

PEF Statewide Labor/Management Meeting

Via MS Teams

6/24/20

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

1.) Minutes – Approval of 5/28/20 minutes. Minutes approved 6/23/20.

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

3.) *****Tabled*** 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.

NYSIF advised that employees with local concerns should go to the highest rank of the respective department. NYSIF to provide a listing of top ranked management for respective offices.

- PEF requests the SW list of managers that will be handling local LM/H&S meetings.

NYSIF advised to seek out local Business Managers in the interim due to the pandemic.

4.) ***Tabled*** Statewide Staffing Levels –

1. Hearing Reps - PEF queries NYSIF re: the amount of hearings and depositions statewide that are being assigned to outside counsel in lieu of hiring hearing reps statewide. NYSIF has been 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.

10 Hearing Rep positions were posted across various offices. PEF awaits new hires.

2.) 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>

PEF notes Binghamton still has no SSA.

c.) CSR1 staffing – PEF notes Binghamton has lost three CSR1's.

Since last meeting, cases are being reassigned.

5.) Telecommuting/Reintegration –

Effective 3/15/20 & 3/17/20 temporary telecommuting where possible was directed by the Governor. On 6/18/20 it was announced, by GOER, that this has been extended to 10/2/20.

Maintaining production in every NYSIF department and quality customer service is a mutual goal.

PEF and NYSIF management agree that telecommuting is successful, and that health and safety is a mutual priority when returning to the office.

In addition to physical health and safety, PEF members are reporting better focus, increased production, general well-being, and overall improved mental health as a result of the many benefits of telecommuting.

- PEF requests a copy of NYSIF's plan for safe employee reintegration into the workplace.
- With every telecommuting extension granted by GOER, PEF requests full-time telecommuting continue at NYSIF for those who desire it.

NYSIF's 5/7/20 anonymous survey gauged employees' feelings about working from home, and why they can or cannot sustain it. 65% of staff responded. Of that

65%, 31% did not want to return to the office, 42% said maybe (a polite 'no'), and only 27% reported any desire to return to the office.

NYSIF's 6/18/20 employee-specific survey asked, "Are you able to return to work beginning in July 2020? (Only answer yes if you have no issues preventing your return to work, such as childcare, transportation or other concerns or issues, etc.)"

The words "able" "work" and "preventing" caused an unidentifiable number of employees to mistakenly answer "No". (Error: This should have read "Yes")

"...or other concerns or issues, etc." was not interpreted as meaning a "concern or issue" that was not "official", as the words "able", "work", and "preventing" were interpreted.

- Has this miscommunication been remedied? Is a new survey warranted?
- PEF requests a survey be done asking and identifying those employees who "prefer" to return to the office or "prefer" to continue telecommuting. This would accurately gauge the number of bodies each office should expect would physically return when allowed to do so. This would assist in the planning of the re-openings.
- PEF requests the opportunity to review and make recommendations to future surveys within 3 calendar days.
- PEF requests that management bring concerns, issues, and anticipated changes to SWLM for input prior to implementing.

PEF brought to management's attention that the 6/24/20 email update from Administration to staff speaks to the survey results and reports, "We wanted to find out whether you're ready, willing and able to return to the office, while considering your biggest concerns in coming back." PEF states this language is not consistent with the actual survey question that did not ask staff if they were ready or willing, hence causing confusion for members.

NYSIF advised that due to PEF's concerns about the survey language, NYSIF is in the process of validating "yes" responses. PEF requests clearer wording in the next survey, that "willing" or verbiage similar to the 6/24/20 update email be added to the next survey. NYSIF will take that suggestion under advisement. Ms. Carroll states that they were looking for honest answers and that the agency wants accurate data.

- PEF has obtained NYSIF's draft safety plan on file with GOER on or about 6/12/20. PEF is satisfied with the majority of the draft however PEF does have some input we would like considered:

