It’s Labor Recognition Week!

We’re celebrating your contributions as a federal employee and NTEU member. But, how well do you know your union terminology? Let’s find out!

1. **The term “bargaining unit” describes:**
2. Members of the union
3. All employees in the office
4. Non-supervisory employees

Answer: C. A bargaining unit position is a job that is represented by a labor union.

1. **True or false: Another term for my contract is “collective bargaining agreement.”**

True. Depending on your workplace, or even your NTEU chapter, your contract may be referred to as a collective bargaining agreement, CBA, term contract—or simply, your contract.

1. **My NTEU contract contains:**
2. Telework and AWS programs
3. Promotion procedures
4. Awards programs
5. All of the above

Answer: D. NTEU negotiates some of the most innovative contracts that meet employees’ needs, providing for alternative work schedules, transit subsidies, performance awards and much more.

1. **What is an example of a reasonable accommodation?**

A. Screen reader software

B. Ramps

C. Telework

D. All of the above

Answer: D. Federal law requires agencies to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified employees but your NTEU contract outlines the process for submitting requests, including confidentiality requirements and medical documentation, timeframes and procedures to appeal denials.

1. **True or False: NTEU bargaining teams are comprised of only professional negotiators.**

FALSE: NTEU teams are comprised of chapter leaders representing different workplaces, positions and geographic locations. They bring real-world workplace issues and concerns to the table and ensure the diverse frontline perspective is represented in discussions with management.

1. **Due process describes:**
2. How NTEU members pay dues
3. The rights employees have to be treated fairly in disciplinary matters
4. The process used to hire new employees
5. Procedures for applying for new positions

Answer: B. Due process rights protect employees from being treated unfairly in disciplinary actions. NTEU negotiates a grievance procedure in every contract that outlines the steps for challenging unfair treatment in the workplace.

1. **Abruptly and prematurely declaring an impasse at the bargaining table is an example of:**
2. Bad faith bargaining
3. A strike
4. A grievance
5. Retaliation

Answer: A. Both NTEU and management have a duty to negotiate in good faith. This means negotiating with a sincere resolve to reach agreement, meeting as frequently as necessary and avoiding unnecessary delays. If this doesn’t happen, either side can file an unfair labor practice grievance alleging bad faith bargaining. Other examples of bad faith bargaining are refusing to meet face to face and declining to explain proposals.

1. **True or False: Only “poor performers” need a union representative when they are facing discipline and want to file a grievance.**

False: While it’s true that NTEU leaders help employees file grievances if they are treated unfairly or management violates the contract, stewards are also a valuable resource. They can provide advice on a range of workplace topics and help employees have conversations with managers to resolve workplace issues.

1. **Which of the following is an example of protected activity for federal employees?**
2. Becoming a union member
3. Filing a grievance
4. Contacting a member of Congress
5. All of the above

Answer: D. All of these are examples of protected activity. If an employee has the right to do something, retaliation for doing it is prohibited.

1. **True or False: Once my contract has been negotiated, NTEU must wait until it expires to negotiate any changes to the agreement.**

FALSE: In 1998, NTEU successfully argued before the Supreme Court that agencies are obligated to bargain over union-initiated proposals arising during the term of an agreement. It’s called midterm bargaining, and it allows federal unions like NTEU to resolve workplace issues at the bargaining table more quickly, without waiting until the entire contract expires.

How Did You Do?

The good news for all NTEU members is that if you have questions about your union, what we do and how we can help you in the workplace, your NTEU chapter leader is always there to help!

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