

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Benefits Administration

VBA - AFGE Memorandum of Understanding

Pilot Testing of BPR Initiatives

The following constitutes agreement between the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO National VA Council #53 (NVAC). The subject of this agreement is pilot testing of BPR initiatives. This agreement will set out expectations for local managers and labor officials at these sites. The goal of this agreement is to enable the national labor partners to obtain as much information about the pilots at the BPR sites as possible. The more information the AFGE NVAC VBA Mid-Term Bargaining Team can receive during the test pilot, the better informed decision they can make about bargaining should VBA decide to roll the pilot out nationally.

1. Most changes in VBA procedures will be rolled out first at the BPR Demonstration sites. Any changes affecting the interests of two or more AFGE locals will be negotiated at the national level. Local bargaining at each facility over appropriate issues not otherwise in conflict with this or other national level agreement will be completed prior to implementation of this program.
2. The VBA managers at the participating sites will provide local union officials all information concerning the initiative/pilot occurring within their Regional Office. Local managers will provide copies of the documents concerning the pilot to local union officials. Local union officials should be invited to attend any conference calls, telebroadcasts and management meetings to discuss the implementation of the pilot. Local union officials should be included in any discussions and provided copies of any documents and E-mails concerning the impact the pilot has on work.
3. It is expected that the implementation of pilots at the BPR sites will require union officials to spend more time away from their job than if there was no pilot. Local union officials will be allowed sufficient time to review all documents concerning the pilot, participate in staff meetings and conference calls concerning the pilot, and provide feedback to AFGE-Midterm Bargaining Team. Local union officials will

be allowed time to talk with employees whose work has been affected by the pilot, hear their concerns, and communicate with AFGE members of the VBA Midterm Committee about the pilot. Time union officials spend in these activities will be counted as duty time in accordance with Article 45, Section 6A of the Master Agreement.

Union officials using duty time at pilot stations are expected to comply with any local agreements regarding leaving their work area. Managers are expected to timely authorize the union representative the duty time needed for him/her to perform his/her duties. Local managers and union representatives are encouraged to work out potential conflicts locally. VBA and NVAC mutually expect that better labor management communications locally and nationally concerning pilots implemented at the BPR sites will save time and money and provide both parties better feedback.

/S/ Jennifer Long
For Management
For NVAC

/S/ Alberta Franklin

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