

# The Force

*United We Bargain, Divided We Beg!*

**A Publication of NTEU Chapter 73**

Teleworking and In-Office Reporting Requirement

Employees on a telework arrangement are required to report to their assigned post-of-duty (POD) at least two days each pay period and **failing to do so can cause them to be removed from telework**. Since telework is not a requirement, it is assumed that each person is teleworking because they want to be and removal from telework is not ideal. If you cannot report twice per pay period, make sure you fall under one of these scenarios and follow the correct procedures for getting the exception or waiver:

**Exception:** National Agreement article 50 Section 1A2

Your teleworking location must be within a 200-mile radius of your post-of-duty (POD). Extended vacations, to help care for a sick family member in your off-duty hours, an out-of-town funeral, college visits-whatever the case-you do have the option to continue working. If you're leaving town, still need to work and you have a telework agreement then you can request your in-office reporting requirements to be waived for up to 2 pay periods per year. These pay periods can be taken together or separated and applies to adhoc, recurring and frequent telework agreements. Getting an exception to work outside the 200-mile radius is subject to manager approval and must be in writing.

While working under the exception outside the 200-mile radius, employees will be required to use their own leave if unable to work. For example, in the case of a power outage, no weather and safety leave will be granted.

**Waiver:** National Agreement, article 50 section 1A4, 5 CFR Sec 531.605(d)(2)

Management has the discretion to waive the twice per pay period reporting requirement for a few scenarios such as:

- an employee is recovering from an injury or medical condition (you're not needing sick leave but not ready to report to the office just yet)
- an employee is affected by a emergency situation, which temporarily prevents the employee from commuting to his or her regular official worksite
- an employee has an extended approved absence from work (paid leave)

*The exception and the waiver are two different things. One is referring to the teleworking location, if you're approved to work outside that location, then your reporting requirements for that pay period are also waived. The other is the reporting waiver which can be approved by management for various scenarios.*

**Suzanne Jackson**



**- TOP NEWS -**

*Telework* - Page 1

*NTEU73 4U!* - Page 2

*Hatch Act* - Page 3

*Stricker's Grove* - Page 4

*Employee Pay* - Page 6

*Pride* - Page 7

## NTEU Working 4U!

**Jacob Bross** - Got 8 hours of AWOL removed!

**Shannon Lovins** - Got an EVAL raised from 3.0 to a 5, an EVAL 2 to a 4.6, 20 hours of AWOL removed, and a letter of admonishment removed!

**Angela Moore** - Got an EVAL raised from a 3.4 to a 4.6!

**Debbie Mullikin** - Got 3 EVAL's raised from a 3 to a 5!

**Brandi Riggs** - Got an employee 100% Telework!



## NTEU National Training



### - Gateway -

Main: (859) 320-3617

Fax: (859) 320-4073

### - Annex/Kentucky Drive -

Main: (859) 869-5293

### - IRRC Building/Industrial Rd -

Main: (859) 594-6138

Fax: (859) 594-6284

(CALL BEFORE FAXING)

### - Facebook -

[www.facebook.com/nteu73](http://www.facebook.com/nteu73)

### - Chapter Web Site -

[www.nteu73.org](http://www.nteu73.org)

### - Twitter -

[www.twitter.com/nteu73](http://www.twitter.com/nteu73)

### - Email -

[ctr.cov.cirsc.nteu.73.covington@irs.gov](mailto:ctr.cov.cirsc.nteu.73.covington@irs.gov)



## Stewards Corner

**President:** Shannon Lovins

**Vice President:** Alex Walker

**Secretary:** Angela Moore

**Treasurer:** Janet Colwell

**Day Shift Stewards:** Brandy Belew, Jacob Bross, Shonda Collins, Diane Gallina, Amanda Gerding, Nicole Guethlien, Rasheda Harris-Bates, Loretha Hudson, Suzanne Jackson, Rachel Lovins, Tonya Morris, Brandi Riggs, Kendra Stevenson, Luke Terhaar

**Swing Shift Stewards:** Maureen Cruse, Erin Sweeney

## NTEU73 Events

### - Labor Recognition Week -

September 16th - 20th 2024

### - NTEU Toy Drive -

November 1st - December 1st, 2024

### - NTEU Holiday Party -

December 14th, 2024

Under the Hatch Act, there are many ways that federal employees can engage in partisan political activity with only a handful of activities to avoid.

