

**PEF DOL Statewide Labor Management Chat**  
**March 23, 2021**  
**Minutes**

<b>PEF</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT</b>
Scarlett Ahmed – co-chair	Geoff von Bieberstein – co-chair
Robert Wright	Ed Vargas – Senior Advisor to the Commissioner
Kevin Jones	Rebecca Secor - recorder
Mike Singleton	
Jose Medina	
Helen Esposito	
Lisa Deluca	

**A. Introductions**

**B. Old business/review of previous minutes** – The minutes were approved and were later posted to the intranet.

**C. New Business**

**1. Health and Safety Property**

**a. Update on move from Flushing to Elmhurst** – Management indicated they had offered 4/1/2021 for a walkthrough date and has not heard back from PEF. Scarlett stated she will check with Michael Marquez and get back to Management. The Emergency Management office has also been asked to reach out to the Managers at this location so the LEAP can be updated.

**2. Plans to return to local offices**

**a. Is there an estimated timeframe for re-openings?** – We are open now, just not to the public. There is no known date for a re-opening to public facing services. It is taking some time to transition from contractors to hiring further employees to work in UI. Once that happens, the other staff can move out of their reassignments and we can start to be more public facing again. This transition is also dependent on vaccination numbers and approval from GOER.

**b. Will there be protocols on social distancing and other safety precautions given that some staff will not be vaccinated?** – We will be following the CDC and DOH recommendations. PEF asked what how DOL is going to handle who is vaccinated, who isn't, is it going to mandated? Management states that this is more of a statewide GOER discussion. DOL is follow whatever the State decides pertaining to this issue.

**3. Discussion of COOP – Communicable Disease Plans (DOL/UIAB) –**

Management states they have reviewed the feedback from PEF and they're

working on responses. Once authorized we will respond to PEF. Not all the feedback will result in changes in the plan, but some changes have been made from the feedback received by all bargaining units. This plan is a living document so once it's posted it doesn't preclude further dialog and changes.

#### **D. DEWS**

1. **Discussion of management monitoring of RESEA calls via VCC –**  
Management states there is some monitoring to ensure we're following the program outline. These are geared toward training needs and plans. PEF states that staff is concerned that the monitoring is unannounced and wondered if this violated any federal codes. Management indicates that this practice is legal but will review any specific legal issue raised. PEF requests that at a minimum that the monitoring is announced at the beginning of the call that a third party is listening. Management indicated that this is a programmatic decision.
2. **DEWS staff working on UI/PUA projects request additional guidance or training on handling fraudulent claims –** DEWS management is going to be meeting with UI and OSI to better understand the scope to develop processes to deal with the increasing amount of fraud. DEWS management will also be working with UI to develop FAQ from staff so that training and tip sheets can be developed. If staff have additional questions on fraud, they should escalate that through their chain of command. PEF states they might just need general refresher fraud training for the UI and PUA projects to help.
3. **Discussion of training and education test for hourly LSR's –** PEF asks if DOL is willing to join them in advocating to Civil Service for T&E for these positions. Management states that after the last exam, the DEWS staff made a lot of the employees who were reachable, permanent. Management is not willing to make an absolute statement at this time whether they would support a T&E test. Management asks PEF to put something together that explains their stance further and it will be taken under consideration.

#### **E. UIAB**

1. **Discussion of the pilot project of a temporary e-file substitute for the paper case file, due for completion at the end of 2022 –** The pilot will utilize IBM Content Navigator for electronic files. The general timeframe is that the testing will end 3/26/21 and ITS will build the system for production completed by 4/9/21. At that time ASO is going to upload a number of files into the system and a group of judges will conduct hearings using the e-file system for two months. Once that period has lapsed, Management will decide if it can be rolled out statewide.
2. **Members expressed concern that if paper case files remain, hundreds of pages of law will again be placed in the files increasing the amount of work and increased staff reports of physical pain and call outs and workers comp claims –** This will be worked out during the pilot program.

**F. Misc.**

1. **Will reasonable accommodation timeframes be extended?** – A recertification will be sent out to employees reaching their 90-day accommodation. They will be reviewed, and decisions will be made based on individual circumstances. This is handled through the DEOD office.
2. **Will expiration of vacation days be pushed back?** – The 3/31 expiration has been extended through 12/31. Members expressed concerned that they weren't made aware of this timely the last time. Management suggests members take vacation and use their time due to no guarantee that this will be pushed back again.

**G. Set next meeting date** – Management suggests that the next meeting be held via TEAMS. This software is being used more in the agency and it will be an opportunity to see each other during the meeting. It was agreed that a trial TEAMS meeting/pre-meeting will be held May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 3:00 – 3:30 p.m. and the actual meeting will be held May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.