



Vol I Issue II - September 2016



American Federation of Government Employees Local 3313 Newsletter

President's Welcome/Message

Hello brothers and sisters in solidarity. The changing seasons are in some respect a testament to the fact that nothing stays the same. Despite any rut you might find yourself on any given day, just know that a good book I once read informs me that Joy comes in the morning. Many of the challenges we face as workers are shared by others in silence. Let's take time to share our knowledge with one another, mentor each other and seek greatness together. A wise man once said that together we stand, divided we fall.

As the seasons change and as apples fall from the trees, take time to smell the flowers, lift someone up and help them across the finish line. You will be surprised at how much you gain from acts of selflessness. In the spirit of sharing and in the spirit of looking at the changing world, I would like to thank everyone who attended our August 9th general membership meeting held in the DOT conference center. The primary goal of the meeting was to fellowship and exchange ideas that might make our work experience better and stronger. Ideas ranged from devising an approach to develop managers so that they respect the skills needed to develop human resources, to ensuring mentors are equipped to support the critical educational/ advisory role necessary to promote growth. Your voice is important to us, and we look forward to acting on your behalf -- but we need to keep hearing from you.

Eugene Johnson
AFGE local 3313
President

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES
LOCAL 3313 OFFICERS

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Weingarten Rights, (5 U. S.C. 7114 (a)(2)(B))

Did you know your Weingarten right is a right derived from the Supreme Court's 1975 Weingarten decision where the court recognized union employees' rights to representation at investigatory interviews? So if you are called into any formal meeting and the meeting includes questioning that you reasonably feel may lead to disciplinary action, then you have the right to end the meeting and request union representation. By law, the agency shall annually inform its employees of this right.

Fair Labor Standards Act

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29U.S.C.A. § 201 et seq.) was federal legislation enacted in 1938 by Congress, pursuant to its power under the Commerce Clause, that mandated a Minimum Wage and maximum 40-hour work week for employees of those businesses engaged in interstate commerce. Known as the "Wages and Hours Law," the Fair Labor Standards Act was part of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "New Deal." It also established the right of the eligible worker to at least "time and a half"—or one and one-half times the customary pay—for those hours worked in excess of the statutory maximum.

Not paying attention to the Fair Labor Standards Act can cost agencies big money. In fact, the American Federation of Government Employees, Local 12 and the Labor Department just reached a \$7 million settlement to end a lawsuit claiming employees were not properly compensated for work performed in an overtime status.

Next week, Representatives from the Snider and Associates Law Firm will be on site to provide an update on the FSLA study they conducted on our behalf. If you'd like to hear what they have to say, please come by and join us on Tuesday, September 6th at 12 noon in conference room W61-101. Lunch will be served.

Evaluation Ratings

By law, your annual evaluation appraisal must be based on the standards agreed upon during the year. It shall not be influenced by matters of conduct or artificial ceilings created by management to limit the distribution of performance bonuses. If you feel you have received an evaluation in error contact your Union Representative.

Back to School

The kids are going back to school and you need to stock up for the year ahead. Luckily, being a union member means you get great savings on the essentials you need. Save on a new Dell computer, splurge on a new Apple laptop or desktop, or even save on oral health care. Visit the AFGE webpage for details. <https://www.afge.org/article/big-back-to-school-savings-for-AFGE-members/>



Understanding Your Pay

Are you actually getting paid what you see in the OPM's yearly pay scale? The answer, unfortunately, is no. Up until 1984, your annual rate of basic pay was calculated using 2,080 hours (52 workweeks times 40 hours) to get the hourly rate multiplied by 80 to determine the biweekly gross pay. However, this formula presumes a calendar year of exactly 52 weeks or 364 days. Actually, a calendar year varies between 365 or 366 days which may mean that a calendar year may have more paid workdays than a straight 52-week year. A General Accounting Office study published in 1981 demonstrated that over a **28-year** period (the period of time it takes for the calendar to repeat itself) there are, on average, 2,087 work hours per calendar year. Using 2,087 as the average number of work hours in a calendar year reasonably accommodates the year-to-year fluctuations in work hours. Consequently, the Federal Government felt the need to make an adjustment to accommodate fluctuations over a 28 year period. Here is how it is calculated today if you are a GS-11 Step 5:

Your Pay as shown on the OPM salary table 2016-DCB:		\$73,270
OPM's 2,087 hour divisor:	2,087	
Your hourly rate using the 2,087 hour divisor:	\$ 35.11	
Your biweekly rate using your hourly rate X 80 hrs:	\$ 2,809	
Your actual annual salary adjusted by OPM hour divisor 26 pay periods X biweekly rate:		\$73,029
Difference		\$241

Why care? Well, if you are asked by a prospective employer to disclose your weekly pay, then you will need to know how to compute it. It might not look good if the employer calculates a lower salary number than you present. You can use this process for your own salary to see what you are really getting paid.

Union Promotes and Achieves Higher Wages

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in 2015 that the median weekly earnings of nonunion workers (\$776) were only 79 percent of earnings for union members (\$980). OPM released the [FY2015 Salary Information for the Executive Branch](#), which examined several aspects of Federal employee salaries to include: agency, gender, ethnicity and race, and occupation. You may find this study interesting, especially since it proves your Union is working for you. A key finding is the USDOT ranks 6th in terms of average salary (\$110,503). That's good news when compared to the Air Force or the Department of Homeland Security which averages between \$73,000 and \$79,000. That said we still have work to do; as previously reported your Union is working with Congress to secure a 5.3 percent cost of living adjustment going forward. The USDOT remains slightly below the average for Federal employees working in DC (\$112.6K), but your Union will continue to fight for career ladder promotions and overtime compensation to ensure we maximize our wages and our motivation to support the nation. Bargaining Unit members should work through mentors and supervisors to develop their Federal careers to enhance their promotion potential.

Upcoming Events

- AFGE-Wide Town Hall (September 6th, Noon – 1pm W64-101)
- General Membership Budget Meeting (December TBD)
- Holiday Party (December TBD)

The American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 3313
Contact your Union Representative:



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Phone: (202) 366-3313



*The Federal Motor Carrier
Safety Administration*



*The Federal Transit
Administration*



*The National Highway Safety
Traffic Administration*



The Office of the Secretary



*The Pipeline and Hazardous
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