
ARTICLE 50

Technology

Technology is dramatically impacting work processes throughout business and Government nationwide. While innovations in technology are occurring so rapidly it is impossible to anticipate them, the Department and the NCFLL embrace the opportunities created to improve work processes and employee skills. The parties recognize that to take advantage of the opportunities technology presents, new ways must be found to work together to ensure that employees understand new technologies and that they are provided the necessary equipment, training, and systems to carry out their duties and responsibilities. To that end, the parties are committed to exploring ways to share information about new technology, while respecting each other's statutory rights.

Section 1 - Information Technology Committee

- A. The NCFLL and the Department recognize that it is mutually beneficial for employees to understand management plans for introducing new technology and to have a forum for the NCFLL to discuss issues related to technology. To that end the parties establish a joint Information Technology Committee where broad Department-wide or cross-Agency Technology Issues can be discussed.
- B. The Information Technology Committee will meet up to four times a year with at least two of the meetings held face to face. The Committee will be made up of at least three Union members and three Management members, but there will be no more than five Union and Management members in attendance.

Section 2 - Hardware and Software Utilization

Where available, the Department will provide online access to electronic documentation, such as manuals and procedures for the equipment, hardware, and software that employees are required to utilize. A point-of-contact phone number and e-mail address will be provided to employees by their respective Agencies to answer questions and trouble shoot computer problems.

Section 3 - Training on New Technology

- A. The Department commits to ensuring that all employees are equipped to perform the duties and responsibilities of their posi-

tions. Employees interested in increasing their information and technology skills are encouraged to pursue additional advanced training.

- B. As the Department introduces new technology, appropriate training (e.g. on-line instruction, desk-aids, “help lines,” mentors, and/or classroom sessions) will be made available to employees affected by the introduction of new procedures and technology. Additional training will be provided for employees who demonstrate difficulty. If individual employees cannot adjust to the changes caused by the introduction of new technology or if the introduction results in the abolishment of some positions and the establishment of others, the Department of Labor, consistent with applicable regulations, will make every effort to utilize the skills and abilities of those employees adversely affected by the changes.

Section 4 - Pilot Programs

- A. An Agency and the NCFLL may, by mutual agreement, establish a joint Information Technology (IT) Task Group comprised of three Union and three Management Representatives. The IT Task Group will provide a forum for Management to share anticipated technology changes and the Union to share and discuss concerns and interests of bargaining unit employees related to these changes. Each IT Task Group will meet as mutually agreed to by the parties. While face-to-face meetings may be appropriate in some instances, it is expected that the Task Group will maximize use of telephonic and other electronic communication to minimize travel costs.
- B. Any IT Task Group established under this Section will remain in operation for a minimum of one year unless the parties mutually decide to dissolve it sooner. At the end of the one year period, the Task Group may be renewed on an annual basis by mutual agreement.
- C. By agreeing to participate in a pilot IT Task Group, the NCFLL agrees that it will address its impact and implementation concerns in that forum and will not request formal bargaining.

Section 5 - Identity Theft

The Department is committed to adhering to government wide standards for security of its computer systems and confidential data. The

Department and the NCFLL recognize that in some instances, bargaining unit employees may be required to provide confidential information, including their Social Security Number, to conduct the government's business using DOL electronic systems.

In the event that an employee's confidential information is compromised as a direct result of conducting official business while using a DOL computer system, the Department will seek to minimize any adverse impact on the affected bargaining unit employee. As such, an employee whose identity has been stolen from a DOL system may be granted a reasonable amount of time, as well as use of DOL equipment and facilities, for the purpose of remedying issues directly related to the identity theft.