



HHS and FDA Employees:

NTEU and HHS wrapped up the first of a two-week bargaining schedule with a mediator on Friday. Over the course of bargaining, HHS refused to sit across the table from NTEU, despite NTEU's repeated requests to meet face-to-face to discuss proposals and answer NTEU's questions about their specific proposals. In what HHS referred to as "shuttle diplomacy," the mediator went back and forth from the two rooms and all bargaining was done in writing.

Late last month, the Federal Service Impasses Panel ordered NTEU and HHS to bargain for 30 days with the assistance of a mediator, however he is not available this week. NTEU previously asked HHS to bargain without the mediator, because of the severely limited timeframe imposed by the FSIP, but the agency refused. On Friday, NTEU reiterated our request for in-person bargaining, as both parties are in Washington, D.C. But once again, the agency refused.

While NTEU was hoping to meet this week for face-to-face bargaining, the mediator ordered NTEU and HHS chief negotiators to engage in limited bargaining over the phone, and NTEU is prepared for this.

It is disappointing that HHS won't sit at the same table as NTEU—their employees' representative—for productive and efficient negotiations. Nonetheless, NTEU remains steadfast in our fight to secure a fair contract that protect your rights and benefits. Here is how you can support NTEU at the bargaining table:

- Show your support on social media by posting a photo with a ["Shame on HHS" sign](#) and use the hashtag #ShameOnHHS.
- [Sign the petition](#) demanding that HHS return to the bargaining table.
- Wear black clothing every Wednesday.
- Wear a Shame on HHS sticker.
- [Tweet Secretary Azar](#) at @SecAzar ([Get sample tweets](#)).

"...to ensure that every federal employee is treated with dignity and respect."