



The Defense 14



The Fight Continues...Are You In?

June 2016—Volume 18

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE... Know any NON-Members? WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Got a burn in your pocket and need some fast cash? NTEU Chapter 14 wants to GROW your voice in both the workplace and bargaining table with greater membership. Our 2016 Recruitment Campaign will run from June 6, 2016 through September 30, 2016. Chapter 14 will pay \$50 for every new Form 1187 signed by a bargaining unit employee during our campaign period.

Lunch Need a Home? Un-Organized Calendar?



You know you want one (or Two). Come on up to the Union Office and purchase one of the best articles of swagger this side of the Mississippi! The hottest items are the Lunch Bags (\$3) and the Messenger Bags (\$5)! The Pen & Calendar Sets are \$2. Purchase YOURS today!



PROUD ***** to be **NTEU 14**

"How can I support my home and the expenses of going to work when the costs of supporting my home and going to work keep rising but my pay is stuck in the year 2003...that's crazy!"

Sound like you? Federal Employee, ask your members of congress to co-sponsor, H.R. 4585 & S. 2699 the FAIR Act, which would provide federal employees with a 5.3% pay increase for calendar year 2017.

This Month's Highlights!

- Recruitment Drive 2016
- House & Senate Bills NOW!
- Did You Know? - TAS OT
- Blackout Period for FSAFEDS
- OPM Data Breach UPDATE
- The AM Performance System
- 2016 Lunch & Laptop Bags
- OSC Reminder—Hatch Act
- NTEU Days at Six Flags

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



Monthly Reminder: Hatch Act

As we go further into an election year, we would like to give monthly attention to the Hatch Act. Employees are cautioned as Civil Servants, to not engage in prohibited activities. Failure to recognize these reminders could place you in a position to hear the following words from your member of management:



Need Advice? We use the reverse of NIKE's slogan—Just don't do it. Employees may not engage in political activity – i.e., activity directed at the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group – while the employee is on duty, in any federal room or building, while wearing a uniform or official insignia, or using any federally owned or leased vehicle.

(Hatch Act—continued on Page 2)



The Hatch Act

Hatch Act Continued—Employees for example May Not:

Wear or display partisan political buttons, T-shirts, signs, or other items.

Make political contributions to a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.

Post a comment to a blog or a social media site that advocates for or against a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.

Use any e-mail account or social media to distribute, send or forward content that advocates for or against a partisan political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.



Psst! Hey! Did you know that Tony Reardon—National President of NTEU is coming to Saint Louis? Mark your calendars for Aug 24th! By the way, there might be a special meeting with him on August 23rd.

Details coming soon!

Update on OPM Data Breach Lawsuit

On June 3, NTEU amended its lawsuit against the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) arising out of the data breaches that OPM announced last June. NTEU amended its complaint to add an additional individual plaintiff and to include information that has been made available since the filing of the original complaint. NTEU's lawsuit continues to allege a single claim: a breach of NTEU members' constitutional right to informational privacy.



And it continues to request the same relief, which includes lifetime credit monitoring and identity theft protection for any NTEU member who received a notice concerning either of the breaches that OPM announced last June. As always, we will keep you informed of and all new developments.

The Accounts Management Performance System (AMPS)