### Federal employees may:

- Register and vote as they choose
- Wear political buttons (except in government buildings, wearing a government uniform or while on duty)
- Sign petitions, including nomination petitions
- Assist in voter registration drives
- Express opinions about all candidates and issues, privately and publicly
- Display a political affiliation in their social media profile information
- Display a political party, campaign logo, or candidate picture as their profile or cover picture on their personal Facebook or Twitter account
- Run for election to a non-partisan office
- Run for office within party organizations and affiliated groups
- Attend political conventions, rallies, and meetings as an elected representative of a partisan organization
- Contribute to TEPAC or other political organizations or attend a political fundraising function
- Solicit contributions to TEPAC from another NTEU member provided that the contributor is not a subordinate employee

**NOTE: Spouses and other members of an employee's family may engage in all forms of partisan political activities.**

### Federal employees may not:

- Be candidates for partisan public office
- Use their official position to influence election results
- Use an official social media account to engage in political activity
- Engage in political activity in government buildings or while on duty (including using government e-mail systems to distribute political messages or posting on social media)
- Collect, solicit or receive any financial contributions from the general public through written, oral, email, or social media communications

Opportunities for federal employees to join in the political process were virtually non-existent until NTEU led the effort to expand ways for federal employees to participate in the nation's civic life. The union secured significant reforms to the Hatch Act and opened up the process to federal employees.

The original statute prohibited nearly all partisan political activities for federal employees, outside of voting. NTEU-initiated reforms expanded the range of activities that federal employees can take part in to include participating in phone banks and sending endorsement mailings, as well as holding lunchtime meetings and voter registration drives.







THANK YOU  
FOR BEING A MEMBER

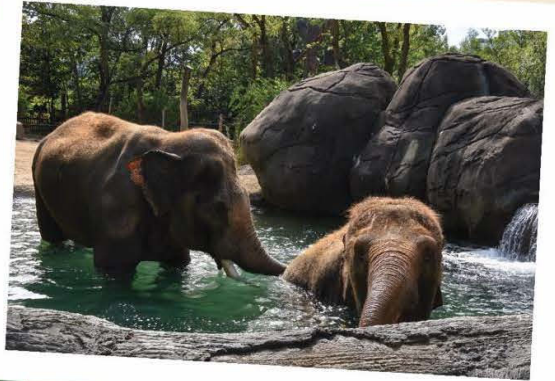
# Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden

## CORPORATE DISCOUNTS

# \$2.00 OFF

Adult Admission

*\*Flat \$2.00 Off All Child/Senior Admission*



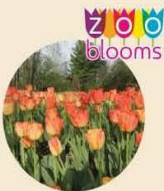
Company Code:

**NTEU73**

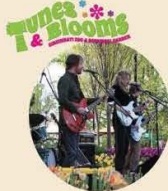
Scan the QR code for quick access or go to <http://cincinnati-zoo.org/prepare-for-your-zoo-visit/> and select CORPORATE/AFFILIATE DISCOUNTS! Enter your Company Code for your discounted admission! Discount is applied at checkout.

*\*Parking discounts are not included with this offer.*

UPCOMING EVENTS:



April 1-30



Beginning April 4

Zoo Babies



May 1-31

HallZooween



Last Three Weekends  
In October



Scan the QR code now to access your discounted tickets!

# 2024 season

## INCREASING FEDERAL EMPLOYEE PAY

Competitive pay helps ensure a professional, skilled workforce is on board administering our nation's laws and programs. Federal employees — who live and work in every state and congressional district across the country serve as scientists, accountants, customer service representatives, park rangers, law enforcement officers and more, providing critical services for our nation and the American people. The federal government must provide competitive pay and benefits to recruit and retain talented employees.

Congress must act to ensure that all workers are treated with dignity and respect and can earn a living wage. This includes ensuring that all workers receive a minimum wage of \$15 per hour, as federal employees do now due to an executive order issued by President Biden, and that federal employees receive annual increases that are equivalent to those provided to employees in the private sector and keep up with the cost of inflation.

