

OTDA PEF Labor Management Meeting

Date: May 28, 2026

Location: PEF Headquarters, 1168-70 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Agenda Items

1. Agenda Item – Overtime

New Business Old Business

Description: Overtime (OT) in some program areas has been ongoing. We have been operating close to our fill level and continue to hire new staff. Onboarding new staff takes a good amount of time and effort. Other than the Division of Disability Determinations (DDD), which is under federal regulations, the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) has had the most overtime in recent years. In 2022, OAH had 14,328 hours of OT and in 2023 had 14,914 hours of OT (data provided at the January 10, 2024, Labor/Management meeting).

- Labor asks for the total overtime hours for OT for calendar year 2024, broken down by program area.
- Labor asks for the total overtime hours for OT for calendar year 2025, broken down by program area.

Have overtime expenses increased in the last couple of years?

Response: Separate attachments are provided for calendar year 2024 and 2025.

2. Agenda Item – Improving the Work Environment

New Business Old Business

Description: On the June 18, 2024, Labor/Management meeting minutes, Management responded to Labor with “Management acknowledges that the workload of many parts of the Agency increased during COVID and has continued. Management expects employees to work hard but does not want employees to feel work related stress due to their workload on a continuous basis. Management has taken steps to hire additional staff where needed and this effort has begun to yield positive results”.

Labor continues to hear that the stress within the workplace is not decreasing, specifically related to work overload. We continue to do more with less. Would Management consider other strategies to keep the work environment positive?

Response: Staff are encouraged to utilize the tools already available through the Agency, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) offerings and various programs to increase morale, camaraderie and decrease stress (i.e. BeWell.NY.gov, EAP: monthly frontline employee newsletter, “Breath Body Mind”. Tending the Roots, Trauma Training. F!SH Training, etc.).

However, Management is always open to different strategies to maintain a positive workplace culture. OTDA encourages staff to raise ideas through the chain of command, starting at the local level. This will also be discussed with Senior Staff.

Additionally, OTDA reinstated The Commissioners Achievement Awards, which focused on both team and individual accomplishments. The event was very well received and is planned to be a yearly event.

3. Agenda Item – Supervisory Training

New Business Old Business

Description: Labor understands that supervisors appointed after January 1, 2025, are subject to mandatory supervisory training. New information is provided in the trainings to new supervisors. Labor believes supervisors that are not mandated to take the training may have a different perspective than the trainings provide. This could create confusion between new supervisors and their superiors that may not have gone through the trainings. At prior Labor/Management meetings, both Labor and Management believe that the training would provide soft skills learning for all supervisors. Labor appreciates new supervisors being mandated to take the training. The Human Services Leadership Institute (HSLI) training is available as optional training to aspiring and current leaders and Labor thinks it could be valuable for all supervisors to attend in order to promote consistency.

- Please provide an update on the status of mandatory supervisory training completions from January 1st, 2025, to present as well as non-mandatory staff that participated in the same trainings.

Response: Mandated supervisory training was implemented in September 2025 and identified newly appointed supervisors going back to January 1, 2025. Supervisory staff are given a six (6)-month timeline to complete all courses with the caveat that all classes are available to take within that six (6)-month period.

Since implementation, 74 new supervisors have been identified.

- To date, 20 supervisors have completed all of the training courses.
- Several others are expected to complete their training by the end of June 2026.
- 119 non-mandatory or “aspiring” supervisors have taken one or more of these trainings during the same period.

Labor continues to advocate for any and all managers to take the trainings. Management is not prepared to mandate this to all supervisors.

4. Agenda Item – Directed Departures Information

New Business Old Business

Description: There has been confusion regarding who can send people home during an event. Labor acknowledges that when the heat was turned off at 40 North Pearl on Monday, February 9, 2026, we did get the notice within a few hours, however, we also understand that only the Office of Employee Relations (OER) can approve a directed departure.

- Please give a detailed explanation of the procedure for office closures.
- Does Facilities and Operations Support (FOS) notify their Deputy Commissioner who then contacts OER with the request for a departure?
- What is the turnaround time for this?
- Who within OTDA evaluates the situations in the building during a safety event?
- Labor presents this as an opportunity to streamline the notification and get all employees to understand this protocol.

Response:

- Office closures can only be directed by OER. When a building issue arises, OTDA will seek information on the severity of the problem and expected duration of repair/mitigation and alert OER. OER will also consult with OGS before acting. OER must also receive approval for direct departures/building closures.
- Yes, Facilities Operations Services (FOS) will notify the Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Administrative Services (DAS) who communicates with OER if necessary. Recently, OTDA confirmed with OER that alternate staff from FOS or the Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) may also refer issues and confirm the correct OER audience for those notices. OTDA has requested that building management, who is often first in the building, immediately alert FOS to any potential issues. OTDA has often relied on OGS to provide occupant building notices but, moving forward and when appropriate, will communicate directly and more frequently to staff during such instances. In addition to email, NY Alert may be used for off-hours notices.
- Turnaround time is dependent on many factors including severity of the issue, time needed to gather information, and assessment of the problem/solution.
- This can vary by location but, in all instances FOS/DAS should be made aware. Local assessment is often dependent on FOS contact with facility control directors or building management. FOS/DAS will evaluate building situations using the best available information and proceed accordingly. In emergency situations, managers should exercise discretion and follow building management or emergency personnel instruction. Staff should be reminded however that vacating a building without a direct departure authorized by OER may result in a charge to accruals if not followed by remote work.

