



VAL CONNORS
NTEU Chapter 68 Steward

Val has worked here at Andover Service Center since October 2014. He works in AM as a CSR. Val said, "I became a NTEU Chapter Steward because at one time I needed the union's help and now I would like to be there for others who need anything I can help with. I became a NTEU member when I was hired and hoped one day to make a difference."

Chapter 68 is proud of its Stewards because they serve as our eyes and ears ... They help ensure that all NTEU members are treated with dignity and respect in the workplace at IRS Andover Service Center. **Welcome a board, Val!**

I AM NTEU

Ask For Representation...

You must under the contract! You may not be aware of this... Under the Contract, in order to have Union representation, you must ask for it. We cannot claim that management violated your right to Union representation if you don't ask for a union representative to be present. Under some circumstances the manager who is conducting the interview/discussion must tell you that you are entitled to representation, while in some cases, they don't.

WEINGARTEN RIGHTS
"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working condition, I respectfully request that my union representative or steward be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions."

either hand it to the manager, or recite what the card states. If a union steward is not present at the moment, you are allowed to postpone the meeting with management personnel to allow you time to locate a representative.

IN ALL CASES, ASK FOR A UNION REPRESENTATIVE TO BE PRESENT! It's your right under Weingarten. If management calls you to ask you questions in any way that can cause you to be disciplined or terminated, pull out this card and you can



Please visit the union office or email nteu.chapter.68@irs.gov

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



We are united for fair pay, benefits and workplace rights.



The National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) represents over 150,000 federal employees in 33 agencies.

As part of its operating and governing structure, NTEU has 15 districts which are organized according to agency and functions within the agency. Each district is represented by a National Vice-president who is elected every two years during national conventions. The 15 NVP's, along with the National President and National Executive Vice-president, comprise the Union's Executive Board.

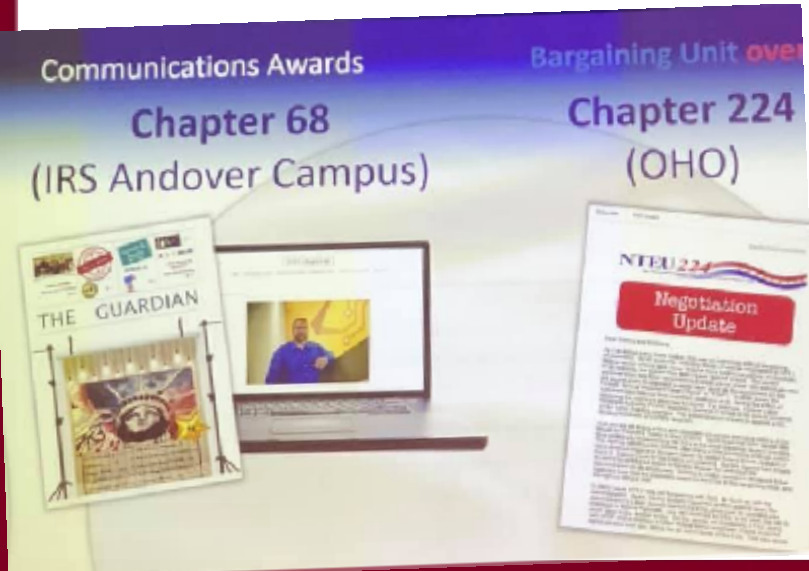
At our national convention in Portland, Oregon, this year I was proud to be elected as District 6 NVP. My district is an IRS service center district which includes Andover, Memphis, Philadelphia, Martinsburg and Brookhaven. In 2016 I served the remainder of Lynne Allen's NVP term and in 2017 I was elected to my first full two-year term.

The Executive Board meets in Washington, DC, at least twice annually to review the budget, discuss policies and strategies, vote on various appeals, and decide on issues proscribed by NTEU's By-laws.

