

NTEU 207 News

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FDIC REFUSES TO PAY FOR HQ EMPLOYEE COSTS TO ATTEND LEGAL DIVISION CONFERENCE

Chapter 207, recently advised by Legal Division employees that their local travel expenses were not going to be covered "unless they volunteered" to help out with the August Legal Division conference to be held at the Hyatt Regency in Bethesda over 4 days. Parking at the Hotel costs \$10 a day.

NTEU sought an explanation from FDIC management. Surprisingly the chapter was advised, *"..that FDIC is not required to provide parking reimbursement for the participants at the Legal Division Conference. The FDIC has the ability to designate an alternative temporary post of duty for employees, such as where the conference is being held (i.e., Bethesda). If the temporary work site is within the same commuting area, as in this case, then the morning and evening trips are treated as a normal commute to and from work and employees would be responsible for the cost of that commute."*

However, the FDIC Travel Regulations states in Section 1 – Local Travel Regulations From Official Station - that claims for round-trip local transportation expenses should be made through petty cash. Every employee has access to petty cash through the ESPS reimbursement program.

The petty cash program notes that one of the reimbursable items is "All local transportation and parking charges incurred while conducting business on behalf of the corporation while not in travel status."

Despite Chapter 207's attempt to point out that the denial of reimbursement is not supported by the FDIC Travel Policies, FDIC has determined to try to avoid the requirement by designating HQ employees to "an alternative temporary post of duty..."

Employees should keep track of their parking receipts and mileage driven to attend this assignment and any other types of transportation costs as it appears that NTEU will be filing a chapter group grievance to seek reimburse- for the employees who were affected by this ruling.

Taxing Weekend Travel Update –Answers To Questions Since Last Newsletter

No. No other agency that we have checked with (OCC, OTS, FRB, SEC, and IRS) categorizes weekend travel home as a taxable event during the course of an assignment.

And, Yes. This policy not only covers examiners, it also affects all employees who are on an extended detail or assignment from their home office. Bargaining unit and management alike.

Background Checks

Chapter 207 was advised by employees that they recently received requests to update their background checks. In response NTEU requested information as to who has been identified and what has prompted these upgrades in security levels. FDIC is refusing to provide that information to the local chapter. In response to various emails regarding this issue Chapter 207 was advised that this effort in part resulted from an OIG report which has been requested by the union since none appears on the OIG website.

In the past the FDIC has easily provided this information but now has determined to take a different approach. NTEU National is advised of this latest development and hopefully soon a meeting between the parties will reveal the needed information.

In the meantime, those employees who have received these requests for completing these reports are advised of the following.

Please read the complete Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between FDIC and NTEU that should have been included in your package. The MOU states clearly that employees do not have to authorize the release of their medical records. If you have already completed the reports and missed the part that advises you that you didn't have to fill it out that authorization then you should reclaim that authorization from whomever you have submitted the report to.

The question as to why your security level has changed has not been answered. You should familiarize yourself with the requirements of what prompts the increase in security levels. Information related to this will soon be added to the NTEU webpage – the MOU will be posted sometime next week.

It is our understanding that these responses are not due until August 20. You don't need to hurry to submit your authorization and hopefully we will have more information soon.

Can the FDIC terminate you for the results of the report? It depends on several factors. Responders must be honest in their responses. Falsification will result in a proposal to remove.

Hatch Act

Many employees are asking Chapter 207 about political activity rules and restrictions.

The Hatch Act was revised 10 years ago and many limitations were redefined. However, there are clear, stringent limitations still in affect.

We believe that the best source for understanding those rules is at the Office of Special Counsel (OSC) website. The OSC manages the Hatch Act and provides good solid guidance on what you can and cannot do. Violations can lead to up to dismissal, but after the 1994 adjustments to the Act federal employees were given more rights to participate in the political process.

Check out:

<http://www.osc.gov/hatchact.htm>
or write Chapter207NTEU@aol.com

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Chapter 207 wants your number! Not really but we do want your home address (Street, City, State and Zip Code) and most importantly we want your home email address. Chapter 207 will be conducting an on-line member survey which will be sent to your home email box and which you will return to an off-site email address.

Unless most everyone sends Chapter 207 their email address we will not be able to conduct the survey. In part it would create a statistical skew that would make the information of little value.

We promise not to fill up your mailbox. Other information will also be sent to your email box. Members don't need to send us their home address – which we hope is up to date, but we do need your email address.

Please send your addresses to:
Chapter207NTEU@aol.com

Condolences - This week we learned of the death of a long time FDIC employee and member of NTEU Chapter 207. Vicki Hayes who worked in Corporate University passed away last weekend after a short illness. She leaves behind many friends and co-workers including friends who are also members of Chapter 207. She will be missed by all who knew her. She leaves her mother and son. Chapter 207 will send a memorial contribution in her name from all of her friends who are also NTEU members.