

August 11, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chapter Presidents

RE: HHS/FDA — Selection of International Inspection Travelers

SUMMARY: NTEU has been briefed by HHS on FDA-ORA's proposed new procedures for selecting international inspection travelers.

NTEU has been briefed by FDA on a proposal to establish new procedures for the selection of international inspection travelers.

Selection of travelers to perform mandatory foreign inspections is currently governed by the attached Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NTEU and FDA dated June 11, 2003, which remains in effect until the new consolidated HHS Collective Bargaining Agreement is finalized and implemented. The existing procedures encourage volunteers and set forth a process for assigning foreign inspections on a regional/district level when there are no volunteers, as follows: (1) any qualified GS-13 employee, (2) any qualified GS-12 employee, and (3) any other qualified employee. The directed assignment process is made on the basis of regional inverse seniority based upon HHS Entry on Duty (EOD) date. Once an employee is selected under this procedure and performs the inspection, the employee's name goes to the bottom of the inverse seniority list based on grade.

FDA proposed to alter the process by creating a National Travel Readiness List (NTRL) as opposed to the existing regional lists and to categorize employees nationally by grade equivalence and HHS EOD in reverse seniority. Any employee who volunteers or is directed to perform an international inspection will then fall to the bottom of the NTRL list.

NTEU has rejected the proposal to bargain over the selection procedures for foreign inspection travelers on the assertion that the existing MOU controls this process.

If you are aware of any deviation by the FDA from the existing procedures governed by the 2003 MOU, please forward them to Anna Gnad, National Negotiator, via e-mail at anna.gnad@nteu.org.

Colleen M. Kelley
National President

Attachments

HHS-FDA NEGMOU