Sincerely, Robert Harrington, NTEU Chapter 68 NVP District 6



At this year's NTEU 57th National Convention, Chapter 68 won the award for Achievement in Member Communications. Our chapter is honored and proud! All NTEU chapters compete for the award and are in the running! Chapter Leaders, Gary Karibian and Maria Zangari, accepted the award from National President, Tony Reardon, who credited the Chapter for its work in the newsletter, *The Guardian*, and website, www.nteu.org. We will continue to find new creative and innovative ways to improve our communications and look forward to earning the award again in the next convention. Stay tuned!





Can Facebook, Twitter and Instagram get you fired? Maybe?!



Social media is everywhere. But there is actually one place you can - and should – get away from social media: the federal workplace.

While work is not the place for social media, social media also is certainly not the place for work. That means the posting of work-related content on your Facebook page, Twitter feed or other social media account comes with inherent risk and may even be a violation of agency policy.

That said, the use of technology is on the rise, both for personal and business reasons, and growing at a very fast pace! Federal employees are not exempt from this worldwide trend. Until recent years conduct cases involving employee use of technology were rare, but they are increasing.

There are two primary types of discipline cases that NTEU-represented employees have encountered, such as actions based on alleged violations of agency internet and email policies, and actions for employee participation in social media such as Facebook. (Fun-Factoid: How many are on Facebook at all? How about Twitter? Wikipedia shows that 53% of Americans are on Facebook).

Here are some do's and don'ts for avoiding unwanted workplace problems.

Best Practices



- Do pause before you post. Understand that when it comes to the Internet, almost nothing is private. What goes online, stays online, often indefinitely.
- Do present yourself in a professional manner at all times, even when engaged in social media activities for personal reasons.
- Do monitor your social media pages and security settings regularly. Material posted by others can reflect poorly on you. On Facebook, you can approve certain items posted about you.

- Do build a rapport with someone before adding them as a “friend” to your social media site.
- Do separate fact from opinion. Be sure your audience knows the difference.
- Do friend NTEU! Join us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to get news, photos, calls to action and links to videos.



How well do you know the Hatch?

Social media and email—and the ease of accessing those accounts at work, either on computers or smartphones—have made it easier for federal employees to violate the Hatch Act. Yet there are many activities employees can do on social media and email that do not violate the law.



OSC has created this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page to help employees understand what the Hatch Act does and does not allow when using social media and email. In general, all federal employees may use social media and email and comply with the Hatch Act if they remember the following guidelines: **(1) Do not engage in political activity while on duty or in the workplace.** Federal employees are “on duty” when they are in a pay status, other than paid leave, or are representing the government in an official capacity. Federal employees are considered “on duty” during telecommuting hours. **(2) Do not engage in political activity in an official capacity at any time.** **(3) Do not solicit or receive political contributions at any time.**

“Political activity” refers to any activity directed at the success or failure of a political party or partisan political group (collectively referred to as “partisan groups”), or candidate in a partisan race.

In addition, some federal employees are considered “further restricted,” which means they are prohibited from taking an active part in partisan political management or partisan political campaigns. Thus, they may not engage, via social media and email, in any political activity on behalf of a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race.

When in doubt, members should consult Chapter 68 Leaders!

Social Media

Q: May a federal employee engage in political activity on Facebook or Twitter?

A: Yes, federal employees may express their opinions about a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race (e.g., post, “like,” “share,” “tweet,” “retweet”), but there are a few limitations. Specifically, the Hatch Act prohibits employees from: engaging in any political activity via Facebook or Twitter while on duty or in the workplace.



Q: May a federal employee engage in political activity on Facebook or Twitter if she is “friends” with or has “followers” who are subordinate employees?

A: Yes, but subject to the limitations described in other related questions and the following guidelines. If a supervisor’s statements about a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race are directed at all of his Facebook friends or Twitter followers, e.g., posted on his Facebook page, then there is no Hatch Act violation. Such statements would be improper if the supervisor specifically directed them toward her subordinate employees, or to a subset of friends that includes subordinate employees. For example, a supervisor should not send to a subordinate employee a Facebook message or “tweet” that shows her support for a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race.

