

AFGE Council 222

Subject: Council President delivers HUD transition paper to new Administration; Union wins backpay for employee; Pay Raise, GSA Rates and more!



<http://www.afgecouncil222.com>

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TRANSITION NEWS
UNION WINS DISCIPLINARY ACTION, BACK PAY
DONATE UNUSED LEAVE
2009 PAY RAISE, CSRS RETIREMENT BENEFITS
GSA PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLE RATES
HATCH ACT AFTER THE ELECTION
VOLUNTARY SURVEY ON SOCIAL NETWORKING

Transition News

AFGE Council 222 has submitted a transition paper (<http://afgecouncil222.com>) to the new Administration. "This is an opportunity to express to the new administration our top concerns," said Council President Russell Varnado. President-elect (then candidate) Obama addressed three of those concerns in a letter (<http://afgecouncil222.com>) to AFGE President John Gage dated October 20, 2008; the need for quality political appointees and staff resources, and concerns with the cost of contracting out. The Council referenced the letter in its transition paper.

In past transitions, the Council has put program issues first. But the "Human Capital" issues at HUD are so large the Council gave them priority. "Without resolving longstanding internal problems, employees will not be able to deliver HUD programs," the transition paper states in the first page. The issues presented include:

1. Human Capital Management
 - a. Select quality political appointees
 - b. Champion modern management methods
 - c. Reorganize to promote results
 - d. Use economic stimulus package to assist succession management
 - e. Hire to meet demonstrated needs, and do it fairly
 - f. Provide quality training, including training related to HUD programs
 - g. Include union representation on Human Capital Steering Committee
 - h. Resolve longstanding problems in Office of Administration
 - i. Create IT infrastructure that meets employee needs
2. Refocus HUD's Mission
 - a. Revise the HUD Strategic Plan FY 2006-FY 2011 to reflect current conditions
 - b. Use HUD to stimulate "main street" economies
 - c. Return homeownership services to our field offices
 - d. Consider reviving Single Family Loss Mitigation Program
 - e. Restore focus on the development and maintenance of quality rental housing
 - f. Suspend implementation of Public Housing Asset Management Model
 - g. Reconsider the process for Fair Housing Limited Reviews
3. Prepare for Disaster Recovery
 - a. Shelter after the storm
 - b. Create and implement a "second responders" strategy
4. Ensure all contracting is cost and mission effective
5. Include Union as part of Transition Team

Union Wins Disciplinary Action, Back Pay

The American Federation of Government Employees this month won a case in which a Florida Housing and Urban Development housing inspector was wrongfully suspended for five days for allegedly failing to use a checklist during his housing inspections. With the assistance of Council Vice President Perry Casper, the union grieved the suspension, arguing that the employee's written reports were uniformly complete and correct. Siding with AFGE, the arbitrator said the inspectors have never been required to use the checklist as a mandatory tool in housing inspections. He revoked the suspension and ordered to agency to pay the grievant back pay. To see more on this case, go to the Council 222 home page (<http://afgecouncil222.com>).

Donate Unused Annual Leave To The Voluntary Leave Transfer Program

If you're in danger of losing some annual leave this year, please be sure to donate it to the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program (http://hudatwork.hud.gov/po/arh/pay_leave/leave2.cfm). There are currently dozens of our co-workers on the list. Be thankful for all you have, and make a donation to the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program.

GSA Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) Reimbursement Rates

The reimbursement rates for POV mileage changed on August 1, 2008, to \$0.585 for automobiles and motorcycles. Airplanes also increased on August 1, 2008, to \$1.26. The other rates have not changed since January 1, 2007. They are \$0.285 if a GSA vehicle is available and \$0.125 if committed to use GSA vehicle. An employee is considered as committed to use a GSA vehicle if the employee's program areas normal mode of travel is the GSA vehicle instead of a POV. Employees must receive authorization to use POV instead of GSA vehicle; however, employees must be reimbursed for official travel.

2009 Pay Raise 3.9%, CSRS Retirement Benefits Increase 4.8%, FERS 4.8%

With adjustments for locality pay, the 2009 pay raise will be 3.9% (less in the Rest of the US, more in metropolitan areas with higher average wages). Retirement benefits are increasing by 5.8% for CSRS retirees and 4.8% for FERS. Pay adjustments and retiree benefit increases are based on two different sets of statistics. Pay raises are tentatively based on the average pay raise received by workers throughout the country during the previous year. Given problems in the employment sector in 2008, we may

have thin pay increases in 2011. Retiree increases are based upon a “cost of living adjustment” or COLA, and reflect the annual change in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI/W). CSRS receives the full CPI/W, while FERS receives CPI/W minus 1%. FERS retirees also receive Social Security Benefits, which rise by the full CPI/W.

The Hatch Act After The Election

The Office of Special Counsel has taken the position that the Hatch Act does not prevent HUD employees from wearing or displaying presidential candidate items now that the election is over. Employees can wear or display something having the name of (or a picture of, or a logo associated with) one of the Presidential candidates. This is because the Presidential election is over. However, an employee can not wear or display something intended to further a partisan political group (i.e. for the Democrats or the Republicans). To see more information, go to our homepage (<http://afgecouncil222.com>).

Voluntary Survey on Internet Social Networking

A research study is being conducted that will assist in developing future policy and training on the Internet and social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, e-Harmony and other types of social networking on the Internet. This survey has been designed to help capture your perceptions regarding the use of networking sites and the Internet. The survey is anonymous and voluntary. The survey wasn't developed by Council 222 and isn't affiliated with it, so please direct any questions or comments regarding the survey to the source listed in the survey. Here is the survey link:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=IA1T1HMvPTENyZBC6ebqGA_3d_3d

This e:news is intended for AFGE bargaining unit employees. If problems viewing, try this [.pdf version](#).

