

AFGE Local 2199

Newsletter 3/1/25

Inside this Issue

2023 Master Agreements available at union office, News on current state of affairs. From the President's desk.

DOGE ANTICS



Upcoming Events

Membership Meeting

Membership meetings are held every 2nd Wednesday of the month. We welcome all to attend. The link to attend the meetings are on the website, [AFGELocal2199.org](https://www.afgelocal2199.org), and once you book the meeting then the link will be sent to you via email.

Lunch & Learn

New Year, new dates for leadership to be swinging by all CBOCS to check in and see how things are going and for questions and info sessions.

AFGE Files Lawsuit Against OPM for Illegal Mass Firings of Probationary Employees

February 24, 2025

Categories: [The Insider](#)

AFGE, along with [AFSCME](#), [AFGE Local 1216](#), and [United Nurses Associations of California/Union of Health Care Professionals](#), filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Feb. 19, challenging the agency's unprecedented mass firing of probationary federal employees.

The lawsuit alleges that OPM's egregious firings were made on false pretenses and violate federal law, including the [Administrative Procedure Act](#) and other statutes defining federal employment and OPM's role. These firings were executed across federal agencies, based on directives from OPM.

OPM, the lawsuit asserts, acted unlawfully by directing federal agencies to use a standardized termination notice falsely claiming performance issues. Congress, not OPM, controls and authorizes federal employment and related spending by the federal administrative agencies, and Congress has determined that each agency is responsible for managing its own employees.

In federal service, new employees and employees who change positions (including through promotions) have probationary status. But OPM is exploiting and misusing the probationary period to eliminate staff across federal agencies.

The unions are asking for an injunction to stop further terminations and to rescind those that have already been executed.

“This administration has abused the probationary period to conduct a chaotic, ill-informed, and politically driven firing spree. The result has been the indiscriminate firing of thousands of patriotic public servants across the country who help veterans in crisis, ensure the safety of our nuclear weapons, keep power flowing to American homes, combat the bird flu, and provide other essential services,” said AFGE National President Everett Kelley. “These actions aren't just illegal. They are hurting everyday Americans and making us all less safe. It's a stark reminder of the price we all pay when you stack the government with political loyalists instead of professionals.”

What did you do last week?' email stokes confusion and anger among federal workers



Stephen Fowler



Demonstrators gather outside of the Office of Personnel Management in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 7 to protest federal layoffs and demand the termination of Elon Musk from the Department of Government Efficiency.

A federal government-wide email asking employees "What did you do last week?" plunged workers and agencies into a weekend of confusion and conflicting directives.

Billionaire White House adviser Elon Musk said [failure to reply would be taken as resignation](#). But some department officials told their employees they could hold off on responding.

Adding to the confusion is previous guidance from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the agency that sent the broad request, saying that responses to such mass emails were "voluntary."

Federal workers resurfaced the OPM guidance after they received Saturday's email, signaling their latest objection to changes pushed by Musk's Department of Government Efficiency.

Elon Musk says federal employees must either document their work — or lose their jobs

Musk teased the OPM notice Saturday afternoon, posting [on his social media site X](#) that "all federal employees will shortly receive an email requesting to understand what they got done last week."

The leader of the DOGE initiative also said "failure to respond will be taken as a resignation."

Many federal workers are covered by civil service protections that prevent them from being fired without cause, and the actual text of the email sent from an OPM address did not include the ultimatum. Employees were asked to reply with "approx. 5 bullets of what you accomplished last week and cc your manager" by Monday 11:59 p.m. ET.

The brief request would appear counter to [a privacy impact assessment](#) OPM published

Feb. 5 that said any mass email sent from a government-wide email system would "explicitly" state engaging with the email would be voluntary.

Fired in Trump's chaotic purge, an Army vet says he's never felt more betrayed

The OPM assessment, published in response to a lawsuit challenging the Trump administration's implementation of the email system, states seven different times that any response to the mass emails are "voluntary." The government-wide email system was also used for the "fork in the road" deferred resignation offer.

"The Employee Response Data is explicitly voluntary," the assessment reads. "The individual federal government employees can opt out simply by not responding to the email."

The assessment notes that there is a risk that "individuals will not realize their response is voluntary," a dynamic that quickly played out across the government in the hours after OPM's Saturday email.

OPM did not immediately respond to NPR's request for comment on Sunday about whether the email asking workers "What did you do last week?" aligned with the Feb. 5 guidance about voluntary responses.

OPM had said in an earlier statement that the emails are "part of the Trump Administration's commitment to an efficient and accountable federal workforce," and that "agencies will determine any next steps."

Many agencies told workers to hold off

Many supervisors and agencies instructed their employees to hold off on responding to the OPM email, according to emails reviewed by NPR, like a directive from new FBI Director Kash Patel that the agency would review its own processes first. The FBI email was confirmed by an individual at the bureau who isn't authorized to speak publicly.

On Sunday, the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security instructed their respective employees to pause any response to the OPM email, according to department emails viewed by NPR.

There are also questions about the legality of the request from OPM, which performs many human resources functions for the federal government.