Q: May a federal employee use a Facebook or Twitter account in his official capacity to engage in political activity?

A: No. Any social media account created in a federal employee’s official capacity should be limited to official business matters and remain politically neutral. Any political activity must be confined to the employee’s personal Facebook or account, subject to the limitations described in other related questions.

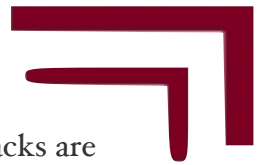
Q: May a federal employee become a “friend,” “like,” or “follow” the social media page of a partisan group or candidate in a partisan race?

A: Yes, but not while on duty or in the workplace.



In today's federal workplace, the best offense is a great defense.

When federal employees find themselves in a foxhole at work and attacks are incoming, the single most powerful shield they can have over their heads is a collective bargaining agreement (CBA). The last two years of assaults on your rights have illustrated more than ever the protective strength of a solid contract.



Time and again, the contracts NTEU negotiated with federal agencies have stood in the way of all kinds of mean-spirited attempts to shrink telework, diminish award payouts, cut leave, eliminate adequate office space and generally sideline the voices of workers. In some cases, the CBA stops the attack before it even starts. It is not a coincidence that so many of the administration decrees targeting federal employees and their unions contain some version of this caveat: "Nothing in this order shall abrogate any CBA in effect on the date of this order." Because that is the Eliminating contract articles that govern workplace benefits is an open invitation for mischief by giving some supervisors free rein to play favorites, hand out or revoke benefits at their whim, and fire employees at will.

This is a time to pay homage to the CBA. It was painstakingly negotiated by your colleagues and union lawyers. And even if you haven't read the whole thing, know that there is a team of trained NTEU stewards, leaders, field staff and labor law experts in the bunker with you to help hold that shield over your head.

Administration's Executive Orders Harm Federal Employees

There's a lot of talk about the federal government over these Executive Orders (EO's) and their potential impact on the employees. For instance, our employees would no longer have the grievance procedure to protest unfair performance appraisals. Agencies are feeling emboldened to go after employee benefits like transit subsidies and alternative work schedules at the bargaining table. The impacts are real, and we need the support and engagement of everyone in the workplace to protest the EO's and share with their legislators and the White House. These orders are based on the false assumption that federal employees (like you) are the problem, and that if you can be fired faster and more easily, U.S. government will operate more effectively and efficiently. This is union gutting! These executive orders are aimed at taking away your collective bargaining rights. The orders – limiting the use of official time, weakening due process, restricting collective bargaining at government agencies – undermine decades of federal law that govern labor-management relations in the federal sector. These EO's eliminate time for union representatives to ensure that the agency is living up to its contractual obligations.


On Aug. 30th, the legal battle to block the administration's anti-employee EO's resumed when NTEU asked the full U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit to take up the case. "This case is about preserving our merit-based civil service system and making sure that taxpayers can count on federal agencies being staffed by highly-qualified employees who are treated fairly as they go about the business of delivering important government services to the public." said Tony Reardon, NTEU President ...read more... NTEU.org

See What You Can Do! Visit NTEU.org Action Center.

Take Action Today!

CAUTION: Do not use government computer or email. Use personal computer, phone or tablet and personal email. Must be done on your own time.





Can a congressional inquiry help my Retirement Disability claim?

Congressional inquiry is a “status check” of your retirement disability claim conducted by your local senator or representative on your behalf. While requesting a congressional inquiry does not automatically guarantee that your claim will be revised or addressed any sooner, it won’t negatively affect your application.



OPM continues to experience unacceptable delays in its processing of retirement claims, especially with disability retirement applications. Well, now you wait for OPM to process your claim and you may be waiting a long time. **Chapter 68 Leaders can help you** initiate a congressional inquiry, they can contact your local senator or representative’s office to request that he or she look into where your claim stands. In your request, you should give a general overview of the circumstances surrounding your claim.

