

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The following constitutes an agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Safety and Health and the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO, National VA Council #53 (NVAC) concerning the Workplace Stress/Aggression Project at the following AFGE sites: VHA Network #13 (Fargo, ND; Fort Meade, SD; Hot Springs, SD; Minneapolis, MN; Sioux, Falls, SD and St. Cloud, MN); NCA Houston; VBA, BPR Phoenix; VBA Chicago, Des Moines, St. Paul and Sioux Falls.

1. NVAC Mid-Term Bargaining Committee shall be provided with the One VA data used in determining the need for the Workplace Stress/Aggression Project, such as the One VA Survey results and other hard data. Personal identifiers will not be included in any data reports. Also the team will be provided a copy of the Kirk Patrick Theory reference Level 4.
2. The National parties understand the decision to participate must be jointly. However, participation of AFGE sites in the Workplace Stress/Aggression Project Study shall be at the election of the local unions. Management officials shall not intimidate union officials nor take reprisal action for not participating in this project.
3. No bargaining unit employee shall be adversely affected by the Workplace Stress/Aggression Project Study. No material gathered/developed as a result of this study shall be used as evidence in any action initiated by management officials. All personal identifying information obtained through surveys and interviews shall be kept confidential. The participation of bargaining unit employees shall be voluntarily, unless they are subject matter experts in this field of study.
4. The National VA Council shall be informed of any changes made as a result of the Workplace Stress/Aggression Project that may affect the bargaining unit employees.
5. The National VA Council #53 shall receive an annual report and a final report on the Workplace Stress/Aggression Project to include any and all data/information that relate to causes, savings and needed changes to reduce workplace stress/aggression.
6. Training on the Workplace Stress/Aggression Project should be made available to all employees considered to be potential subject for the surveys, so that they will have an understanding of goals of this project and cooperate to the fullest extent possible.
7. Each local union involved in the workplace stress/aggression project shall appoint their members to each work group and/or task force following the criteria outlined by research team.

8. Whenever a bargaining unit employee is involved in a one-on-one interview as part of the workplace/aggression project, he or she will be advised that they can have union representation present and the interview will be scheduled so that a union representative may attend, if the employee chooses.
9. Should any employee become uncomfortable with participation in a focus group, that employee may choose to opt out of the process and shall not be intimidated by any other person. All employees will be briefed on this option prior to participation in a focus group.
10. The appropriate management official shall provide a copy of this MOU to the AFGE Local President upon their receipt at their location.
11. Local unions made negotiate further on this issue so long as they do not impair, interfere or conflict with this MOU and the Master Agreement.



For the Department



For the National VA Council #53

MARCH 30, 2000