

PEF Statewide Labor/Management Meeting

Via MS Teams

7/30/20

<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	
Don Stephens	

1.) Minutes – Approval of 6/24/20 minutes. PEF thanks NYSIF for timeliness in approving minutes and posting them to the NYSIF intranet.

2.) Next Meeting - PEF proposes 8/20/20 and 9/24/20 at 9:30am to discuss office reintegration and telecommuting. PEF proposes 10/29/20 at 9:30am for full quarterly agenda.

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 PEF 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 seeks to work with NYSIF on safe reintegration.

- PEF requests a copy of any updated NYSIF draft plan for safe employee reintegration into the workplace that may have been filed since their last draft on 6/12/20.

NYSIF advises that it does not have a formal update to the 6/12/20 plan. Ms. Carroll states the plan is to open 1 Watervliet on 8/17/20 but only for those people who were validated as wanting to come back into the office. NYSIF plans to pilot an incremental roll-out, and it is important to start with people who want to be back. Approximately 75 or so people in 1 Watervliet expressed this desire.

With respect to reopening, there will also be a communication going out to all staff statewide very soon, and a more specific communication will be sent to the Albany office staff.

Another upstate office will follow, sometime after Labor Day, probably Buffalo, as they had a very high rate of response to wanting to come back. Remaining offices would be rolled out every 2-3 weeks. NYSIF can also cycle people in and out based on circumstances.

There will be a remote screening application that can be accessed via smartphone or computer. Employees will be directed to self-temperature and will be asked Covid-19 related questions, which will include a question asking if you have traveled to any state that the Governor deemed an advisory state which by mandate is a 14-day quarantine upon returning to NYS. If you answer "yes" to any question, at the end of the screening you will receive a red "X" and a message to not report to work. An email will be automatically sent to HR, and the employee will be advised to contact their medical care provider and seek testing.

When you arrive at the office, your temp will be taken again. Screeners are not being hired. NYSIF supervisors/volunteers will be doing the screening. NYSIF notes that they are required to screen, but are not required to have screeners. Those with a temperature of 100 degrees or more will be sent home. A temperature check is good for 12 hrs.

CAD drawings are being utilized, and employees will be 6 ft apart from each other. Masks should not need to be worn at desks, and there will be a maximum of 4 people in an elevator.

Prior to returning to the office, employees will also be required to watch a 12-minute "training" video in relation to the return to work/office process. Ms. Loveday-Chesley advises that her group has already been directed to take that training. Ms. Carroll responds that Albany offices are going through a "dress rehearsal" as there have been people reporting to those building all along. Ms. Carroll reassures everyone that this is a closed trial, she doesn't want anyone to panic. No one is being forced back into the office currently.

Restrooms will have touchless controls, but are still being worked on, including Albany 8. Conference rooms will be closed. Refrigerators and Microwaves will be accessible, but eating in lunchrooms or break rooms will not be allowed.

Fingertip cots will be available for elevators. Mr. Babich asks about specifics in White Plains. Ms. Carroll advises that the landlord of the building in WP has been terrific. Mr. Warren asks about the pre-screening, as one of the questions will be related to travel to a "hotspot". How will this affect a required quarantine, and will this information be shared? Ms. Carroll advises NYSIF is awaiting that clarification from GOER but notes that if you must quarantine due to having voluntarily traveled to any advisory state, you will not receive 14 days of paid leave.

Mr. Dubofsky asks about employees who live far from the office and queries what happens if they pass the screen before leaving the house and then show up at the office and fail? No definitive answer, but Ms. Carroll states that she feels that a reasonable policy will be in force.

Ms. Czachorowski asks about volunteer screeners. Are they PEF members? Ms. Carroll feels there are more than enough volunteers to avoid this being an issue.

Ms. Czachorowski asks if NYSIF will allow stewards to do a walkthrough of the workspace prior to reopening. Ms. Carroll feels the fewer people through the office the better.

Ms. Czachorowski asks how employees will be notified if a coworker tests positive for Covid 19. Ms. Carroll advises that NYSIF will be working with the DOH and will inform employees accordingly, depending on the type of exposure. Mr. Browning asks how an employee testing positive for Covid 19 will be

handled. Ms. Carroll states that cleaning crews will be on call and that NYSIF will follow the advice of DOH.

Mr. Singapura asks if screeners will have to report early to accommodate early start times? Ms. Carroll states that schedules will be reviewed, as we must limit the amount of people entering at any one time. Mr. Mohan asks about NYC and off hours entry and screening. Ms. Carroll advises that employees who have permission to report to the office during off-hours will self-screen. Ms. Carroll also notes that Security will be screening essential visitors and vendors.

