

# NTEU

The National Treasury Employees Union

# THE FORCE

A Publication of NTEU Chapter 73

January 2018 Edition

## NTEU73 WINS INCLEMENT WEATHER MASS GRIEVANCE.

On February 17 and 18th 2015 Cincinnati Service Center Employees were improperly denied administrative leave. NTEU 73 filed a mass grievance , which ended up in arbitration on April 23, 2015. The agency has agreed to grant administrative leave to impacted employees to be used no later than September1,2018. Those who were included in mass grievance should have been notified via email.



## January 19th Shut Down Looms!

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In December, Congress passed another Continuing Resolution (CR) funding the federal government at Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 levels until midnight January 19, 2018. Negotiations on overall defense and non-defense spending levels, as well as disaster funding, immigration and health care issues, and other expiring provisions are ongoing. Republican leaders in the House are working on another CR that would continue current spending levels for federal agencies into mid-February, likely February 16. However, it is unclear at this time what additional provisions may be in the measure, and whether it can garner enough votes to pass. Until Congress and the White House agree upon overall spending levels for FY 2018 and address sequestration, no action can occur to determine individual agency funding levels for the remainder of FY 2018. Legislation championed by NTEU to ensure that federal employees are paid in the event of a government shutdown was introduced last month in the House —

H.R. 4694 — by Virginia Representatives Beyer (VA-8-D) and Wittman (VA-1-R), and Senate – S. 2274 – by Senator Cardin (D-MD). NTEU worked closely with these offices and the many others who have cosponsored this important legislation for federal employees and their families.

It is unbelievable that we are a week away from a possible government shutdown once again. This is no way to run the federal government. NTEU continues to urge elected officials to act to keep agencies open and federal employees paid and on the job. We will keep you updated on further developments.



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## *The Force*

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**From the Desk of NTEU73**

**President  
Rick Riley .**

**“As always,  
At Your Service.”  
Rick Riley**



## A View from the Saddle

Aww, the Holidays are here, and they are my favorite time of year. We as employees get extra time off to spend with our family, friends and loved ones. My hope is that everyone reading this gets to do just that. Christmas has always been very special to me. I have very fond memories of waking up on Christmas morning as a child and being so excited. I was blessed with parents who made my childhood very happy. Then there is New Year's. I married my bride 30 years ago on New Year's Day. New Year's Eve has become our celebration since then.

The New Year will bring CIRSC many new jobs and opportunities. Congress still hasn't decided on our budget for 2018, which began October 1st. The IRS has lost so many employees over the years and with the closing of Submission here. Changes are coming here. There will be jobs announced almost constantly over the next 18 months, so be ready. Opportunities for everyone will be available. As new areas open up, the need for new managers and leads will be there.

The President has issued an Executive Order abolishing labor-management councils. OPM has issued a directive to agencies to even go as far as throw out their negotiated agreements if there is an agreement or rules establishing such. This is going to bring on another round of attacks on our rights. There is already talk of a pay freeze for fiscal year 2019. We will be addressing these issues constantly with members of Congress, however, it becomes more effec-

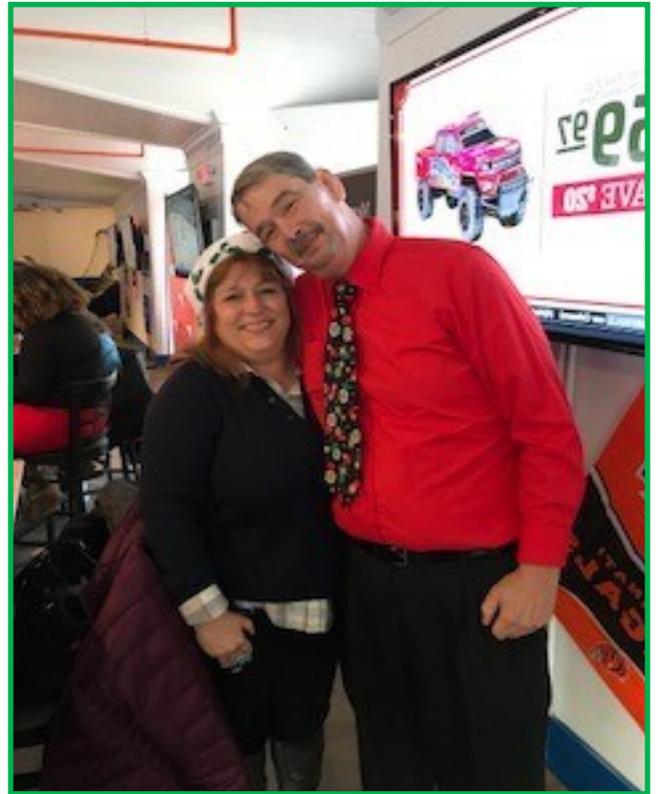
tive the more people who complain to their Senators and Congressmen. The old saying of “United we Bargain, divided We Beg!” has never been more true than now. If you aren't a member, join, if your friends aren't members, ask them to join.