Have information you want to share about the ongoing changes across the federal government? Reach out through encrypted communications on Signal to Stephen Fowler (stphnfwlr.25), Andrea Hsu (andreaHSU.08) or Jenna McLaughlin (jennamclaughlin.54).

"The ["What did you do last week?"] email fails to identify any legal authority permitting OPM to demand the requested information," Everett Kelley, national president of the American Federation of Government Employees, wrote in a letter to OPM's acting director on Sunday. "OPM's actions conflict with laws delegating the authority for the management of federal employees to their respective agencies and do not comport with OPM's own regulations and guidance"

And though Musk wrote on X that responding to the OPM email would be simple and easy, Kelley said in the letter that the union has "received numerous reports from dedicated civil servants, including those who care for our veterans and safeguard our nation, expressing frustration over the email's tone and intent. Rather than fostering professionalism and respect for their work, this hastily written email left many feeling undervalued and intimidated."

From the Local Presidents Desk

Hello, Bargaining unit employees of AFGE Local 2199,

I would like to welcome all of our new members and thank all of our 990 members for making their voices heard. These past few weeks have been mentally and emotionally exhausting. I want all of you to know that you are not alone. Together, we will make this local and VA a better place for our veterans and each other as we go through these extremely difficult and troubled times until July 2026 (the day the DOGE committee is disbanded as a government entity).

AFGE is on top of each issue, that is an Executive Order or DOGE odd and frightening demands that we have to follow as VA employees. Please follow what they say and simply go through these troubled times together. **DON'T GIVE IN TO THESE BULLIES.** I could not be prouder of the way you all are weathering through this storm.

There will be news of upcoming events within our local so please watch for them on our social media outlets; IE: Facebook, website, and broad stripes. Feel free to reach out to any officer or steward who is listed on the last page of the newsletter for assistance, but please be mindful that we are receiving the same information that you are currently. There is also the national site, AFGE.ORG, to see the latest updates on information and lawsuits filed.

Thank you again for your continued dedication to our loyalty and dedication to our veterans and to your union.

Respectfully in Solidarity,

Robert Johnson, President

AFGE Local 2199

District 11

District 13 chair 219 NVAC Trustee

AFL-CIO

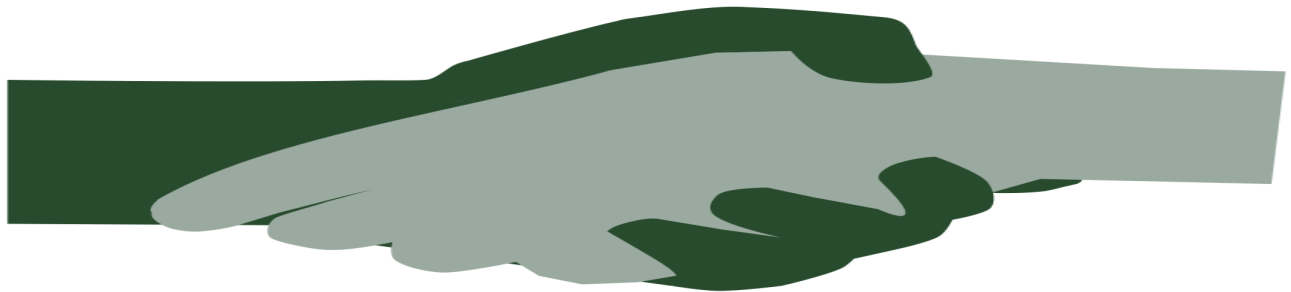
Your partnership with AFGE doesn't have to end when you retire.

AFGE Retirees are front and center in our efforts to honor and defend government employees. That means advocating for a productive, healthy, and secure retirement as well as good jobs, pay, and benefits for those who are still working.

- **Stay connected with friends through social activities and volunteer opportunities**
- **Keep informed about issues affecting retired and active government employees**
- **Take action to protect retirement security, jobs, and government employee pay**
- **Save money on a host of benefits – Retirees receive all AFGE discounts and benefits**
- **Share your skills with the next generation of union leaders and activists**



LEARN AND LEAD



BECOME A STEWARD

[Transparency and Availability](#)

Union officers are to provide more transparency and availability. What does this mean for the members? This means that if you need a rep to assist you then you will get one quickly. If you want to know what is happening in the local chapter, then we will have a monthly briefing to inform you of upcoming events. Our goal is to keep everyone informed of local events and events happening on the national level that will affect the VA and the employees.

AFGE LOCAL 2199 **Union**

President — Robert Johnson
Treasurer/Secretary- Lisa-Maria Manning
Executive Vice President - Jeff VanCuren
VHA Vice President - Lisa-Maria Manning
VBA Vice President -Teresa Salazar
Sergeant At Arms - Caitlinn Tanaka
Chief Steward - Jason Jolly
Political Cord. - Steve Bollschweiller
Womens Fair Practice - Nancy Plambaeck
YOUNG Cord. - Charles Borsani
PRIDE Coordinator-JoJo Begay
B.L.A.C.K.- Coordinator-Christina Meadows
APOWER Coordinator-Caitlinn Tanaka
HISCO Coordinator- Teresa Salazar

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