

Memorandum of Understanding
Education Services Committee on Waivers
And Compromises (COWC) Consolidation

The following constitutes agreement between the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO National VA Council #53 (NVAC) concerning the consolidation of the Education Services Committee on Waivers and Compromises (COWC) Consolidation from four (4) offices (Atlanta, Buffalo, Muskogee and St. Louis) to one office (St. Louis).

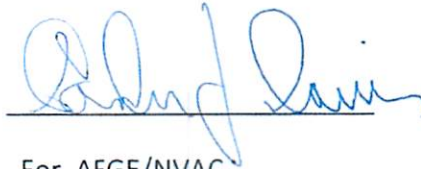
1. An SOP for COWC employees will be developed that will provide clear guidance on policies and regulations needed to process COWC work. This will also include clear guidance on how to process admin errors/corrections when the discrepancy occurred at another Regional Processing Office (RPO).
2. Management will ensure that St. Louis employees processing COWC work will have nationwide access to systems necessary to complete the work including CAROLS, other RPO's TIMS, etc).
3. Under the National COW plan, no existing waivers will be transferred to St. Louis. Effective the date of implementation, the RPOs and Debt Management Center (DMC) will forward new claims to St. Louis for processing. Each RPO is responsible for every waiver they have on station on the date of implementation.
4. Classroom refresher training will be provided to employees at the offices that will no longer be processing COWC work to ensure continued success with the processing of non-COWC work. These employees will be given a minimum of 90 days to ensure they can meet the fully successful level of performance as shown in their performance standard.
5. Employees at St. Louis Regional Processing Office (RPO) who will be processing a larger volume of COWC work will receive classroom refresher training to include, but not limited to, admin errors, statement of case, notice of disagreements, appeals, and all education benefits.
6. Prior to the date of implementation, Management will provide an orientation to the affected employees; the local union will be invited to attend. Ideas received from the

affected bargaining unit employees regarding process improvement will be considered by management, and any action taken on these ideas will be shared with the employees and the local union.

7. The mid-term bargaining committee will be notified of the date of implementation. If after implementation either party is made aware of issues that may adversely affect employees, both parties agree to discuss the issues and work to mutually resolve the issues for the employees. Should discussions not resolve the issues; the parties will implement the negotiating process.
8. In accordance with Article 47, Section 4A of the Master Agreement, Local bargaining shall take place at individual facilities and may include substantive bargaining that does not conflict with negotiated national policy and agreements.
9. Management will provide a copy of this MOU to the President of each AFGE local affected by this consolidation.



For Management



For AFGE/NVAC

Date: 02/12/15