

OFFICIAL TIME

SECTION 1. PRIOR APPROVAL: The Agency will provide Union representatives a reasonable amount of official time under the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 7131(d) to prepare for and carry out statutory representational functions (e.g., attendance at formal discussions or negotiations, preparations of grievances, and preparation for arbitration). Use of official time must be requested and approved in advance in a manner consistent with the terms of this agreement.

SECTION 2. OFFICIAL TIME FOR UNION REPRESENTATIVE:

A. RELEASE FOR OFFICIAL TIME: A designated Union representative who wishes to use official time under this Article will request permission of his or her immediate supervisor using the "Request for Official Time Form". The representative will be released unless their absence will cause a disruption in their work area.

1. Such request should be made as early as possible (i.e., generally as soon as the need for the official time is known).
2. When making such a request, the representative will provide the information required, including how much time away from the work station, including anticipated travel time from his or her duty station to another duty station (locale).
3. If the first-line supervisor is unavailable at the time of the request, the request may be elevated to the second-level supervisor, or as necessary, to a higher official in the employee's chain of command.

B. DENIAL OR MODIFICATION OF OFFICIAL TIME REQUESTS: If permission is denied due to workload disruption:

1. The supervisor shall reschedule the use of official time at a mutually agreeable time.
2. If the supervisor and Union representative disagree on the amount of time which is reasonable, the supervisor shall grant the amount he or she believes to be reasonable.
3. The supervisor will document the reason for the denial or modification on the form and present it to the Union representative and forward a copy to LMER.

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4. The denials or modifications may be grieved by the Union.
5. If a request for official time is delayed by management decision, LMER will grant the Union an equivalent extension of applicable deadline if necessary and requested.

SECTION 3 PROCEDURES:

A. Duty Hours: Official Time will be granted to a Union representative only during the representative's regular working hours.

B. ATAAPS Codes: All Official Time will be recorded using the Official Time Request Form and entered into the Automated Time and Attendance Production System (ATAAPS) utilizing the codes as follows:

1. BA – Term Negotiations
2. BB – Mid-Term Negotiations
3. BD – Labor/Management /Training
4. BK – Grievances and Appeals

C. Return to Duty: The Union representative will report his or her return to work to their immediate supervisor upon conclusion of use of official time under this Article.

D. Entering Other Work Areas: Upon entering a work area other than his or her own, to meet with an employee, the representative will advise the immediate supervisor of their presence, the employee(s) to be contacted, and the estimated duration of the meeting. The supervisor will then make a determination if the employee(s) can be released. The representative shall request from the supervisor of that work area official time for all unit employees with whom the representative wishes to meet.

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SECTION 3. OFFICIAL TIME FOR UNIT EMPLOYEES:

A. Consultation with Union Representative: It is recognized that the employees may need to meet with (in person or by telephone) authorized union representatives regarding grievances or other representational matters and that they will require a reasonable amount of time to do so.

1. Without prior approval or charge to Official Time, employees may contact the Union to ask a general question, schedule an appointment, or have a preliminary discussion of a representational matter.
2. If the time required exceeds 30 minutes within the workday, or if the employee wishes to leave the work area to meet with the Union, the employee should request prior approval from their immediate supervisor, utilizing the Request for Official Time Form. In the section titled "Reason for Request of Official time" the following codes shall be used:
 - a. BD – Labor/Management /Training
 - b. BK – Grievances and Appeals
3. The employee is NOT required to advise the supervisor of the nature of business requiring union assistance.

B. Standards for Release: The employee will be released unless their absence will cause a disruption in the work area at that time. If the request is denied, the employee will be advised as to the time when approval can be granted.

SECTION 4. OFFICIAL TIME FOR UNION OFFICERS

A. Dedicated Official Time: The Agency will provide Union Officers dedicated of official time as follows:

1. *Union President:* Seven (7) days per Pay Period.
2. *Executive Vice President:* Three (3) days per Pay Period.
3. *Vice Presidents at WRNMMC and FBCH:* Two (2) days per Pay Period.
4. *Vice President at PENTAGON:* One (1) day per Pay Period.
5. *Treasurer:* One (1) day per pay period. Additional days may be requested on an ad hoc basis through LMER to deal with variable workload.

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B. Schedule: The specific days (one day is eight hours) to be utilized shall be arranged between the officer and their immediate supervisor. On days when the Union officer is scheduled to be on official time, they shall not be required to sign in/out at their regular location.

C. Internal Union Business: As set forth in 5 U.S.C. 7131(b), any activities performed by any employee relating to the internal business of a labor organization (including the solicitation of membership, elections of labor organization officials, and collection of dues) shall be performed only during the time the employee is in a non-duty status.

Agreed: Agency (65) Union PAW
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