potential of undue financial hardship for extermination fees if they did transport the pests. NTEU stepped up. Pat Breitenstein filed an official OSHA complaint on behalf of the union and our employees. Shortly after the complaint was filed management announced that exterminators would treat the buildings.

This Really Bugs Me!!!

Heather Philips

Dateline Covington KY

The IRS Gateway Center has been invaded. The dreaded bedbugs have established a beachhead on the third floor. The source of the invasion is unknown; however, there are several theories as to the origin. One theory is that they are an invasion force from outer space; another is that they were planted by Iraqi terrorists; and still another that they are illegal aliens. The Force attempted to contact management, however they were unavailable as they were too busy engaging in buck passing with the building ownership over responsibility. We then captured one of the bedbugs, unfortunately no one spoke bedbugese and the little buggger swallowed the black pill and committed suicide before a translator could be found.

It is rumored that the IRS was planning on issuing all employees a large shoe to attack these creatures; however the Bug's Rights Activist have obtain a court injunction preventing such action. The Administration subscribing to the alien theory has proposed to offer the bugs citizenship. While military leaders believing that they are the result of Iraqi terrorists have proposed to bomb Baghdad. NASA has checked in offering to send a space probe to see if they can find the planet of origin. Meanwhile the employees have barricaded themselves in their pods and are threatening to kill the bedbugs on sight. Management is offering to hold meetings over the incident. NTEU contacted OSHA and was informed that as long as the bugs were wearing hardhats there was nothing they could do. A cry has gone out for the ORKIN man, but sources say he is trapped on the third floor mired in red tape. We are so desperate that the Force is sending out a cry for help. Atom Ant where are you?

The proceeding was a humorist look at a serious situation. Chapter 73 does take this bedbug infestation serious. Pat Breitenstein is Chapter's go to person on this matter. She is prodding management to eliminate this threat not only to the employees, but to the community at large. Pat has contacted OSHA in an effort to ensure that the proper action will be taken to exterminate the bedbugs from IRS locations. If you have any questions, you can contact the Union Office at (859) 669-5700



'DO ME A FAVOR - STOP SAYING 'GOOD NIGHT, DON'T LET THE BED BUGS BITE '!'

NTEU UNION OFFICE HOURS

Fourth Street Office

Monday-Friday 6:00 am- 1:00 am
(859) 669-5370

Industrial Road Retention Center

Monday-Friday 12:30 pm-2:30 pm
(859) 669-5024

Gateway Center Office Room 511

Monday-Friday 6:00 am-4:00 pm and 7:30 PM-
11:00 PM
(859) 669-5700

Not a Union Member? Missing out on all the benefits
membership brings? Join the Union today!!!

We're on the web!
WWW.NTEU73.org

We're working hard
"To Organize Federal
Employees To Work
Together To Ensure
That Every Federal
Employee Is Treated
With Dignity and Re-
spect."

THE FORCE
NTEU73's Hard Hit-
ting Newsletter

President:
Jacqueline S. Huff
Vice President:
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quest medical documentation, however, if such specific information is requested it is not provided to management. Medical information is supplied directly to the FOH (Federal Occupational Health) physician. This can be faxed directly to FOH giving you, the employee, a degree of privacy and protecting your sensitive medical data. This privacy and protection is also a legal right. You may be provided a medical information release by your manager. The manager may tell you that you must sign the medical information release before information can be forwarded to FOH for review. This is not true. The FOH reviewer is a medical professional and should be able to validate statements from your treating physician (which may be in the form of a statement or recommendation signed by your doctor or on the internal form WH-380. If you choose to permit the FOH doctor to contact your doctor you may, however, saying no is not a reason a request can be held from processing.

