
ARTICLE 3

Labor-Management Relations Committees

Section 1 - Purpose and Function

The Union and Management recognize that the participation of bargaining unit employees in the formulation and implementation of their conditions of employment affects their well being and enhances the efficient administration of the Government. To this end, Union and Management mutually recognize and endorse the involvement of affected employees and their representatives in the development of Departmental and Agency programs, policies, and practices. The parties further recognize that the entrance into a formal collective bargaining agreement with each other is but one act leading toward a constructive labor-management relationship and that the success of a labor-management relationship is further assured if a forum is available and used to communicate with each other during the life of the agreement.

The Department and the NCFL, therefore, agree to continue and improve upon both the National Labor-Management Relations Committee and Regional Labor-Management Relations Committees for the purpose of exchanging information and discussing matters of mutual concern or interest in the broad area of personnel policy and practices and other matters affecting working conditions. The parties will strive to have these committees be an effective forum for meaningful dialogue and exchanges in a manner that will benefit both labor and management and promote an effective and efficient government.

Section 2 - Labor-Management Relations Committee Meetings

A. Frequency of LMR Committee Meetings

1. National Committee. The National Labor-Management Relations Committee meetings shall be held three times a year.
2. Regional Committees. The Regional Labor-Management Relations Committee meetings shall be held semi-annually.
3. Committee Meetings. National and Regional Labor-Management Relations Committee meetings may be held more frequently or deferred by mutual consent of the parties.

B. Ground Rules for Labor-Management Relations Committees Meetings

1. It is the intent of the parties that LMR Committee meeting time be removed from and be mutually exclusive of mid-term bargaining.
2. The discussion of agenda items should be coordinated to minimize, if not eliminate, “down” time.
3. Agenda items should comprise topics conducive to meaningful dialogue, exchange of ideas, joint initiatives (e.g., charitable drives), and problem solving; and not comprise merely of questions asked by one party to be answered by the other. The agenda should serve the purpose of discussion by the parties of specific interests and concerns and for enhancing the labor-management relationship.
4. Information requests should be submitted and responded to exclusive of LMR committee meetings, and such information requests should not be part of an agenda.
5. Agenda items or concerns should be substantiated by fact rather than mere allegations.
6. An agenda should comprise both standardized issues and ad hoc issues as appropriate, and management is encouraged to provide regular or periodic updates on its initiatives. The regional committee meetings should address only regional issues. National issues are appropriate for the National committee meetings and should not have to be repeated on agendas at regional committee meetings.
7. Issues or subject matters pertaining to a subcomponent of an Agency in the region can not be placed on a regional agenda if it has not been previously raised or discussed at a lower level.
8. All agenda items (Department-wide as well as individual Agency issues) shall be arranged for and scheduled in advance. With respect to both National and Regional Committee meetings, the parties agree to submit their respective agenda items to each other no less than ten workdays prior to the scheduled date of the meeting. As necessary, the parties will continue their coordination to finalize the agenda no later than three workdays prior to the meeting.

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9. Either party will provide any necessary follow up to the other party within five workdays after the conclusion of the meeting.

Section 3 - Coordination of Regional LMR Committee Meetings

- A. Upon the effective date of the Agreement, the NCFLC will notify the appropriate Regional OASAM of the designated union liaison for each DOL Region with whom the OASAM management representative can coordinate regarding scheduling, agenda items, union participants, etc. All regional Labor-Management Committee meetings will be held in the DOL regional city unless mutually agreed to otherwise. Specific regional Agency items will be consolidated on the agenda in the regional city in which the Regional Agency Head is located.

Nothing precludes the parties from mutually agreeing to alternative means (such as teleconferencing) to participate in the Regional Labor-Management Committee meetings. If the parties agree, Regional LMR Committee meetings can encompass joint training.

- B. The number of persons entitled to official time and/or travel expenses to attend Regional LMR Committee Meetings will not exceed 50 nationwide twice a year. The number of NCFLC representatives in attendance at DOL Regional Semi-Annual Meetings will not exceed six, unless otherwise mutually agreed to between the parties.

Section 4 - National Meetings

- A. NCFLC membership on the National Labor-Management Relations Committee (NLMRC) shall normally consist of elected officials of the NCFLC, not to exceed a total of 11 persons.
- B. The Department recognizes that the NCFLC may request an AFGE, AFL-CIO, National Representative to attend Labor-Management Relations Committee meetings from time to time.
- C. The National Labor-Management Relations Committee meetings shall normally be in Washington, D.C. The parties mutually can agree to hold any particular meeting at an alternate site.
- D. For the National meeting, each party's respective agenda will be coordinated and shared between the NCFLC President or his

designee (for the Union) and the Office of Employee and Labor-Management Relations (for the Department).

Section 5 - Meeting Summaries

No formal or official minutes of LMR Committee meetings will be taken. This does not preclude either party from taking notes and/or summarizing the discussion at the meetings and distributing such summaries to its respective constituency.

Section 6 - Review of Regional Relationship

The parties acknowledge that the Department of Labor has undergone fundamental change in its structure since the 2002 Collective Bargaining Agreement and this change is likely to continue. Therefore, the parties commit to ensuring that the internal labor-management relationship is conducted in the most efficient and effective way. While maintaining adequate responsiveness to local needs, we must continuously scrutinize our structure. To that extent, a NCFLL National Officer may, on an as needed basis, attend a Regional Semi-Annual meeting at no cost to the Department.
