

PEF Statewide Labor/Management Meeting

1 Watervliet Ave, Albany NY

1/16/2020

<u>PEF</u>	<u>MANAGEMENT</u>
Charles Browning – Co-Chair	Cliff Meister – Co-Chair (video)
Dan Warren	Sadhna Gujral (video)
David Dubofsky	Patricia Carroll
Lisa Wells	Alyce Siegel (video)
Chris Rampe, PEF recording secretary	
Patty Mason	
Clifvon Jones	
John Babich	
Jeff Hutchinson (excused)	
Kathy Czachorowski	
Brandi Loveday-Chesley	
Prashant Singapura	
Radhakrishna Mohan	

1.) **Minutes** – 10/17/19 minutes approved 11/25/19.

Ms. Gujral, Asst Director of Underwriting was introduced as a new management member of the team.

2.) **Next Meeting** - PEF proposes April 30, 2020 at 9:30am

PEF proposes April 30th as next date of the SWLM meeting, and requests a new start time of 9:30am, all agree.

3.) Local L/M Meetings –

-Due to NYSIF's departmental reorganizations, PEF requests SW organizational charts for all departments for proper communication of local LM and H&S issues.

Mr. Browning inquires about chain of command now that business managers are being reassigned/transitioned. Ms. Carroll answers that Employees should go to the highest rank of the respective department. Dubofsky speaks to local L/M and who is in charge. Ms. Carroll states she will get listing of top ranked management for respective offices. Mr. Meister states that there may need to be continuing conversations as the agency continues to evolve. Question of departmental issues versus labor issues. In the meantime, Ms. Carroll states we are welcome to contact her with any questions.

4.) Statewide Staffing Levels –

- a.) Hearing Reps - PEF queries SIF re: the amount of hearings and depositions statewide that are being assigned to outside counsel in lieu of hiring hearing reps statewide. Per last meeting, SIF is compiling data regarding the number of hearing reps vs the amount of claims in particular offices. From 6/1/17-6/1/19 SIF has spent \$6,321,993.40 statewide on outside counsel. PEF argues that it would be more cost effective to hire hearing reps.

-PEF requests an update on that study and subsequent analysis.

- b.) ITS – Staffing – SSA staffing.

-PEF requests SSA's be adequately staffed SW.

-PEF requests NYSIF fully implement the 2016 Call Center/Help Desk/Call Transfers LEAN project.

<http://sp.nysif.com/sites/lean/LEAN%20Projects/Call%20Center%20%20Help%20Desk%20%20Call%20Transfers/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

- c.) CSRI staffing –

-PEF would like to know what the current benchmarks are for Lost Time units, Medical Only units, and Pension units.

- d.) MCR staffing –

-PEF notes a steady decline in SW MCR's.

-PEF notes there are no current Civil Service MCR exams, no current MCR list, and that currently per CS, MCR hires are "resume based", making it much easier for NYSIF to hire MCR's.

Regarding Hearing reps, PEF believes that hiring hearing reps is more beneficial than outside counsel. Mr. Meister states that CSR3s a select group of CSR3s are in the process of studying the issue and the data. They will report their findings and recommendations to executive/claims administration. Mr. Meister's feeling is that we are getting closer to hiring HR. The presentation is scheduled for 1/30/2020. Mr. Meister states that recruitment is generally a 3-month process. Mr. Meister believes that by the end of April we should have a solid idea.

Mr. Warren speaks to no SSA in Binghamton. Personnel leave NYSIF to go to another agency and come back to NYSIF at a higher grade. IVR revamp is discussed and should be finished by mid-year. IT has a larger training budget for this year. We are seeing forward movement and PEF would like to see the movement continue.

Mr. Warren has requested training for SSAs. Last Formal training for SSAs was when we went to Windows XP. Question of specialties: perhaps get getting Civil Service to look into specialization of titles. Ms. Carroll speaks to the fact that communication was key, and she agrees that things are moving forward and hopes it continues.

Regarding CSR 1 staffing, Mr. Dubofsky queries regarding PEF's requested benchmarks. Mr. Meister states the following: indemnity caseload 160 cases, Medical only 300, pension 400 cases. If any of the units were to get higher, it would probably be pension. Dubofsky asks who exactly is counted as claims personnel regarding staffing levels. Mr. Meister says the Grade 11s, Grade 14 examiners and CSR1s are counted as claims personnel. Investigators are assigned in caseloads in some offices and they are also counted as claims personnel. Mr. Dubofsky inquired whether the Binghamton mailroom person that is in a claims title. Mr. Meister suggests that department head/equivalent be consulted.

Kathy addresses the difference in complexity of cases by noting that not all cases are created equal, i.e., NYC cases are more involved than local district office cases, and the Language Line is utilized more often for these cases. Kathy emphasizes that numbers don't tell the whole story. For instance, in most NYC claims assigned to upstate, the CSRs usually do not have familiarity with providers, attorneys, etc. Mr. Meister states that management is interested in hearing more about this topic and is amenable to hearing suggestions. Mr. Meister stated he has reviewed the NYC distribution and he states that the numbers are fairly in line with our benchmarks. If there is a specific issue, Mr. Meister would like to hear about it. Dubofsky speaks further to the vagaries and variances in caseloads as result of geographical differences.