With all the issues we face as employees though, we can be thankful for our family and friends. The Holidays I hope are stress free for everyone and the New Year hopefully will bring us all Health, Wealth and Happiness.

From the Officers, Executive Board, the Staff and Stewards of Chapter 73, we wish everyone Happy Holidays!



# NTEU Christmas Party!



# Christmas Party Continued.



## NTEU Endorses Bills to Boost Federal Pay

Washington, D.C. – The National Treasury Employees Union is endorsing House and Senate legislation introduced today that would give federal employees a much-needed 3 percent pay raise in 2019.

“Federal employees living and working in all 50 states are just like everyone else in the middle class, trying to pay their bills and save for retirement,” NTEU National President Tony Reardon said. “A 3 percent bump in pay is a modest but meaningful way to help them do that.”

Economists have predicted that private sector salaries will grow by an average of 3 percent this year, so the proposal to do the same for our nation’s public servants is appropriate, Reardon said.

“We applaud Sen. Schatz, Rep. Connolly, and those members of Congress who clearly recognize the valuable contributions made by the men and women of the civil service and are fighting to compensate them accordingly,” Reardon said. Federal employees are highly-skilled professionals who choose to work for their fellow citizens delivering important public services like securing the nation, safeguarding the economy and protecting public health. Many of them could earn significantly higher salaries working for private companies but instead remain committed to the public mission of their agencies.

For years, federal employees have endured pay freezes, raises that don’t keep up with the rising cost of living, furloughs, and increased retirement contributions, all in the name of deficit reduction.

“Too often, federal pay and benefits are an easy target when Congress tries to cut spending, so NTEU intends to fight hard to help pass this legislation and give federal workers a fair and respectful pay raise next year,” Reardon said.

***NTEU represents 150,000 employees at 32 federal agencies and departments.***



### NTEU 73 Welcomes New Treasurer, Bill Lawrence.

Many of my friends cannot believe that I am a Union Member, much less a Steward. I was always in Management when I was a banker. I became a Union Steward, because I was tired of seeing my co-workers abused by managers that either didn’t know what is the contract or just didn’t care. I have had managers tell me that the contract didn’t apply to them. I have suggested a mandatory

class for managers to help them understand the bare basics of the contract. I am talking about an employee getting written up for AWOL when they e-mailed their manager letting them know that they were sick and would not be in. I am talking about a manager refusing to accept a letter from a Doctor, because she didn’t like how the letter was written. The employee was written up for a week’s AWOL. I was able to get both reversed when I talked to the Department Manager. Another reason that I became a Steward is to help employees facing the shutdown of the Service Center. I want

to use my background as a banker to help each and every employee to have a plan for September 2019. It might be: retirement, a job swap, finding a new job on USAJOBS.GOV or as a last resort severance. We have the time and the resources to make sure that every person in the Service Center leaves here ready for whatever life has in store for them. I am now a fulltime Steward in the 4th Street building. Stop by and ask questions. We might not have the answers right away, but we can help find the answers.

Bill Lawrence, Steward & Proud of it.



## Federal Employees' 2018 Pay Raise Approved in Executive Order

The 2018 pay tables for federal employees have now been released. The rates for each General Schedule grade, step and locality are now available in the GS Pay Calculator.

The new pay rates include an average pay raise of 1.9% percent and will be effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2018.

The base pay increase for 2018 is, as expected, 1.4%. There is an additional amount added for locality pay that will bring the overall average pay increase up to 1.9%. Here is a listing of the locality pay definitions for 2018.

The exact amount of the raise for each federal employee under the General Schedule will depend on the locality where a federal employee is working. Check out the GS Pay Calculator to look up your GS grade, step and locality rate. **Locality Pay for 2017**

There were no new locality pay areas added for 2018. The Federal Salary Council had recommended adding Burlington, VT and Virginia Beach, VA. This recommendation was not adopted for 2018 by the Pay Agent. These new locality pay areas will most likely become part of the locality pay system in 2019.

The Salary Council has also recommended new locality pay areas for San Antonio, TX and Birmingham, AL. These will not be added in January 2018 either. Adding these cities as new locality pay areas was "tentatively approved" by the President's Pay Agent. There is a regulatory process required before they can be added. The date of their future inclusion is unknown; it could be January 2019 before this actually occurs.