- With every telecommuting extension granted by GOER, PEF requests full-time telecommuting continue at NYSIF for those who desire it for safety reasons.
- PEF requests updates on individual retrofitting changes in each office. Mr. Singapura reports that the Melville office was just remodeled and now has very low walls and asks if plexiglass will be installed. Ms. Carroll advises that no plexiglass is going up currently because people are sitting 6 feet away from each other, but that if offices go to full capacity, plexiglass may be installed.

Mr. Singapura also brings up the possibility of conducting a fire drill “pandemic style” during this return to office pilot. Ms. Carroll advises she will look into this.

- PEF asks if there has been any change or direction to replace filters to MERV as per information on Governor’s website which states in part, “The governor also announced that air conditioning filters with a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) rating capable of filtering COVID-19 particles or similar air exchange measures will be mandatory for large mall reopenings. A COVID-19 particle is approximately 0.125 microns in diameter. Filters with a high MERV, such as High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters, have been shown to help reduce the presence of COVID-19 in air filtration systems.”. These standards should apply to the Governor’s own workforce. PEF asks if the Governor’s office has given this state agency any directive to use MERV filters to keep employees safe.
<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-state-decide-wednesday-whether-slow-reopening-indoor-dining-new-york>

Ms. Carroll reports that they are looking at every system. All vendors are doing the maximum amount of service, but not every HVAC unit is able to be equipped with the MERV filter. However, all HVAC systems are being inspected more often and every filter is now being changed more often, and NYSIF will be increasing filters where possible. Service companies’ expert advice will be followed, and NYSIF is going above

manufacturer's recommended servicing when possible and is working on gathering a list of HVAC systems.

- PEF thanks NYSIF for validating upstate "yes" survey answers re: returning to the office. PEF asks if downstate member's answers were also individually validated. TBD
- PEF asks if and when we may see another survey. TBD
- PEF requests that management bring concerns, issues, and anticipated changes to SWLM for input prior to implementing.

6.) 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.

- PEF reports a good response from NYSIF for end-user services training and inquires re: 2020 Risk Management Security training. A request was submitted, PEF was advised training for 2021 is uncertain due to no funding.
- PEF asks if training is a separate fund.

Issue was to be tabled, but PEF asks that training continue to be investigated. As previously advised by Ms. Carroll, Ms. Loveday-Chesley has reached out to ITS management more than once regarding training and has received no concrete response. She will follow up directly with Ms. Carroll.

7.) 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?
- Due to the reduction in policyholder premium, PEF asks if there has been any direction from the Governor or any statewide indications that speak to restructuring plans? What changes can we expect to see?

Ms. Carroll states that NYSIF is financially sound, no layoffs are contemplated, nothing has changed.

New Item:

Discussion ensued re: changes to the T&A manual, LATS, and reporting to work via daily emails.

Ms. Czachorowski advised that statewide employees have received email reminders from their supervisors to complete LATS on a daily basis. PEF is in agreement, but notes that PEF members have up to one hour after the start of the next scheduled workday to complete their LATS per agreement/2013 consent award.

PEF raises concerns of there being no consistency re: the interpretation of the T&A manual's section that refers to LATS, therefore members are receiving mixed directives.

PEF requests that the following be added to the T&A manual. **"PEF employees are required to complete daily LATS entries no later than one hour after the start of the next scheduled workday."**

PEF also takes exception to any daily, contemporaneous reporting to supervisors via email. PEF understands emailing your supervisor when you "report to work" but that is where it should end.

Ms. Carroll asks that members be reminded to check their voicemails and fill out LATS on a daily basis. The attendance manual was not updated 6/20/20, only a dead link that was repaired. NYSIF will change the date back to 2014. Ms. Siegel advises that former Council Leader, Ken Johnson, signed off on the 2014 update to the manual. PEF requests a copy of that sign off.

With respect to contemporaneous, daily email reporting to supervisors, PEF raises time keeping. Ms. Carroll advises that operational need due to coverage may be required on a departmental basis. Ms. Carroll noted that NYSIF does not require employees to complete a daily workplan to their supervisors as noted in the negotiated temporary telecommuting agreement. All concerns were duly noted on both sides. Follow up is expected.

 8/19/20

Cliff Meister, NYSIF SWLM Co-Chair

 8/20/20

Charles Browning, PEF SWLM Co-Chair