

National Grievance

Date: September 8, 2006

To: Ronald E. Cowles, Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Labor-Management Relations, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Re: Official Time for training at the Multi-District Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, from June 12 to June 16, 2006

From: Bill Wetmore, Third Executive Vice President, National Veterans Affairs Council, #53, (NVAC), American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) *Wetmore*

1. This is a National Grievance filed under the provisions of Article 42, Section 11, of the Master Agreement between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the American Federation of Government Employees, signed March 21, 1997 (MCBA).
2. This is filed for violations of various articles of the MCBA, including Article 4 and Article 45 as well as past practices honored for years and other laws and regulations.
3. AFGE notes that multi-district training has been attended by many representatives of the bargaining unit throughout VA for many years with those representatives being granted either administrative time or official time for attending those classes that do not represent internal union business, such as steward's training, EEO training, OWCP training, and financial officers' training. That was the type of training being offered at this multi-district training.
4. This national grievance is filed because VA decided to give less than the full 40 hours of official time or administrative absence for attendees of classes that were not internal union business. In some cases, some hours of official time was granted but the attendees had to take annual leave or leave without pay to attend the balance of the classes.
5. AFGE seeks the following remedies: cease and desist from denying properly identified union representatives official or administrative time to attend multi-district training when they are taking courses not involving internal union business; convert all annual leave or leave without pay for attendees of this conference who took non-internal union courses to official time; and any and all other action so as to insure that all attendees are made whole.