



# NATIONAL VETERANS AFFAIRS COUNCIL

American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO



## NATIONAL GRIEVANCE NG-10/5/15

Date: October 5, 2015

To: Larry Bennett  
For the Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Labor-Management Relations  
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

*Received by  
Doreen Sehn  
LMR VAC  
10/6/2015*

From: James R. Alsup, Managing Attorney, National Veterans Affairs Council (#53) ("NVAC"), American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO ("AFGE").

Subject: National Grievance in the matter of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Kansas City, Kansas, VA Medical Center (KCVAMC) Director, failure to provide travel and per diem for NVAC 9th District Representative Barbara Whitson-Cassanova in violation of the Master Agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the American Federation of Government Employees.

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 43, Section 11, of the Master Agreement Between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the American Federation of Government Employees (2011) ("MCBA"), American Federation of Government Employees/National Veterans Affairs Council ("the Union") is filing this National Grievance against you and all other associated VA officials and/or individuals acting as agents on behalf of the VA for failure to comply with Article 47, sections 2 G and 4 B of the MCBA in addition to past practice.

### STATEMENT OF CHARGES

KCVAMC notified AFGE Locals 910 and 2663 of a demand to bargain changes in working conditions. Local 910 represents professional bargaining unit employees at KCVAMC and Local 2663 represents non-professional bargaining unit employees at KCVAMC. Pursuant to Article 47, the NVAC was notified and NVAC President, Alma Lee, designated NVAC 9th District Representative Barbara Witson-Cassanova to be chief Union negotiator in the matter. Ground Rules under negotiation do not include a provision requiring KCVAMC to pay for the travel and per diem necessary for the NVAC negotiator to attend negotiations and KCVAMC notified Ms. Witson-Cassanova that they did not intend to pay for her travel and per diem.

Article 47, Section 4 B of the MCBA provides that when the Agency brings forward proposed changes in personnel policies, practices, or working conditions affecting the interests of two or more local unions within a facility shall require notice to the party designated by NVAC to represent the Locals' interests. Article 47, Section 2 G provides that



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the Agency shall pay travel and per diem for bargaining team members. In addition, the Agency's past practice has been to pay for those negotiators designated by NVAC in cases involving more than two Locals at a single facility. Indeed, Ms. Whitson-Cassanova was designated by NVAC to negotiate on behalf of Local 903 and Local 3399, professional and non-professional Locals at the Harry S. Truman VAMC in Columbia, Missouri, and the Agency negotiated ground rules that include a requirement that the local facility pay per diem and travel costs for Ms. Whitson-Cassanova to attend the negotiations.

### REMEDY REQUESTED

The Union asks that, to remedy the above situation, the VA agrees to the following:

- (1) Agree to pay the per diem and travel costs associated with Ms. Whitson-Cassanova's negotiations on behalf of Locals 910 and 2663 at KCVAMC.
- (2) pay attorneys fees incurred as a result of the KCVAMC denials to pay per diem and travel costs associated with Ms. Whitson-Cassanova's negotiations on behalf of Locals 910 and 2663 at KCVAMC; and,
- (3) any all all relief provided by regulations and statutes.

### TIME FRAME AND CONTACT

This is a National Grievance and the time frame for resolution of this matter is not waived until the matter is resolved or settled. If you have any questions regarding this National Grievance, please feel free to contact me at (202) 494-9452.