If you do choose to sign a medical information release you can amend the form to include specific criteria under which the FOH doctor may request additional information from your treating physician. You may request that the contact be by three way call at a time acceptable to you and your doctor. You may authorize the FOH representative to fax specific questions to your doctor, who will usually provide you with a copy of what information has been provided. You can ask what clarification is needed and ask that it be provided directly to you. This will give you the opportunity to talk about the information requested with your doctor. Remember, this additional contact is your choice. You decide to agree or say no. In the event that FOH and your doctor are not in agreement, the agency is required to arrange and pay for a third party neutral evaluation, at the agencies expense. Pending final approval of you FMLA your leave should be provisionally approved per law, rule and regulation.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS READ ARTICLES 32, 33 AND 34. Also read and review the information on FMLA entitlement and criteria in the National Agreement, pages 203 to 206. If you need a contract, request that your manager provide on to you.

Part 3: What leave can be requested and used for FMLA?

Have you moved?

The Agency does not notify NTEU when you move, so it is important to you let us know. You can change your address at www.NTEU.org or you can complete the slip below and drop it off at the union office so that we can update the records for you.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Ph: _____

Warning: Letters of Proposed Disciplinary and Adverse Action

By: Brandon Havlin

I would like to take a few minutes to explain to NTEU members and nonmembers alike some things that are occurring here at the Internal Revenue Service across the board.

The IRS is distributing these letters to employees left and right and people just do not seem to be aware of there rights. There are two ways to handle this situation. First you have the right in which NTEU will repre-
 to have an Oral Reply employee). In an Oral Reply
 sent you (the em- will prepare a statement
 a NTEU representative gations and the validity
 in regards to the alle- Everything is recorded
 of these allegations. stenographer and both
 on tape by a non-IRS parties will receive a written transcript of everything that was said during the
 meeting. The catch here is a big catch so listen and listen closely. From the
 parties will receive a written transcript of everything that was said during the meeting. The catch here is a big catch so listen and listen closely. From the
 time that management gives you the proposal letter you have **seven calen-**
dar days to request an oral reply. After this timeframes has lapsed, the
 Agency has the right to deny you any rights in which you may defend your-
 self. Information regarding these procedures are located in Article 39 Sec-
 tion 2 A of the National Agreement. You also have the option of a written re-
 ply, but an oral reply is the best avenue to pursue any allegations against
 you and the preferred method of the IRS.

“From the time management gives you the proposal letter you have seven calendar days to request an oral reply.”

In conclusion, please don't wait until fifteen days after you receive this type of letter to contact NTEU. Go to the Union office as soon as you receive a proposal of disciplinary or adverse action come to the Union Offices. We have a team of specially trained stewards who will get things rolling to meet the timeframes, and ensure your rights are protected.

WANTED

Are you interested in writing for The Force? Submit an article! The deadline is the 1st of each month. If selected we will print your article, with or without your byline; your choice. To submit an article simply email one to Tammy Rackley or bring it to the union office. Identify your article as "article for The Force." The Force reserves the right edit all articles it prints.

Truthful James

Union Language
(With apologies to Bret Harte)

I reside at Cincinnati, and my name is Truthful James
I am not up to small deceit, or any sinful games;
And I'll tell in simple language what I know about the row
That's breaking up our Society upon the Ohio.

But first I would remark, that it is not a proper plan
For any management gent to intimidate his fellow-man,
And, if a union don't agree with his peculiar whim,
To go ahead with the plan to put a stop to him.

Now nothing could be finer or more beautiful to see
Than the harmony that could happen in that same Society,
Till Barbara Pabotoy signed the LOU to change letters of reprimand
To make tax-related retention five years over two years throughout the
land.

Then management read a paper, and they reconstructed there
From those current plans, a change that was extremely rare;
And Colleen M Kelley then asked for a suspension of the rules,
Till she could negotiate some sense out of this pack of mules.

Then management smiled their bitter smiles, and refused to admit to
fault,
It seemed they would gather folk, and chastise those who balk.
They are most insensitive people, our flock of management.
And on several occasions they fleece the government. (Contracting
out.)

Now I hold it is not decent for a management gent
To say another is an ass, - at least, to all intent;
Nor should the individuals who happens to be meant
Listen in shocked silence, to any great extent.