W&I has proposed to conduct a “proof of concept” for a measured performance system in Accounts Management (AM) called AM Performance System (AMPS). Currently, AM employees are evaluated on their work (telephone calls with taxpayers) through the contact recording procedures in Article 12, Section 9. The work is not measured. Under AM’s proposal, AM employees at the following call sites will be included in the AMPS POC: Ogden, Denver, Oakland, Austin, Dallas, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. AMPS would be implemented for a “parallel year” that would coincide with the Article 12 appraisal year (starting October 1). AMPS would use quality and efficiency data to conduct a “mock” measurement of employees’ performance in the quality (CJEs 2, 3 and 4) and efficiency in CJE 5. AMPS data would be given to each employee who participates in the POC at the beginning of the POC and also weekly, monthly, and quarterly throughout the POC. The data would show the employees’ numerical performance standards so employees would know what is expected of them and where their performance would fall under AMPS. At the end of the appraisal period, employees in the POC would receive a “mock” annual appraisal. AM states that the AMPS evaluation system will provide employees with a “more objective” evaluation process, but we have repeatedly expressed to AM the significant concerns we have about the proposed performance system. One is that by moving to a measured performance appraisal system, it will increase the existing tension between the CJEs that apply to the quantity of work and CJEs that apply to the quality of the work. For example, in this system, where average handle time would be used as a basis for measuring the quantity of work, many CSRs would likely feel compelled to shorten calls to improve their quantity ratings at the expense of quality. Shortening calls to score higher on quantity means that taxpayers will receive less quality service from the IRS. It could be that CSRs would be reluctant to take additional steps to resolve an ancillary taxpayer issue that arises as a result of the call to not incur the extra four or five minutes that would get applied to the CSR’s handle time. Other CSRs who care more about providing the extra four or five minutes of service to the taxpayer will be penalized in their evaluations for having done that. Such a system makes no sense. We will keep you updated as NTEU goes back to the table with IRS. Know a non-member? Ask them to join & fight!

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DID YOU KNOW?

Blackout Periods
for FSAFEDS?

More than 350,000 federal employees currently use pre-tax dollars to save money on their family's health care and dependent care expenses through the FSAFEDS (Federal Flexible Spending Account) program. Earlier this year, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) announced that a new administrator—WageWorks—would be replacing the current provider ADP for the FSAFEDS program.

As part of this administrative transition, OPM recently publicized details about a claims submission blackout period that will affect all current FSAFEDS participants starting this July. From July 30, 2016 through September 1, 2016, no FSAFEDS reimbursement claims will be able to be submitted or processed.

Visit: <https://www.fsafeds.com/GEM/BulletinBoard>

NTEU recognizes that this planned claims blackout period will negatively impact employees seeking FSA reimbursements, particularly those with recurring dependent care expenses. NTEU is asking that she consider the feasibility of requiring a shorter blackout period so that FSAFEDS participants can seek needed reimbursement sooner, and to consider setting up advance payments for individuals with recurring dependent care expenses, as well as the suspension of deductions during the blackout period. We believe that having to wait at least a month for claims to even be able to be submitted before being reimbursed is a hardship for many federal employees. We will share OPM's response with you, and will keep you updated on any further announcements.



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IRS has approved limited overtime to TAS employees! As you know, NTEU has raised the issue of high inventory levels of the Case Advocates in TAS with TAS leadership for several weeks. Our National Office again raised this issue in a face-to-face meeting with Nina Olson earlier this week. Ms. Olson indicated that she had requested funding for overtime, but the IRS had not approved any until now. We are happy to report that NTEU has now received notice from TAS that some overtime has been authorized to support TAS casework. Overtime is authorized for the period June 3, 2016 through June 25, 2016, as follows: eleven (11) hours are authorized for each eligible Case Advocate and for eligible Lead Case Advocates. Eight (8) hours of overtime are authorized for each eligible Intake Advocate, and seven (7) hours are authorized for each Technical Advisor and for Analysts. According to the notice, the overtime hours are authorized for casework-related activities only. Support staff or employees detailed in TAS who are performing case-related activities or providing direct support of casework are also eligible for up to seven (7) hours of overtime pay.

This overtime availability is an important step in addressing what TAS employees and NTEU have been communicating for months — that the case inventories in TAS have been very high and difficult for employees to manage during their regular tours of duty. Ms. Olson indicated that there could be a second authorization of overtime, similar to this one, if funds are made available. NTEU will continue to press TAS to seek approval of additional overtime while employees' inventories remain high.





NTEU DAYS!

VISIT JUNE 13 - JUNE 27, 2016

TICKETS ONLY \$32.99^{+TAX}!
REGULAR GATE PRICE \$62.99^{+TAX}

PURCHASE BETWEEN

JUNE 10 - JUNE 24, 2016

By visiting www.sixflags.com/stlouis and entering



NTEU

in the promo code box at the top right.



*PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE TAX

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