

# NTEU 207 News

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## Did you know ...

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*Grievances must be filed within 20 workdays of the action giving rise to the grievance?*

### **Article 47, Grievance Procedure**

While representing grievances is only one of the ways in which the Union protects employees, it is the means by which employees seek redress for violations of their rights. When an employee feels that his or her rights have been violated, he or she should contact the Union immediately to consult on the situation. We would seek first to resolve the issue without formal means, meaning filing a grievance. However, a grievance must be filed within 20 workdays (Monday through Friday excluding holidays) of the action that led to the grievance OR 20 workdays from the time the employee became aware of the violation.

Article 47 of the Negotiated Agreement covers the entire grievance process from filing a grievance to submitting the grievance for arbitration. If you have questions about the process, contact us at NTEU 207 HQ.

### **RIF and Retirement**

NTEU 207 has been asked numerous times what would happen to benefits in the event of an early out or a RIF. The following is an excerpt from Fedweek with some valuable information.

*"Benefits in RIFs, By John Grobe*

*"A reader asked what would happen to our government benefits and seniority if we found ourselves out of federal employment due to a downsizing or an outsourcing decision. Well, as with so many other items dealing with our federal employment, the answer is 'it depends.'*

*"Health Insurance*

*"If you are eligible for retirement (including early retirement) you may retire and you can continue your health benefits under the same conditions as if you were an employee as long as you had been enrolled in the FEHB for the last five years. As a retiree, you continue to participate in the annual open seasons.*

*"If you hadn't been enrolled for the last five years, or you were not eligible for retirement, you could carry over your health insurance for 18 months under the provisions of COBRA. COBRA, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, requires that you pay 100 percent of your cost and the employer's cost, plus a 2 percent administrative charge. This sounds like a lot, but often it is less expensive than purchasing an individual health insurance policy. Often employees who can't carry their health insurance over when they leave look for group insurance through professional or fraternal organizations to which they belong.*

*"Life Insurance*

"If you are eligible for retirement (including early retirement) you may retire and you can continue your life insurance under the same conditions as if you were an employee as long as you had been enrolled in the same options in the life insurance program for the last five years. If you are not eligible for retirement, you will have the opportunity to convert your life insurance to an individual policy.

*"Early Retirement*

"Both CSRS and FERS early retirement have the same criteria. You must be age 50 with 20 years of service, or be any age with 25 years service. Under CSRS you are subject to a 1/6 of 1 percent per month (2 percent per year) reduction for each full month you are under age 55. There is no age-based reduction for early retirement under FERS.

*"FERS MRA+ 10 Retirement*

"Under FERS, employees who have reached their minimum retirement age may retire if they have at least 10 years of service. There is a 5/12 of 1 percent (5 percent per year) reduction for each full month you are under age 62.

*"Deferred Retirement*

"If you are not eligible for immediate retirement you can leave your contributions in the retirement fund and later become eligible for an annuity when you meet the criteria for immediate retirement (FERS) or reach age 62 (CSRS). You are not eligible to carry your insurance over under deferred retirement.

*"Leave*

"You will be paid in a lump sum for any annual leave you have left.

"If you are eligible for CSRS retirement, your unused sick leave will be added to your length of service for the purpose of computing your annuity. If you're a FERS transferee, you will receive either the sick leave balance on the day you transferred from CSRS to FERS, or your balance at retirement, whichever is less, added to your length of service for the CSRS portion of your annuity computation. Sick leave is not creditable toward a FERS benefit.

"If you have three years of federal service, your sick leave can be re-credited to your account if you ever return to federal service.

*"Seniority*

"What happens to seniority would depend to a large extent on your agency and any applicable collective bargaining agreement."

**CSA Group Grievance Update**

The Group Grievance regarding inequitable distribution of CSAs based on demographics is being held in abeyance. Chapter 207 filed the grievance in what is called a protective filing on the last day that grievances could be timely filed. Protective filings allow NTEU to file the grievance while continuing to research possible violations of employee rights.

Under the CSA MOU, the FDIC and NTEU agreed to conduct a joint review of the data on distribution of CSAs to various demographic groups and to address any problems

with the distribution. This process is ongoing, and Chapter 207 President Betty Coll and NTEU National Representative Steve Keller will be participating, along with several other chapter leaders, the week of July 12th. Decisions to pursue a national grievance addressing the demographics issues will be made only after this process is concluded. Should a national grievance be filed, you do not need to join or be a named participant in the group grievance regarding demographics. If you are a member of a protected class for which a grievance is filed, you will automatically be included in that grievance.

### **NTEU Elections Upcoming**

NTEU Chapter 207 has a two-year term of office for the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the chapter. The current term began October 1, 2002, and ends on September 30, 2004, which means that it is time to think again about electing officers for the chapter. The first step in that process is to nominate members to run for office. On July 19th, the Nominations and Election Committee will be mailing to members' home address a "Notice of Nomination and Election of Chapter Offices" form. Please note that only members are allowed to run for office, nominate other members for office, and ultimately vote in the election. The mailing will contain a nomination form and a pre-addressed return envelope for a US Post Office Box to which only the Elections Committee has access. If you are interested in running for office or nominating someone else for office, please look for this form and return it filled out as quickly as possible as the election is scheduled for September. For further information, contact committee members Roger Congress (Chair), Dottie Willey, or Sonya Inabinet.

### **NCUA Joins NTEU**

In a message to Chapter Presidents by National President Colleen Kelley.

"Employees of the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) have voted by 345 to 220 for representation by the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), joining a growing number of federal workers in financial regulatory agencies seeking NTEU representation. Including both professional and non-professional employees, the NCUA bargaining unit will number some 800.

"NTEU already represents employees of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) and Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

"The nationwide NCUA vote was conducted by the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), which oversees federal sector labor-management relations. Employees at NCUA headquarters, in Alexandria, Virginia, voted in person today; NCUA employees in offices around the country voted by mail over the past 30 days. The vote count was reported from the FLRA office in San Francisco."

[NTEU 207 HQ](#)