Kathy addresses MCR Staffing: there has been a 20% reduction in MCRs since 2011. PEF asks if MCR hiring is being contemplated. Mr. Meister states that we have fewer policies, premium, and claims than we did in 2011. A Principal MCR is being recruited. Once that selection is made, an analysis will be conducted as to MCR staffing. WCB drug portal has lessened the need for MCRs to get involved with all prescriptions. Mr. Meister states that our MCRs may now have additional "breathing room", due to the low number of prescription requests coming through the drug portal. Kathy counters that the WCB drug portal has created its own issues.

5.) Telecommuting –

PEF submitted a telecommuting memo outlining the history of telecommuting at SIF and included additional suggestions for consideration and hopeful PEF involvement.

-PEF requests a status/update on telecommuting at NYSIF.

Ms. Carroll states that it continues to be explored.

6.) ITS Concerns –

PEF ITS staff have brought specific concerns re: reduced security, inadequate training, various specialties, staffing, networking, servicing, and OOT work to this forum.

As PEF ITS members work through the requesting process for training, there are requests pending, deadlines not being met, discounts are being lost, difficulties in garnering a decision from supervisors/managers as to instructor-led course versus online access.

-PEF requests improved communication between SIF managers and ITS staff re: training requests and procurement statuses.

-To date no communication has been shared regarding security training. End user services staff have only been told that “some training will become available in 2020.” But no specifics, so PEF is unable to judge its adequacy.

-PEF notes that the SANS training discount period runs from 12/1/19 – 1/31/20, yet ITS staff is unaware of the procurement status. It appears NYSIF has not availed themselves of the opportunity for significant savings.

Mr. Warren covered a lot in his earlier staffing level talk. Brandi feels like maybe not all IT managers were aware of the increased funding for training. Her manager has asked the grade 23's to give recommendations. SANS training is still in the process of being procured. Ms. Carroll is aware of the steep discount that expires on 1/31/2020, but there may be more to the discount than meets the eye, i.e. discount being contingent on membership, etc.

7.) Reasonable Accommodation file -

PEF queries if the RA file is digital or paper.

Ms. Siegel states that ADA Administrator Guy Okafor's ADA documentation is in paper format and kept locked inside his office. There is also some electronic filing, only accessible by Okafor.

He has an assistant, Amanda Huguley-Williams. Mr. Browning asks if he wanted to see his file, what would the procedure be. Ms. Siegel states that she would have to discuss with Mr.

Okafor. The ADA medical file is different than the employee's medical folder, which contains all other non-ADA medical. The latter file is mailed to the employee's residence in response to a request to review after verification of the employee's identity.

8.) **Workers' Comp medical letter –**

WCL requires updated medical every 8 weeks. NYSIF is requesting medical every 30 days from its employees out on worker's comp.

Management previously advised that it is looking into the medical update every 30 days mandate. It could be revised in the future and it may be a case by case basis rather than a one size fits all process.

PEF requests an update. Has NYSIF decided to make these determinations on a case by case basis?

Ms. Carroll reached out to other agencies to see what they were doing. Findings were that all agencies do it differently. Some agencies require medical documentation every 30 days, some are 90 days, and some are in between. NYSIF is sticking with 30 days, but Ms. Carroll feels that there could be exceptions to the 30 days in certain cases, i.e., medical documentation that states that the employee is out for longer than 30 days. The issue continues to be monitored. Case by case basis is an option. More data and time to review is needed for Ms. Carroll to make a determination.

9.) "Employee Contacts" link on SIF intranet - Per Executive order 187 discrimination complaints now go directly to GOER.

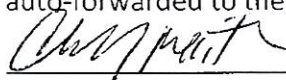
-PEF requests that Heather Woolfolk and her direct GOER email be removed from the list of Employee Contacts and be replaced with these two links:

<https://goer.ny.gov/executive-order-187> to the GOER website.

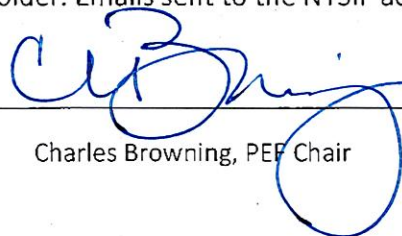
Complaint form link: <https://goer.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2018/11/nys-discrimination-complaint-form.pdf>

Last meeting NYSIF reported that Ms. Woolfolk was having problems with her GOER email and that NYSIF would look into it. PEF requests update on GOER's email problems/removal of NYSIF email address.

Ms. Woolfolk has a NYSIF email address, as she has a folder that is located on NYSIF servers, and the email address is required to access that folder. Emails sent to the NYSIF address are auto-forwarded to the GOER address.

 3/9/2020

Cliff Meister, NYSIF Chair

 03/09/2020

Charles Browning, PEF Chair