

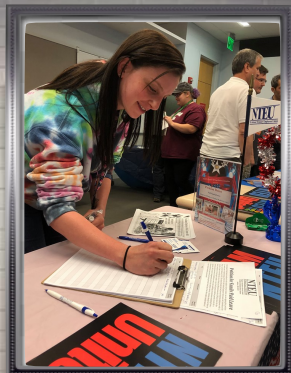
# The Guardian



I AM NTEU.....pg2



LRD.....pg3



PETITION DRIVE...pg4



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## Inside Edition

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# I BELONG NTEU because...There is Strength in Numbers. I AM NTEU

- ★ The many rights and benefits enjoyed by federal employees didn't come easily. No one handed them to us, not Congress, not the White House, not any federal agency. NTEU members won them, at the bargaining table, through legislation, and by having a voice in the workplace where policies are implemented on a day-to-day basis.
- ★ NTEU can help you be successful in your workplace. Because management knows we speak for everyone in the bargaining unit, we can influence workplace rules in ways that make sense for employees and America's taxpayers. We turn back legislative attempts that harm federal employees and advocate for policies and laws that support you and help you do your job more successfully.



As federal employees you serve our country and aid your fellow Americans each day. As we do every year at NTEU, it's time to recognize you and your work. That's right, once again Chapter 68 celebrates another successful Labor Recognition Day!

**You** make sure Americans are treated fairly by enforcing the nation's tax law with integrity and fairness. **You** provide America's taxpayers with top quality services and help them.

**WE** make sure federal employees are treated fairly by ensuring employees receive the proper compensation, negotiating tough workplace protections and working to safeguard and strengthen grievance procedures. understand and meet their tax responsibilities.

**NTEU** is proud to serve the federal employees who serve our country.



*Labor Recognition Day*

Chapter 68 Legislative Petition Drive for 3.6% Pay Raise on 2020 & 12-weeks Paid Family Leave was a great success thanks to the Hundreds of chapter members who signed the petitions! Thank you all for participating in the chapter's event.



## *Petition Drive*

## Stewards Working For You



### When TIGTA Calls.

The TIGTA agent will normally call your manager and have the manager inform you that you have a meeting scheduled with TIGTA. The meeting is usually planned within 24 hours, at the TIGTA agent's office. The very first thing you should do is contact your NTEU steward. It is your right to have union representation for any investigatory interview. For your protection, it is imperative that a steward accompany you to the meeting. If the scheduled time and place is not possible for you or your steward the meeting can be rescheduled. Either you or your steward can arrange a new time with the agent. Even if the meeting must be postponed, do not go alone!

Why do you need your steward? Your job, or worse, could be in jeopardy. Your steward is there to protect your rights and interest. It is normal for you to be anxious and nervous during a TIGTA interview. Your steward is there to be a calming influence and keep the meeting in check. Your steward will: prepare you for the interview, clarify the reason for the interview, verify that you receive your rights, make sure that you understand your rights, make comments on the form of the questions, seek clarification of questions, assist you in clarifying answers or expressing your view, suggest other avenues of inquiry, point out facts favorable to you, request breaks as necessary, and take notes. However, your steward does not have the right to turn the meeting into an adversarial proceeding.

TIGTA conducts interviews for different types of issues. The two basic categories are administrative matters and criminal matters. When contacted for an interview, you have the right to know whether the investigation involves criminal or administrative matters. You should also be told if you are the subject of the investigation, or a third party witness.

By way of example, Administrative matters deal with infractions of agency rules; i.e., alleged code of ethics or conduct violations. TIGTA investigates administrative matters and then sends their findings to management. Management then decides the appropriate disciplinary action, from no action to termination. You can be called as a third party or as the subject of the interview. You must attend a meeting regarding an administrative matter. You are also required to give truthful testimony, usually under oath. Your failure to respond could lead to disciplinary action, including termination. Your steward will help prepare you for your interview.

Sincerely,

Rob MacFarlane, N/S Chief Steward



### Know Your Rights: How to Consult Your NTEU Steward

NTEU-represented employees who encounter workplace problems or issues have an ally in their NTEU steward. This trained union representative can help resolve or alleviate your situation, or fight it with a grievance, if necessary. You have specific rights, under federal labor law and particularly under your NTEU contract to meet with your union steward and discuss issues or questions you may have. Here are some of the most common issues employees talk to their stewards about:

The performance appraisal process. What are the objective standards, and how can I meet them? What training and development opportunities are available? How do I gather the right information to convince my supervisor I deserve the appraisal I believe I've earned? Leave, all kinds of leave. Whether the question deals with annual or sick leave, leave without pay, leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, or being charged absent without leave, employees have the right to speak with their steward about what leave they are entitled to take and how to invoke that leave. Managers often do not fully understand employees' leave options and, as a result, can be too rigid about leave matters.

Bullying and disrespectful treatment. It can happen in the workplace, and the offender can be a manager, directing anger or stress at a single employee or a group. Occasionally, it can be another employee. You do not have to suffer through this. Benefits: Employees want to know what they are entitled to and how they work. NTEU stewards can help with these issues and much more. So, the next question for many employees is: how do you get time to talk to your steward? Under federal labor law, agencies are forbidden to interfere with your right to union representation. And under NTEU contracts, you are entitled to a reasonable amount of paid administrative time to meet with your steward. You can talk to your steward during a break, at lunch, dinner or before or after work. Having a meeting on work time isn't difficult; it just involves your supervisor.