- **Requests/suggestions/items not addressed in draft safety plan:**
- -Remove hand dryers in restrooms – NYSIF responds they are hardwired and removing them could be costly. NYSIF will consider signs for staff to not use them, may just block them off.
- -Install lids for toilets - Another touchpoint which NYSIF is trying to avoid, but NYSIF will look into.
- -Include "the importance of restroom cleanliness training" in employee PPE training – NYSIF responds that this is not a Covid-19 issue and should be handled locally.
- -Post restroom cleanliness guidelines on restroom mirrors at sink in plain view - instead, possible weekly message from mgmt. that people be conscious of their surroundings and respect others – Ms. Carroll states that office-specific reminders should be sent out. Ms. Carroll may have the message sent over the intranet or e-message boards asking employees to treat NYSIF bathrooms like their own bathrooms.
- -Request daytime Janitor to clean and disinfect restrooms hourly (appears to not be the Daytime Porter's job) - Chemical sensitivities were also raised - NYSIF is going to have dedicated cleaners in each office. Will make sure bathrooms are clean, using CDC recommended, green, & other approved products.
- -Provide greater flexibility by allowing all employees to work the flextime window per the T&A manual – NYSIF advises this can't be done, that they might have to be less flexible to meet density goals/operational needs. PEF recognizes that while management must meet its operational needs, there are members that are not receiving the full benefit of the AWS policy according to its spirit and intent even before the current state of affairs. Particularly, in ITS and PHS, the restrictions on these members do not seem to be tied to true legitimate operational needs. Ms. Carroll advised bands are needed in some departments.
- -No sharing of desks - No one will be sharing desks or using other employees' workstations, but if they are used by another, they will be cleaned.
- -No allowing other employees to use another's workstation and equipment in their absence – There will be no sharing of equipment, but if it happens, it will be cleaned.
- -Post the weekly cleaning summary printout at each local office – PEF requested a printout be posted on intranet for each office. – NYSIF will investigate/consider.

- -Provide a face shield for screener - NYSIF is looking into medical professionals to do temperature screenings, not NYSIF employees, with limited exceptions. Face shields are not common PPE.
- -Positive pressure with HEPA filter for all offices - Ms. Carroll states that HVAC systems in every location have been inspected and determined to be up to code in both performance and maintenance. Unsure what installing HEPA filters would entail.
- **Questions/concerns:**
- -What was written in the redacted portions? - NYSIF recalls they have concerns re: social distancing and re: 6 foot spacing of workstations. NYSIF does not know who did the redactions; Ms. Carroll states that every single concern that PEF has raised has been discussed in this forum.
- -How will NYSIF handle issues with employee non-compliances? (PEF suggests process to re-educate employees until they can adapt) – NYSIF advises that employees who do not comply will be sent home. NYSIF will start with re-educating those employees first, then will request that the union speak to the employee. If after reeducation and union intervention an employee is still non-compliant, NYSIF has the right to discipline, as this is a health and safety issue.
- -Who will be the Site Safety Managers for employees to contact with questions & concerns? – NYSIF responds, Labor Relations or Facilities Management, depending on the nature of the concern. Ms. Carroll states employees should follow the usual chain of command for now. There will be a clear indication of who to seek out when we return to the office. NYSIF will set up a repository of contacts.
- -Where will health and screening/temp check practices be performed? (PEF suggests privacy - if an employee fails a temp check and is sent home, they should have an alternate, private exit in order to protect their privacy) - NYSIF advises employees will do daily self-screening prior to coming to the office with an APP. If an employee fails the temperature screening upon arrival to work, there will be no separate door to exit, as that is not feasible.
- -Who will be doing the daily temperature screening? (PEF suggests the Site Safety Managers) – NYSIF advises that they plan to hire a medical professional for this screening. PEF raised concerns about delays in reporting to workstation due to going through screening etc. NYSIF advises they understand this is a possibility.
- PEF also asks about an employee failing a temp check, will they have to use their time? NYSIF responds that it is unclear at the present time.


- PEF asks will employee-provided equipment remain at home so employees have the option of working from home if they fail a temp check? NYSIF responds yes. NYSIF also notes that on-site security guards will be doing temp checks for vendors/visitors.
- PEF asks will telecommuting be allowed to continue to 10/2/20? NYSIF advises that the end of July/beginning of August will be the earliest return to work dates in some of the upstate offices. NYSIF advises that there is no guarantee that telecommuting will be extended to October 2nd. Ms. Carroll states that NYSIF employees are working from home for safety reasons.
- -How will privacy of logged screening results be protected? NYSIF advises that it will be secure and that exact temperatures will not be recorded. Employees will either “pass” or “not pass” a temperature check.
- -Why wasn't this draft safety plan shared with SWLM? Unknown.

6.) *****Tabled*** ITS Concerns** – PEF ITS staff have brought specific concerns re: reduced security, training concerns, various specialties, staffing, networking, servicing, and OOT work to this forum with suggestions for better work flow.

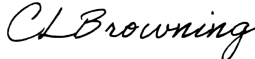
- NYSIF’s compartmented departments, fragmented ITS specialties, and unequal distribution of work should be reviewed and assessed.
- NYSIF’s SSA career path is stagnant.

7.) *****Tabled*** NYSIF Budget in the midst of COVID-19** - Is there any change from what was reported out at the 4/30/20 meeting?

- Does NYSIF have to cut their budget due to the pandemic/NYS budget deficits?
- Since NYSIF is off budget, are we exempt from layoffs?
- Does NYSIF foresee any layoffs?

 07/29/2020

 Cliff Meister, NYSIF Co-Chair

 7/29/20

 Charles Browning, PEF Co-Chair