

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

## Claims Assistants Transition into Production WATRS

The following constitutes an agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), AFL-CIO National Veterans Affairs Council (NVAC) #53, (Union) regarding the Claims Assistants Transition into Production WATRS.

1. Claims Assistants (CAs) will be provided training on how to use WATRS prior to going live. Employees will be on excluded time for this training.
2. CAs will be provided the opportunity to use WATRS and input data prior to the system going live.
3. Excluded time will be requested in 15-minute increments.
4. Any leave status approved in VATAS will be approved in WATRS.
5. If Management denies an excluded time request places in WATRS by the employee, WATRS will be annotated and the employee will be notified of the denial, along with the supporting reason.
6. CAs will perform work assigned by their supervisor and may request excluded time for any time spent working on assigned tasks that they do not receive production credit.
7. Consistent with the procedures set forth in 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.
8. Management will not hold employees accountable for factors or extenuating circumstances that affect performance and are beyond the employees' control.
9. After implementation, if either party is made aware of issues that may 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 to the extent required by the statute.
10. Management shall provide a copy of this MOU to the local president and/or designee at each AFGE local within (10) ten days of the date this MOU is signed.

*Kevin D. Nelson*

Kevin D. Nelson  
For the Agency

Paul H. Fleming  
For AFGE/NVAC

05/20/2021

Date