5. Agenda Item – Confidentiality of Employees Personal Documentation

New Business Old Business

Description: DDD Management asked to elevate to this OTDA agenda. There has been ongoing concern about the personal files being held at DDD PCs (Processing Centers) which are not the same as what is contained in the employee's Personal History File (PHF). DDD Management agreed to conduct an internal audit to investigate the areas. An internal control review was completed on March 5, 2026, and subsequently reported out at the April 28, 2026, DDD Labor/Management meeting that Management found no issues. Labor asks where the file areas are within each PC and who are the individuals who have access to these files? Labor asks for the final report on the internal audit that Management conducted.

Response: There was a robust discussion on this topic. Labor and Management will continue to review the processes in place to store and review files.

Action Item: DDD Management will move forward with completing an internal audit of the files in question at all PC's.

6. Agenda Item – Health and Safety Committees

New Business Old Business

Description: Labor would like to see changes in our Health and Safety Committees. Is Management willing to add a decision maker to join Statewide Health & Safety. Is OTDA willing to hire a Safety and Health Manager?

Response: There are already decision makers on the Health & Safety Committee. OTDA is open to looking into additional OSHA/PESH/Health & Safety Trainings that may be available as additional resources for OTDA Health & Safety personnel. Chuck Latham serves the function of OTDA's Health & Safety manager.

If follow-up questions come up at the meeting it should not be expected they will all be resolved immediately without further research.

7. Agenda Item – Main St. Buffalo Construction

New Business Old Business

Description: OTDA offices (OAH, AQI, DDD) in Buffalo are adjacent to a heavy construction project to replace road and rail that will continue through November or December 2026. The construction will begin again in the spring of 2027 to continue construction on the other side of the street. The construction is from 7:00am to 3:30pm. The noise has been continuous and excessive. DDD has shared desks in other parts of their office to manage the noise. At the Statewide Health and Safety meeting on May 13, 2026, we discussed potential solutions, one of which is providing noise reducing headphones/earmuffs. After discussion it was determined that it can create a health and safety hazard. Labor would like to suggest additional remote work as a short-term solution.

Response: Management received information related to the construction schedule from Buffalo Place the day prior to this LM Meeting. The main source of construction noise is jackhammering directly outside the building. Jackhammering outside the building is expected to be completed within the next three (3) weeks and will then move further away from the building.

Action Item: After the meeting, management approved full-time telecommuting for impacted staff, and they were notified by their respective program areas. FOS management will be in routine contact with a representative of the Buffalo downtown business improvement district to assess the situation. Staff will be notified when they are required to return to their normal telecommuting schedules.

Informational Items/ Accomplishments

- Buffalo appreciates the proficiency of closing offices this winter on a much timelier basis related to weather closures.
- Labor would like to acknowledge that Management has been kept to the same standards as Labor and has noticed a positive change in Management because of this.
- Labor and Management continue to have differing opinions and discussions about LATS codes and Employee Organization Leave (EOL) tracking.
- Labor completed LM training in March 2026 and is ready to set up a meeting for the Joint Labor/Management training for LM.
- Management would like to share that the NY HELPS program that was initially set to expire in June of 2026 has been extended until June 30, 2028.
- Labor has requested and Management provided addresses for each OTDA work site/location, which included building number, and floors when appropriate. Report also included number of OTDA employees at location per program area with breakdown by bargaining unit (MC#, PEF#, CSEA#, Contract#).

The following individuals were present at the OTDA PEF Labor/Management Meeting held on May 28, 2026.

PEF:

Carl Anderson
Leslie Apacible
Pam August
Germaine Greco
Omotayo Kuku
Matthew Nirelli

Chelsea Propati
Jill Poeller
Scott Staub
Ryan Stoliker
Nathan Tucker

Management:

Donnovan Beckford
Rajni Chawla
Sara DeWitt
Barbara Guinn
Bryce Luttenegger
Christian Mullin

Matthew Rider
Jim Ryan
Eric Schwenzfeier
Jared Tallman
Felicia Valle Job

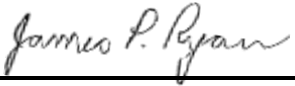
Next Meeting/Date & Place

- September 24, 2026 (OTDA)

The following representatives certify the minutes above to be an accurate representation of the PEF OTDA Labor Management Meeting held May 28, 2026.


X
Pamela August
PEF Labor Management Chair, OTDA

06/02/2026
Date


X
James P. Ryan
Director of Human Resources, OTDA

06/02/2026
Date