**Pay Rates Depend on Geographic Location (Locality Pay)**

The pay raise for the "Rest of the U.S." will be 1.67%. The raise for the Washington, DC area will be an increase of 2.29%. The raise in the San Jose, San Francisco locality in California will be 2.21%.

The amount of the raise depends on an employee's grade, step and the geographic location. These rates can easily be obtained with the GS Pay Calculator. For example, a GS 13, step 5 employee working in the Washington, DC locality pay area will see the results posted in this way:

Originally published on FEDSmith

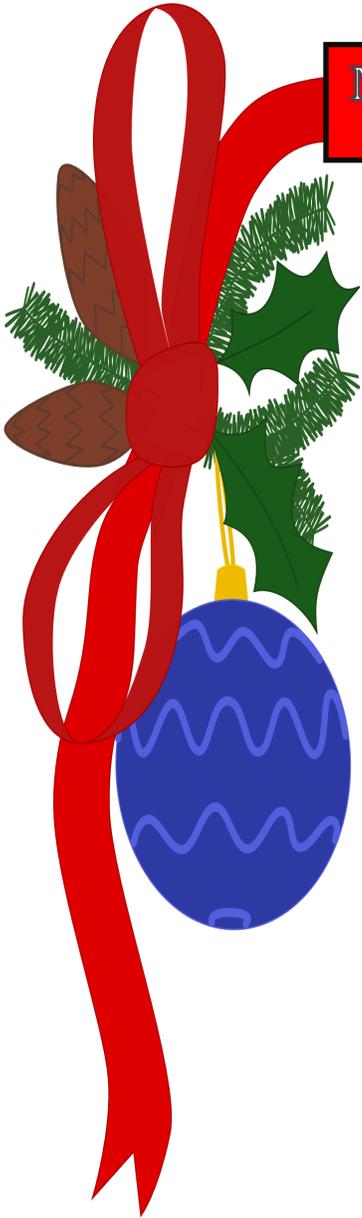
**SALARY TABLE 2018-CIN**  
**INCORPORATING THE 1.4% GENERAL SCHEDULE INCREASE AND A LOCALITY PAYMENT OF 19.87%**  
**FOR THE LOCALITY PAY AREA OF CINCINNATI-WILMINGTON-MAYSVILLE, OH-KY-IN**  
**TOTAL INCREASE: 1.70%**  
**EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2018**

*Annual Rates by Grade and Step*

Grade	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7	Step 8	Step 9	Step 10
1	\$ 22,518	\$ 23,272	\$ 24,021	\$ 24,765	\$ 25,514	\$ 25,952	\$ 26,691	\$ 27,439	\$ 27,468	\$ 28,172
2	25,318	25,921	26,759	27,468	27,780	28,597	29,415	30,232	31,050	31,867
3	27,624	28,545	29,465	30,386	31,306	32,227	33,148	34,068	34,989	35,909
4	31,012	32,045	33,078	34,111	35,145	36,178	37,211	38,245	39,278	40,311
5	34,696	35,853	37,010	38,167	39,323	40,480	41,637	42,794	43,950	45,107
6	38,675	39,963	41,252	42,541	43,829	45,118	46,406	47,695	48,984	50,272
7	42,978	44,411	45,843	47,276	48,708	50,140	51,573	53,005	54,438	55,870
8	47,597	49,184	50,771	52,358	53,945	55,532	57,119	58,706	60,293	61,880
9	52,571	54,324	56,076	57,829	59,581	61,334	63,086	64,839	66,591	68,344
10	57,894	59,824	61,753	63,683	65,613	67,543	69,473	71,403	73,333	75,263
11	63,605	65,726	67,846	69,967	72,087	74,208	76,328	78,449	80,569	82,690
12	76,237	78,779	81,320	83,861	86,402	88,944	91,485	94,026	96,567	99,109
13	90,655	93,677	96,699	99,721	102,743	105,765	108,787	111,809	114,831	117,853
14	107,128	110,699	114,270	117,841	121,412	124,982	128,553	132,124	135,695	139,266
15	126,011	130,211	134,411	138,612	142,812	147,012	151,212	155,413	159,613	163,813

Applicable locations are shown on the 2018 Locality Pay Area Definitions page: <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2018/locality-pay-area-definitions/>

NTEU 73 Says Thanks with Holiday Lunch.



