

HHS UPDATE

NTEU National Treasury Employees Union

Victory for Employee Rights **NTEU, HHS to Return to the Bargaining Table**

After years of attacks on your fundamental workplace rights, there is finally some very good news for HHS employees.

At NTEU's urging, HHS has agreed to reinstate the 2010/2014 contract starting today, and return to the bargaining table to negotiate a new agreement. This means HHS will set aside the regressive contract articles imposed by the Federal Service Impasses Panel and implemented by management, costing employees valuable rights and benefits.

NTEU fought long and hard—through a series of legal, legislative and political actions—to get HHS back to the bargaining table to negotiate a new contract in good faith. It has been a difficult process, but NTEU is optimistic that we are poised to begin a new era of productive labor-management relations at the agency.

HHS leadership informed NTEU of its intention to return to the bargaining table in a letter to National President Tony Reardon. The letter emphasizes HHS' commitment to repairing its relationship with NTEU and to working collaboratively to support employees, "the department's greatest asset."

Management also proposed negotiating a global settlement with NTEU that resolves the many issues from the last contract negotiations that are still being litigated. Over the past few years, NTEU filed a slew of grievances and unfair labor practice charges aimed at challenging, mitigating and delaying HHS' implementation of harmful contract articles. A global settlement would allow NTEU and HHS to settle outstanding litigation as part of the path forward to resetting our labor-management relations.

You may have questions about what the return to the 2010 agreement means to you including how it relates to telework and HHS' return to the office plans. Along with bargaining a new contract, NTEU is engaged in negotiations with HHS on workplace reentry plans including a permanent expansion of telework and other workplace flexibilities for employees who worked successfully from home these past 15 months.

Through its actions, the new HHS leadership has sent a message that it values employee involvement in workplace decisions through NTEU as your representative. Despite the challenges you faced, HHS employees stayed focused on your critical public health and safety mission, and NTEU thanks you for your important work for our country and ongoing support of our union. We will continue to keep you updated on developments on bargaining and return to workplace plans.