Here are the steps: Tell your supervisor you want to meet with your NTEU representative. You need not give specific details. At most, you need to give a general description of the reason you want to meet with the steward. Say when you want to meet and estimate how long the meeting will take. Unless work schedules prevent it, the supervisor has to grant the time. Generally the timing is worked out among you, your steward and your supervisor. When the meeting ends, report back to your supervisor and record the time on your time sheet in regular fashion. Your agency likely has a designated code for that purpose. By knowing your rights to talk to your steward, you are better able to seek NTEU's assistance when you need it. Stewards can explain laws and processes, talk to your manager for you and even file a grievance, if necessary. **All you need to do is ask!**



## Can I Use Wrap Time?

Although this article was published in the newsletter several months ago, we have heard several concerns about the use of wrap time, including management's flat out denial of its use. Please review this article. Wrap time CAN ABSOLUTELY be used!!! Management CANNOT flatly deny you the use, however, there is a time and a place for it... please see the information below.

### IRM 21.1.1.4 (13) reads as follows:

"Use of wrap time should be minimal except in rare instances. CSRs are expected to complete calls (account adjustments, tax related research and writing Account Management Services (AMS) notes) while on the line or on hold with the caller. If the taxpayer does not want to be placed on hold while specific actions are being taken on the account, wrap time should be limited to no more than two minutes. For additional information regarding completing on-line account inquires, see IRM 21.1.3.20 (2), Oral Statement Authority."

The IRM is not the controlling document and it's incorrect. The controlling document in this case is the Customer Service Agreement, the CSA which is the agreement signed by both NTEU and the Agency. Section 4B2 of the CSA states the following:

"Conditional wrap is appropriate in situations where the taxpayer does not wish to stay on the line and case documentation is required. Other situations that may warrant the employee being in conditional wrap are if a case is complex and requires additional time to complete documentation or research, or if there is a need to prepare to take the next call. However, employees are expected to resolve telephone inquiries (including account adjustments) while the customer is still on the line."

The biggest concern of the IRM is that it clearly indicates that you cannot be in wrap for more than 2 minutes. The CSA states that wrap time can be used for multiple things including complex cases that would require additional time to complete.

Chapter 68 brought this to the attention of management. In their response, they seemed to agree that there were some issues with the IRM and that the CER team is to be reviewing cases per the CSA. It was also pointed out that IRM 1.4.16.3.5.4 seems to show that more than the 2 minutes of wrap time can potentially be used.

### So, what is the truth about wrap time?

It is true that wrap time should be used as little as possible. The CSA does state that "... employees are expected to resolve telephone inquiries (including account adjustments) while the customer is on the line.". However, there are many reasons where you are able to use wrap time and management should not give you an error or even have concerns with your work. As long as you have a legitimate reason for going into wrap and it coincides with the wording in the CSA, you are absolutely eligible to go into wrap and you are able to use wrap for more than 2 minutes in contradiction to the IRM.

If your manager tells you that you can only use wrap for 2 minutes or if you are told that you cannot use wrap at all, please contact the NTEU office immediately. Also, if you are given an error for being in wrap and you feel it's a violation of the CSA, please contact us immediately to help rectify the problem.

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### Article 31: Leave Sharing Program

The Leave Sharing Program was negotiated and established to assist IRS employees who are facing or who have faced personal/family medical emergencies.

- Leave Sharing consists of two programs: Leave Bank and Leave Transfer. To receive donated leave from the Leave Bank, an employee must be a member of the Leave Bank. No membership is necessary to receive donated leave under the Leave Transfer Program.
- An employee who is a member of the Leave Bank may apply for leave through both the Leave Bank and Leave Transfer Programs. Applications for the leave sharing programs may be made retroactively, but no later than thirty (30) days after the employee has returned from leave required by the medical emergency.
- To apply to become a leave transfer recipient, an employee must complete the Leave Sharing Application F12303. IRS Leave Sharing Program Form (Leave Bank/Transfer) - F9058 – This form is used to join the Leave Bank Program (during open season or within 30 days of being hired or return to duty from extended leave). **Please stop by the union office for further assistance.**



### Article 11: Facilities Services

If you did not get a copy of the National NTEU Contract Agreement for 2019, then management should provide you with one. Article 11 Sec. 5(A) entitles you to obtain a copy.

Section 5 (A): “A copy of this Agreement will be printed and given to each employee in the unit. The Employer will provide all visually impaired employees with a CD-ROM version of the Agreement. Further, upon request, visually impaired employees will be provided with a Braille copy of the Agreement. In addition, the Employer will make an electronic copy of the Agreement available on the IRS Intranet. Employees will be encouraged by the Employer to familiarize themselves with the contents of the Agreement.”



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# Summer Word Search

W	K	V	A	C	A	T	I	O	N	I	W	I	W	S
S	A	P	J	U	N	S	C	P	R	C	A	J	U	V
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R	W	H	S	H	A	M	B	U	X	H	U	L	I	
C	A	M	S	Y	B	A	S	E	B	A	L	L		
B	A	C	K	Y	A	R	D	O	X	A	Y			

Find these words.

family  
summer  
vacation  
camping  
backyard

beach  
pool  
swimming  
baseball  
fishing

June  
July  
August  
sun  
hot

picnic  
watermelon  
hamburger  
ice cream



# Summer



**NTEU**

The National Treasury Employees Union

Chapter 68

*Membership Meeting*

*Tuesday*

*June 18, 2019*

*5:00 PM – 8:00 PM*

*Where: Elks Lodge  
652 Andover Street  
Lawrence, MA 01843*

Dinner will be provided

**\*\*RSVP by June 12th\*\***

RSVP to : NTEU Chapter 68

Email [Nteu.Chapter.68@irs.gov](mailto:Nteu.Chapter.68@irs.gov)

Phone: (978) 783-8426



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