And this is all I have to say of these improper games,
For I live in Cincinnati, and my name is Truthful James;
And I've told in simple language what I knew about the row
That's breaking up our Society upon the Ohio.

Legislative Issues

Concerning You!!

H.R 1256, the Hoyer Bill

NTEU ask that members support H.R. 1256, the Hoyer Bill. This legislation proposes an increase to the share of health premiums paid by the government. The federal government on average pays approximately 72% of the insurance premiums for its employees. Comparatively this is in sharp contrast with most large private corporations and state and local government employers who routinely pay an average of 80% of their employee's health insurance premiums.

This bill is being introduced to the House of Representatives by Representative Steny Hoyer. It proposes to increase the federal share of our health insurance premiums to 80% thereby reducing our costs. Please considering writing your representative and ask them to support this bill.

Congrats Artists Club LWR Raffle Winner



Congratulations to Sally Russell of ACS who just won the T-shirt Raffle Presented by The Artists' Club President Ron Cunningham (*right*) and Union Steward Dwight Cornett (*left*). The Artists' Club supports Union membership within their club.

Not a member? Join Today!

Congratulations Beverly A. Frank

Winner of the Union CFC Laptop!!!

NTEU chapter 73 union member Beverly Frank, an employee in Case Processing Liens is the grand prize winner in the Union CFC's laptop! "Beverly is a swing shift employee," said Tina Wentz, "and she was extremely excited and was to the point of tears."

The Combined Federal Campaign is the world's largest workplace charity campaign. NTEU would like to send a thank you to every person that participated in the NTEU 73 raffle. Your participation helps your own co-workers in their time of need.

NTEU 73 would also like to thank union member Melinda Haubner. She was grabbed out of the hall on floor five and asked to draw the name for the laptop NTEU 73 raffled for the benefit of CFC. She graciously did the honor. Thank you Melinda!

A special thanks also goes out to Tina Wentz, Assistant Chief Steward, for volunteering to be NTEU 73's key person in this year's campaign.

The Combined Federal Campaign gives each of us the chance to have fun at work and take pride in our jobs as we work together to come up with creative ideas of how to make the most money to help reach the campaign goal.

When you give to the Combined Federal Campaign, you are basically giving to yourself, your community, your world. The donations that come in each year from federal employees, postal employees and the military support many organizations throughout the world.

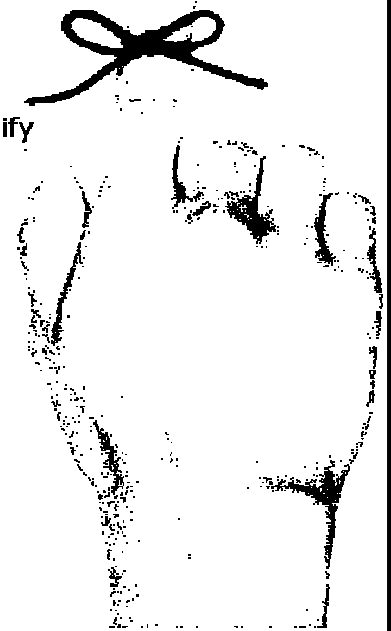
Don't forget, your income is important, protect it!

Don't miss out on our new income protection plan during open enrollment
Enrolling now, you can qualify for:

- Up to 60% of your Income - Max. \$2,000 monthly.
- Choose a plan that will pay benefits up to 24 months.
- Starts after 14 days of disability, (First day if hospitalized).
- Does not offset for other benefits.
- Pays 50% of the benefit if hurt on the job, in addition to workers compensation.

**Guarantee Issue if actively at work full-time.
With NO medical examination or health questions.**

Schedule a meeting at the NTEU 73 office by calling:
(513) 842-0705



Call the Union Office at 859-669-5370

NTEU

The National Treasury Employees Union



Win!

Win!

Money!

Recruit New Members

From November 1 to April 30th

First Place:	\$500.00	at least 25 1187's.
Second Place:	\$400.00	at least 20 1187's
Third Place:	\$300.00	at least 15 1187's

See Union Office for complete rules