You may include factors such as:

- How long it has been since you began the application process
- How long you have been waiting for an appeal hearing to be scheduled
- Any medical, emotional, or financial distress the application process has caused

While these are just examples, be sure to include any information that will help explain why you are in need of a congressional inquiry. Congressional inquiries are helpful for individuals who, due to financial or medical hardship, can no longer wait for a disability hearing to be scheduled. **Please contact your Chapter 68 union office or email n-teu.chapter.68@irs.gov for further assistance.**



ACTION 68 GRASSROOTS CONTEST WINNERS



1 LISA



2 MIKE



3 DORIS



1



2



3

celebrating LABOR DAY

Word Search



See how many of these newspaper related words you can find in the puzzle.
The words can be forward, backward or diagonal.

- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. LABOR | 5. WORK | 9. SUMMER | 13. AMERICAN |
| 2. DAY | 6. LONG | 10. NATIONAL | 14. MONDAY |
| 3. HOLIDAY | 7. WEEKEND | 11. USA | 15. DAY |
| 4. SEPTEMBER | 8. ENDING | 12. TRAVEL | 16. OFF |

Chapter 68 Events

Fairs

Stop @ the Union office
for your tickets today!



Tickets
Available Now!



DEERFIELD FAIR

September 26 - September 29, 2019

DEERFIELD FAIR

143 YEARS OF AGRICULTURAL FAMILY FUN
SEPTEMBER 26-September 29, 2019
WE ARE NEW ENGLAND'S OLDEST "FAMILY FAIR"

Adults tickets \$10.00 ea.

Children 12 and younger are FREE

Topsfield Fair

October 4th
through the 14th



Admission
Ticket

\$11



Rides

\$26

MORE INFO



Food
Ticket

\$6

Retirement Planning Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) and Medicare



Planning to retire in next 5 years?

- **FEHB in Retirement:**
 - Eligibility
 - Government Contribution
 - Open Season and Qualifying Events
- **A, B, C, & Ds of Medicare:**
 - Medicare Eligibility
 - How and When to Enroll
 - Cost



**BlueCross
BlueShield.**

Federal Employee Program.

