



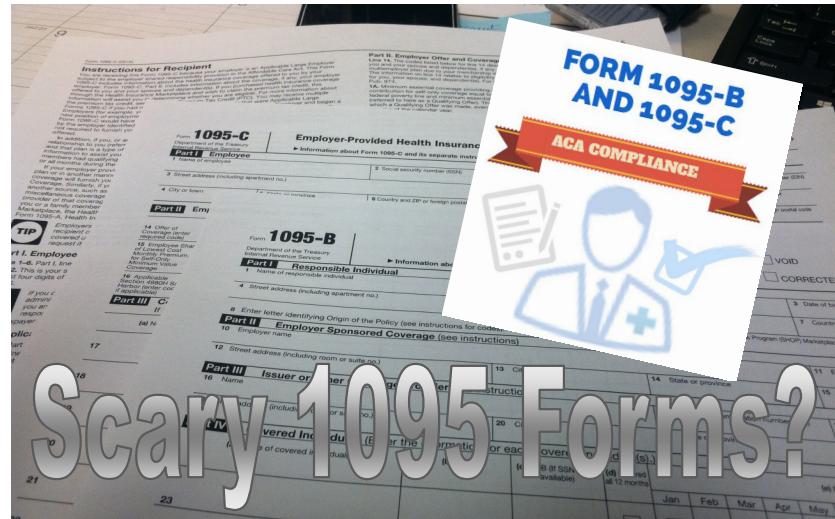
The Defense 14



The Fight Continues...Are You In?

February 2016—Volume 14

As we shared with you last fall, individuals with employer-sponsored health insurance, including the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), are to receive tax forms starting in 2016 verifying health insurance enrollment. These tax forms will be needed for the upcoming tax-filing season, and are to be received by March 31. Under the Affordable Care Act, employers and health insurance carriers, including federal agencies and FEHBP plans, are responsible for reporting employee health coverage information to the IRS. IRS Form 1095 B is the new form insurance carriers are to provide to individuals and IRS Form 1095 C is the new form employers are to provide to employees. Individuals should review both forms carefully, including to verify that the 1095 B form accurately lists all FEHBP-covered family members (in addition to the federal employee or annuitant) under Part



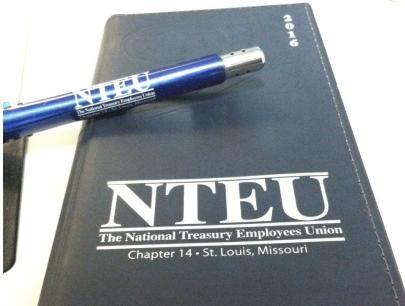
Scary 1095 Forms?

IV of the form. We have received some reports of missing enrolled family members on the 1095 B form, which will create problems at tax-filing time, when proof of health enrollment is needed to avoid triggering the individual shared responsibility penalty. If you have any questions about the 1095 B form, or

notice inaccurate or missing information (or never receive one), you are to contact your specific health insurance carrier. The carrier's contact information is provided in Box 18 on the form. Please note that it is the health insurance company's responsibility to answer questions about the 1095 B form. *See page 2*



Reminder—2016 NTEU Chapter 14 Pen & Calendar Sets are available for members who haven't picked up their gift. Also, we are placing for sale additional sets at



This Month's Highlights!

- Voter Registration Dates
- FEHBP Info For Tax Season
- 2016 NTEU Pen/Calendar Sets
- 348,814 Reasons To Join
- Night Differential For OT
- Employee Tax Compliance
- 2016 Lunch & Laptop Bags
- Anti-Harassment Policy



PROUD

NTEU 14

Back by popular demand! The NTEU Chapter 14 Cool Lunch Bags and Laptop Messenger Bags are so swaggaliciously perfect to show your allegiance to the coolest Labor Union on the planet! Lunch Bags are \$3 and Messenger Bags are \$5. Can we say that? We believe so. Stay connected with Chapter 14! Like Us on Facebook & Follow Us on Twitter for news updates!

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



1095 Form Continued—Remember any needed corrected 1095-Bs will be issued from the insurance companies and not OPM or individual agencies. Additionally, current federal employees will receive the IRS Form 1095-C—from their employing agency documenting whether their employer did or did not provide them with health care coverage. Employees should contact their home agency with any problems with the 1095 C form. Federal retirees will not receive the 1095 C tax form unless they were actively employed for some portion of the previous year (they should also contact their former agency with any issues with the 1095 C form, and not OPM). See... we keep you updated!

REGISTER TO SPEAK OUT

REGISTER. VOTE. SPEAK.

Voter Registration Deadline

Missouri

Last Day for General Election
October 12th

Absentee Request for the City:
(via mail) March 9th
(in person) March 14th

Absentee Request for the County:
(via mail) March 9th
(in person) March 15th

Illinois

Last Day for General Election
October 11th

Absentee Request:
(via mail) March 10th
(in person) March 14th

Don't Forget!