All American workers and middle-class taxpayers, including federal employees, face ever-increasing utility, health care, food, and college bills, as well as rent and mortgage obligations. However, overall federal pay raises have fallen behind increases to private sector wages due to numerous years of pay freezes or below market pay increases.

As a result, the average pay disparity between the federal government and the private sector, according to the last report by the Federal Salary Council, grew to 27.54 percent. This amount is far greater than the 5 percent goal set by the *Federal Employee Pay Comparability Act of 1990 (FEPCA)*, which governs annual white-collar federal employee pay adjustments and sets those adjustments based on changes in the Employment Cost Index (ECI), i.e., changes in private sector wages and salaries.

For 2025, Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) and Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI) have introduced the *Federal Adjustment of Income Rates (FAIR) Act (H.R. 7127 and S. 3688)* calling for an average 7.4 percent pay adjustment for federal workers, consisting of a 4.0 percent across-the-board increase plus an average 3.4 percent for locality pay.

Providing federal workers an average 7.4 percent pay raise in 2025 would begin to address the shortfall in pay in the past and help make the federal government a more competitive employer, especially in higher cost areas of the country.

Moreover, in addition to increasing pay overall, Congress must lift the statutory limit on pay which prevents some employees in high-cost areas from receiving their full pay increase.

We also continue to fight to prevent federal wildland firefighters from going over the “pay cliff” created because of a temporary pay increase in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. We support legislation to ensure that federal wildland firefighters receive competitive pay.

For federal agencies to meet their missions, they need to recruit and retain talented employees, all of whom, regardless of pay system or occupation, deserve an adequate pay raise that is comparable to increases for their private sector counterparts.

**NTEU National**

### **NTEU urges:**

- Support for the FAIR Act (H.R. 7127 and S. 3688) that would provide an average 7.4 percent pay adjustment for federal employees in 2025.
- Support for lifting statutory pay caps to ensure that federal employees in high-cost areas receive their full pay increase.
- Opposition to efforts to freeze or cut employee pay.
- Support for legislation to provide all workers with a \$15 per hour minimum wage.
- Support for a fair and transparent pay system that provides adequate and equitable pay raises.
- Support legislation that will permanently raise wildland firefighter pay.





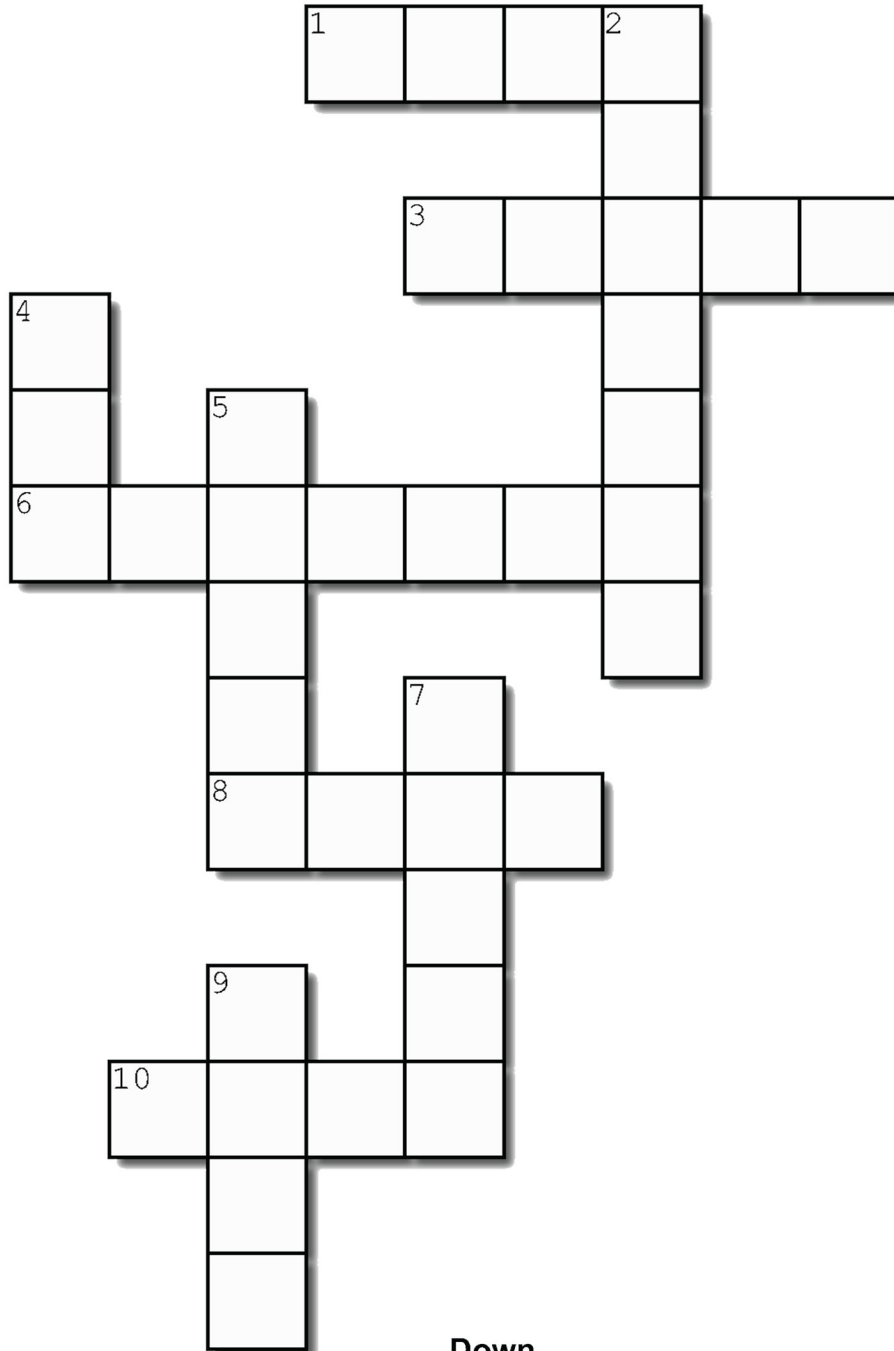
As we enter Pride Month, I wanted to take just a moment to recognize the Pride flag and educate others on what this flag represents. It's one way to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community but is also a symbol of love, acceptance, strength and pride.