# NTEU73 Stewards Working for the Members

Your NTEU Stewards work for you, and are available if not in person, by phone or email. There are multiple stewards throughout Cincinnati IRS center locations Here is a list of stewards currently in NTEU offices:

## ***Gateway:***

Chapter President **Rick Riley**  
Vice President **Karen Walsh**  
Chief Steward **Debbie Mullikin**  
Office Staff/Stewards **Sarah Corea, Tonya Morris** and **Chris Pierce**  
Swing Chief Steward **Dennis Stone**

## ***Fourth Street Center:***

Stewards **Hillary Montgomery**  
Treasurer **Bill Lawrence**

## ***Florence:***

Stewards **Janet Colwell**

NTEU 73 welcomes the following new stewards:

**Sarah Baker, Aaron Davis, Jackie Johnson, Trisha Lawrence,** and **Kimberly Seiwert.**

We are looking forward to the year ahead and think they make a great addition to our team.

**Sarah Corea** got an employee's 15 day suspension reduced to an admonishment letter. She also had an employee's evaluation raised from a 3.2 to a 4.6. She had AWOL changed to LWOP!

**Hillary Montgomery** had an employee's AWOL converted to LWOP.

**Chris Pierce** helped an employee avoid removal. He was able to get a 14 day suspension reduced to a 3 day. Chris also worked to get an employee's Annual Performance Appraisal raised to a 4.6!

**Loretha Hudson** worked to have employee who was being removed to get The Buy-Out instead.

**Rebekah Taylor** helped an employee get their Annual evaluation restored to all 5's. Rebekah was also able to get a removal lowered to a 5 day suspension.

**Tonya Morris** was able to get several charges of AWOL converted to LWOP.

*If you have any issues or concerns, call an NTEU73 office at (Gateway)859-320-3617, (4th Street) 859-320-4649.*

# NTEU

The National Treasury Employees Union

# Chapter 73

## Philadelphia IRS to Roll Out Telework Without Key Protections

On Friday, the IRS informed NTEU that it will unilaterally rollout an expanded telework pilot for approximately 300 Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) in W&I and Contact Representatives (CRs) in SB/SE ACS in Philadelphia as early as this week.

Although NTEU has advocated for and fully supports telework expansion for CSRs and CRs, the IRS refuses to agree that the 2012 Customer Service Agreement's prohibition on the use of ASPECT data/reports for evaluative purposes applies to pilot participants. In addition, the IRS refuses to negotiate over which employees may participate in the pilot.

Specifically, the IRS has said that it plans to ignore the CSA's restrictions on the use of reports of average handle time, sign-in, sign-out, meal periods and other time reports to evaluate employees. The CSA allows such reports to be used as a "performance indicator" but data from these reports alone cannot be the basis of negative evaluations.

NTEU and the IRS originally agreed to these limitations on the use of ASPECT data because they recognized that many factors influence the use of reason codes and average handle time, and therefore it would be unfair to employees to evaluate them on this data alone. In addition, NTEU is concerned that the use of average handle time to evaluate employees will negatively affect customer service. Employees may be unfairly pressured to compromise the thoroughness and quality of their responses to shorten the length of calls.

The IRS' actions are puzzling because, in the last pilot of CSR/CR telework, the agency agreed that these provisions of the CSA would apply. The IRS declared that pilot an unqualified success. And the IRS refuses to explain why it wants to treat employees in Philadelphia differently than the CSR/CRs in other sites who are still participating in the Phase II pilot.

On positions eligible for the pilot, NTEU has argued that CSRs in AM, IDT/VA, International and other units, including Tax Law Specialists and SB/SE CRs, should be allowed to participate. The IRS refuses to agree to allow any employees participate, other than W&I AM CSRs and SB/SE ACS CRs. As we know all Call-Site employees—in Philadelphia and elsewhere—would like the opportunity to work from home. NTEU believes that the IRS' actions are inconsistent with the Customer Service Agreement (CSA) and the law. We will pursue all appropriate legal measures to enforce our rights and those of employees, whose performance evaluations, award eligibility and potential upward mobility could be unfairly harmed.

Meanwhile, please carefully consider how participating in this telework pilot, without the full protections of the CSA, could harm you before volunteering to participate. At a minimum, discuss your participation with your Chapter 71 steward. NTEU will keep you updated on further developments.

## NTEU 73 Adds More Discounts for Members

National Treasury Employees Union is pleased to announce our new membership perk with TicketsatWork. Now you'll have access to exclusive savings on movie tickets, theme parks, hotels, tours, Broadway and Vegas shows & more. Be sure to visit often as new products and discounts are constantly being added! Look for local discounts for Kings Island, AMC, Great Wolf Lodge as well as National discounts on Walt Disney World, Cirque du Soleil, and Six Flags.

Stop by The Union Office and we will register you to start receiving these wonderful discounts.