CROSS POINT - Tower 3, 9th floor Conference Room

Date: Tuesday, October 1st

Times: 12:00 PM and 12:30 PM

ANDOVER - Café Function Rooms 223 & 224

Date: Thursday, October 3rd

Times: 11:30 AM, 12:00 PM and 12:30 PM
5:30 PM, 6:00 PM and 6:30 PM

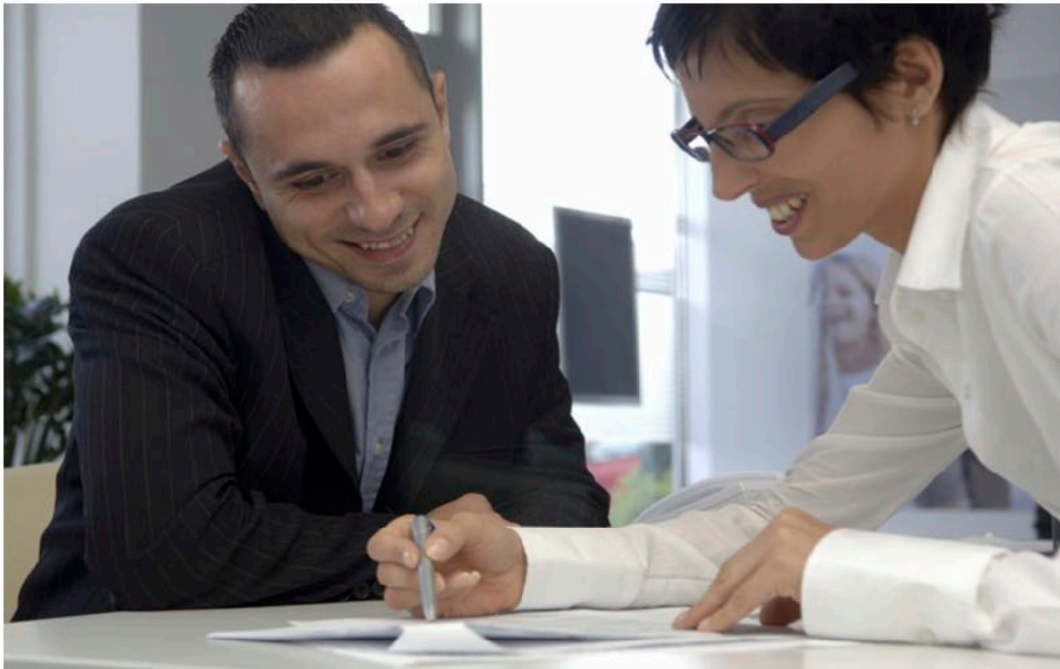
NTEU members only

For questions, please contact NTEU office at nteu.chapter.68@irs.gov
or call 978-783-8426

NTEU Sponsored Event

Blue Cross Blue Shield Information Table

*Blue Cross representative will be available
for any specific questions.*



Personal one on one meetings to address your individual needs

Cross Point Tower 3, 9th Floor Conf. Rm

Date: Tuesday, October 22nd

Times: 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM

Andover – Café Function Rooms 223 & 224

Date: Thursday, October 24th

Times: 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

and

5:00 PM to 7:00 PM



**BlueCross
BlueShield**

Federal Employee Program.

NTEU members only

For questions or to schedule a one-on-one meeting, please contact NTEU office at
nteu.chapter.68@irs.gov or call 978-783-8426



UNITED BENEFITS

Hosted by NTEU Chapter 68

Invites Members and Non-members

**October 7th—10th &
October 28th — 31st**

Schedule Your Appointment

Benefits and Retirement Counseling

**Retirement Calculations and Package Assistance
TSP, FEGLI, FEHB, FERS, CSRS**

Café Function Rooms 223 & 224

Please request 1 hour of Admin time

Article 36—Section 11—Subject to workload considerations the Employer may grant an employee up to a total of four (4) hours excused absence per calendar year for the purposes of attending a health benefits fair, reviewing health benefits information and materials, receiving financial counseling, and seeking supplemental retirement counseling. Except for excused absence for retirement planning, as provided for in Article 21, no other administrative time shall be authorized for general benefit counseling.

**Jim Ragan—256.312.3015
jim@unitedbenefits.com**

**Karen Ragan—256.312.3016
karen@unitedbenefits.com**



Members Only Event

health fair

Sponsored By

NTEU

The National Treasury Employees Union

Chapter 68

Our Mission

To organize federal employees to work together to ensure that every federal employee is treated with dignity and respect.

Tuesday, November 19th

In the Communication Center

(By The Rear Lobby)

Times: 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM

2:00 PM to 4:30 PM

5:30 PM to 7:00 PM

ADMIN TIME WILL NOT BE APPROVED FOR THIS EVENT

Arrange to attend during your

OWN TIME

*****Any questions visit our office*****

Call (978) 783-8426 or email

nteu.chapter.68@irs.gov



OPEN SEASON

Nov. 11 thru Dec. 9



Happy



Gary Karibian, Chapter President, (978)783-8425

Maria Zangari, Executive Vice President, (978)783-8423

Beth Willwerth, Secretary, (978)783-8426

Noelia Batista, D/S Chief Steward & Treasurer, (978)783-8424

Rob MacFarlane, N/S Chief Steward & Executive Coordinator, (978)783-8426

Nell Arndt, Membership Trustee & Legislative Coordinator, (978)783-8426

Barbara Thomas (Doumaney), Membership Trustee, (978)783-8426

Robert Harrington, National Vice President Dist. 6, (978)783-8426

NTEU Union Office local at ANSC Stop 935, Room 1106

Mailing Address: P O BOX 4186 Ballardvale Station, Andover, MA 01810

Website

www.nteuch68.org

www.NTEU.org



www.facebook.com/NTEU-Chapter-68
www.facebook.com/NTEU/National