An excerpt from People Magazine (2023) reads:

“You probably knew that the rainbow flag — created by artist Gilbert Baker in 1978 — is used as a symbol of LGBTQ+ pride, but did you know that each color on the flag has its own meaning? In the widely known six-color flag, red is symbolic of life, orange is symbolic of healing, yellow is sunshine, green is nature, blue represents harmony and purple is spirit. In the original eight-color flag, hot pink was included to represent sex and turquoise to represent magic/art.

There have been many variations on the flag. In 2021, the flag was altered in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter protests, including black to represent diversity, brown to represent inclusivity and light blue and pink, the colors of the trans pride flag.”

**Brandi Riggs**



**Across**

- 1. It's not fake
- 3. These normally will be taken in two (2) fifteen (15) minute increments and will total no more than thirty (30) minutes
- 6. Tracks your every movement and bathroom breaks
- 8. The exclusive representative for bargaining unit employees
- 10. You get four (4) hours of Administrative Time to do this every election

**Down**

- 2. Will defend your Employee Rights from bad management
- 4. Your lead is always telling you to check it
- 5. Association formed by people with a common interest or purpose
- 7. This is something you get every Pay Period and what you want to do at the end of your shift
- 9. You should always keep one for your personal records





UNITED  
BENEFITS

+

NTEU  
National Treasury Employees Union

# RETIREMENT COUNSELING AND BENEFITS ENROLLMENT

IN-PERSON APPOINTMENTS ARE AVAILABLE

Come by or set up an appointment for guidance on the following topics:

## RETIREMENT

- Assisting with Retirement Paperwork
- TSP & 401(k) Strategies
- Survivor Annuity Options
- Calculating Your Pension
- Social Security Strategy
- Early, Deferred, & Disability Retirement
- FERS Retirement
- FERS LEO Retirement

## SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS

- Short-Term Disability
- Hospital Indemnity
- Critical Illness
- Dental & Vision Insurance
- Permanent Life Insurance for Employees & Family

## ONE-ON-ONE APPOINTMENTS



Schedule your free one-on-one  
benefits review by scanning the  
QR code or visiting us at

[unitedbenefits.com/christopherlee/](https://unitedbenefits.com/christopherlee/)

## YOUR LOCAL BENEFITS SPECIALISTS

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