



The Defense **14**

The Fight Continues...Are You In?

October 2015—Volume 11

Continuing Resolution Signed



On September 30, 2015 President Obama signed a Continuing Resolution or C.R. that extends the Government's funding until December 11, 2015. While this did prevent a shut down on October 1, 2015, all it actually accomplished was proverbially kicking the can down the road.

Our very own Chief Steward voiced his concerns during an [interview](#) with the Washington Post voicing his opinion on how these constant threats of shutdowns can impact employee morale. Our worries are not gone in the last. It's more important now than ever before that you make your voice heard! NTEU has created [CAPWIZ](#) to make contacting your elected officials as simple as possible! A few minutes is all it takes to make sure your opinion will count! This site is available from any computer connected to the internet, as well as any mobile device with an internet connection. Please keep your eye out on future communications from Chapter 14, as we will notify you as soon as we hear any issues that require immediate attention!

Your Voice Matters!

FEHB Resources

Members!

Please see the below resources to assist you in choosing the FEHB Benefit Plan that best fits you!

- [Premium Information](#)
- [Open Season Info](#)
- [FEDVIP Info](#)
- [Benefeds](#)
- [SelfPlusOne](#)
- [FSA Feds](#)
- [Family Member Eligibility](#)

Each of these resources offers a treasure trove of information related to choosing the best benefits for you!

This Month's Highlights!

- CR Signed
- FEHB Resources
- Letters to the Editor
- Letter Contest Returns
- Consumers' Checkbook
- Telework Grievance



NTEU
The National Treasury Employees Union
Chapter 14 • St. Louis, Missouri



Letter to
the Editor

We want to hear from you!

Do you have a great idea you think would be great for our newsletter?

nteu14@gmail.com

Chapter 14 Letter Contest

Want to win some NTEU SWAG? Want to make your voice heard? Each letter sent using [CAPWIZ](#) will add a chance for you to win an NTEU Chapter 14 item of your choice!

Drawings held monthly!

Consumer's Checkbook Guide to Health Plans



Once again NTEU will be offering access to the Consumers' Checkbook online Guide to Health Plans for Federal Employees and Annuitants, beginning Monday, November 9, 2015.

This guide, which is eligible to all NTEU Members who are currently or planning to participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) plans or the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), will be available through NTEU's [website](#) in the "Members Benefits" section throughout Open Season (November 9, 2015—December 14, 2015). It will remain available throughout 2016 for NTEU members who are new hires or are current enrollees with a qualifying life event change.

This guide is an innovative way to obtain reliable, useful information about the many health plans available under FEHB and makes fast, easy, personalized plan comparisons. This guide also offers comparisons for the FEDVIP dental and vision plans available to federal employees.

We are proud to offer you these tools which have been praised for their ease of use.

These tools will not be available until the first day of the Federal Open Season, **November 9, 2015.**

NTEU Files National Grievance On Telework



NTEU has filed a national grievance under Article 42 of the parties' 2016 National Agreement on behalf of all impacted employees. In this grievance NTEU believes that the Agency has violated Article 50, which lays out how Telework is to be handled.

In the grievance NTEU cites four separate violations of both the Privacy Act and Article 50, of the 2016 National Agreement.

In NTEU's first count, we are grieving that the IRS has implemented a telework library which created an electronic database that stored all of the information included from the Telework Agreement. The IRS failed to publish a Notice in the Federal Register. In addition, the IRS failed to conduct a privacy assessment as required by the E-Government Act.

In the second count the IRS has been utilizing a digital telework form the IRS that requires a day of the week to be checked before the form may be submitted. This is in violation of Article 50, Section 1C. Employees per this Article should be able to alternate the days of the week in which they telework within a pay period, or they may agree with their supervisors on other ad hoc arrangements.

The third count is because NTEU

learned that certain IRS business divisions (e.g., TAS) require employees who request recurring (or "frequent") telework to add the following language to the telework agreement:

"All Telework days require prior approval by your manager. Requests for any telework day must be submitted to your manager via email no later than close of business Wednesday for any requested telework days for the following week."

This language violates Article 50; recurring telework employees are entitled to request and be approved for recurring telework on specific days of the week. There is no requirement under the Contract for bargaining unit employees to seek further or additional approvals once the recurring telework agreement is approved.

In the fourth and final count, NTEU has learned that Tax Compliance Officers at certain IRS locations are being denied recurring telework. These employees have been told that they may only be approved for "ad hoc" telework for certain non-recurring projects. This violates Article 50 which states that employees who meet eligibility criteria may request and be approved for recurring Telework.

NTEU has asked that in each of these instances, that the Agency cease and desist these illegal practices. NTEU has also asked that the agency immediately approve the requests of all eligible employees who have requested Recurring Telework. NTEU further has requested any other appropriate remedies which it is entitled to in regards to each count listed above. We will keep you updated as this moves forward.



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