



Out of Many/One Union
AFGE NVAC/AFL-CIO

NATIONAL VETERANS AFFAIRS COUNCIL

American Federation of Government Employees, Affiliated with the AFL-CIO

NATIONAL GRIEVANCE

NG-01/08/20

Date: January 8, 2020

To: Tracy Schulberg
Executive Director
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Labor-Management Relations
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420
tracy.schulberg@va.gov
Sent via electronic mail only

From: Christopher Zatrutz, Staff Counsel, National Veterans Affairs Council (#53) (“NVAC”),
American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (“AFGE”)

RE: **National Grievance against Department of Veterans Affairs for violating the Master Agreement in its failure to fund travel for the 12/17/19 NTEC meeting**

STATEMENT OF CHARGES

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”), the American Federation of Government Employees/National Veterans Affairs Council (“the Union”) is filing this National Grievance against you and all other associated officials and/or individuals acting as agents on behalf of the Department for failing to fund the travel for the December 17, 2019 National Training and Education Committee (“NTEC”) meeting. To date, the Department has failed to remedy this violation, and as such, continues to violate the MCBA.

Specifically, the Department violated Article 4 of the MCBA, and any and all other relevant articles, laws, regulations, customs, and past practices not herein specified.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Background

In the 2011 MCBA, the parties jointly established the NTEC to advise the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration on joint labor-management training and education needs and to plan the development of agreed upon national labor relations training programs. To this end, the NTEC was envisioned as a collaborative institution. The NTEC is comprised of an equal number of members from the Union and the Department. One of the



objectives of the NTEC is to identify labor relations training and other educational needs of common interest to the Union and the Department. The NTEC is also tasked with the development and implementation of training programs, including, but not limited to, courses regarding contract administration, Master Agreement training, grievance handling, and training instructors to facilitate the courses.

Aside from conference calls every two months, the Committee's core business is conducted at quarterly meetings. The NTEC Charter requires the Department to "fund travel and per diem for meetings of the NTEC." Article 4, Section 5(E)(6). The NTEC's fourth quarter meeting was scheduled for December 17, 2019. However, in clear violation of Article 4, the Department failed to fund the travel for the meeting. As a result, the meeting was effectively cancelled.

Violation

By failing to fulfill its obligations, the Department violated, and continues to violate, the following:

- Article 4 of the MCBA: requiring the NTEC to meet quarterly with travel funded by the Department;
- Any and all other relevant articles, laws, regulations, customs, and past practices not herein specified.

Remedies Requested

To remedy the above violations, the Union asks that the Department agree to the following:

- To immediately reschedule and fund the Union for travel costs for the rescheduled 12/17/19 NTEC meeting;
- To guarantee that the Department will fund travel for all future NTEC meetings;
- To fully comply with its contractual obligations under Article 4 of the MCBA;
- To post an electronic notice, signed by the VA Secretary, to all VA bargaining unit employees that the Department violated the MCBA and law and that the Department will refrain from further violations of the MCBA;
- To make whole the Union and any employee affected by the Department's violations;
- To agree to any and all other remedies appropriate in this matter.

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, please contact the undersigned at AFGE Office of the General Counsel. The undersigned representative is designated to represent the Union in all matters related to the subject of this National Grievance.



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cc: Alma L. Lee, President, AFGE/NVAC
Mary-Jean Burke, Chairperson, Grievance and Arbitration Committee, AFGE/NVAC
Ibidun Roberts, Supervising Attorney, AFGE/NVAC