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Let Us Give You
348,814

Reasons to Join Our Union

Imagine you own a rental property valued at \$348,814.00, that generates about \$55,000 a year in income for your family, and that it plays a big role in your retirement plans. What are the odds you would not insure the property? If you answer anything other than "Zero," report immediately to the health unit for a fitness-for-duty exam. You probably should not be walking around the streets without a helmet and attendant. We just read a case decision about a non-supervisory Social Security Customer Service Representative who is a great example of something just like that. Her job paid about \$55,000 a year. At least it generated that annual income for her and her family until her supervisor started acting more than a little nuts. He suddenly relentlessly criticized and targeted her until he had made up enough stuff to fire her. Poof! \$55,000 a year in income gone, but that was only the beginning of her troubles. For reasons not entirely known to us, the local union didn't represent her. (More on why later.) So, she had to hire a private attorney. According to published records, he charged her \$348,814.00 to do what this particular employees' union could have done for her for free. In other words, even though the attorney got her reinstated to her \$55,000 a year job, she was on the hook to take \$348,814 from whatever savings she had built up, e.g., remortgage her house, empty her TSP accounts, etc. The employee never joined the union and was too embarrassed to now ask it for help. She saved about \$15.00 a pay period

in dues on a gamble that she would never need it. (By the way, in case you think this employee was at fault, the federal agency that ordered her reinstated ordered the agency to send her managers for retaining and to discipline them. That is how wrong he was to treat her that way.) This case provides a very clear and real example of how the decision not to join a union can be just as insane as not insuring a rental property asset. Another reason why she did not have union representation might be that she went to the union thinking that as a non-member the union had to represent her anyway, but quickly learned that the union does not have to when someone is fired, discriminated against, or the union just thinks their case is not a good use of its members' funds and time. Or maybe she thought that if she ever needed representation she could always hire a lawyer cheaply. If so, she is so naïve. The government approved the lawyer charging her that rate because that is the going rate in the market for her type of case. The Department of Justice just approved experienced lawyers in the Washington, D.C. charging \$796.00 an hour for services like this employee needed. Federal employees have the freedom to join or not join a union. They also have the freedom to stick or not stick their hands in the office's industrial paper shredder or to jab or not jab government pens in their eyes. In each of those cases one of the options is a very wise decision and the other is incredibly self-destructive.



Did You Forget!? - Make it your last time forgetting...EVER! Please remember to File & Pay all Federal, State and Local Taxes Timely!



2016 Business Improvement Committee Meeting—Washington DC



Tony Reardon—National President NTEU



Night Time Differential

An employee who performs night work is entitled to a differential of 10 percent of his or her rate of basic pay. Night work is regularly scheduled work performed by an employee between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. There are certain leave situations that can affect your night differential eligibility. When 8 or more hours of annual or sick leave is taken in a pay period, night differential will not be paid. Night differential is only received for the actual number of hours worked. Night differential will not be paid on credit or compensatory time taken, regardless of the number of hours in a pay period.

Anti-Harassment Policy

Are you aware of the IRS Anti-Harassment Policy? You don't have to take bullying or be threatened here in the workplace. The policy is designed to address unwelcome, hostile and/or abusive conduct before it rises to a level of harassment that creates a hostile working environment. This policy preserves the existing mechanisms for reporting harassment and bullying. It also provides an additional mechanism aimed at getting reports of harassment to managers for intervention much earlier than we see through the EEO process. IRS wants you to be clear that their focus here is to place an emphasis on managers taking appropriate corrective actions at the earliest point possible. But we all know how that can go. Use **IDLE Code 9** should a situation warrant the use. Document well and always talk with your Steward on any issues of concern.

YOUR VOICE AT THE IRS

This year, Chapter 14 President Pamela Sturm, visited Washington DC a little early. No, this was no trip for fun but to voice YOUR concerns to our National Office. Just as the name entails (Business Improvement Committee) it was created to improve business here at the IRS. The parties discussed a number of important issues during the BIC meeting. One of the bigger items is the 2016 Filing Season Budget Execution. The IRS's fiscal year budget increase of \$290 million dollars is earmarked so that W&I will be allocated \$145 million dollars specifically to improve the Level of Service (LOS). The agency will target social media messaging to promote electronic filing, but expressed concern that too much publicity would result in additional telephone calls from taxpayers who would not normally call W&I. Employees who work paper and phones should expect to spend all of their time on the phones during the filing season so that the IRS can achieve its targeted LOS. As a result of the budget increase and new hires, the expected LOS for filing season will be 65% and 46–49% LOS during non-filing season. Seasonal employees will work most of the summer (August through the end of the fiscal year). NTEU raised its concern that W&I wastes resources by training seasonal employees only to later furlough and lose many of them because of shortened seasons, causing them to seek work elsewhere. The agency acknowledged this concern and stated that its preference was to get back to the 51/49 or 60/40 ratio for permanents to seasonal employees.

NTEU placed on the agenda TAC locations being understaffed as well as TAC office closures in the future. The agency stated that it looks at the “business case” for adding staff and keeping a TAC office open. The agency will continue to look at the way TAC locations are providing services; real estate costs; and employees’ desires to have flexible schedules. Because of budget constraints, Wage is pushing providing more and more service to taxpayers

via the internet. NTEU raised a concern about the allocated times for scheduling TAC appointments and how the times may not be sufficient to assist the taxpayer. For example, if a taxpayer comes in for a TAC appointment to pay a bill, but also has another issue, will that taxpayer be rushed and/or not be provided service? The agency has indicated that the employees staffing TACs should continue to assist the taxpayer if the appointment time runs over.

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