

From: Sapp, Heather [Heather.Sapp@USPTO.GOV]
Sent: 02/13/2009 3:47 PM
Subject: Follow-up on the production bonus cap

Members of the Executive Board have been meeting since yesterday with management regarding the production bonus cap. We are concerned about the impact of this move on members of the bargaining unit and have been working to find ways to ameliorate the impact.

In our discussions with management, management has agreed to implement the following steps immediately:

1. Eliminate the first action requirement for the fiscal year.
2. Quality bonus -- In view of the Office's shift from quantity, management will explore additional ways to recognize and reward quality.
3. Training – Management will encourage examining attorneys to participate in training by providing production adjustments for all time spent in training (above the training hours in the PAP model). Training activities can include: legal trainings, CLEs, INTA meetings, computer training, viewing ID/Class online class "interviews," attending conferences, CBTs, and any approved relevant training in-person or online.
4. Manager cooperation. The managers will be encouraged to find ways to assist members of the examining corps to achieve enhanced quality. Moreover, examining attorneys will not be penalized for devoting time to approved training activities and taking additional time to produce enhanced quality work. Managers will also be encouraged to give production adjustments for approved projects at the law office level, e.g., law office presentations, where appropriate.
5. Re-evaluation of production bonus cap -- Discussions for re-evaluating the need for a production bonus cap and other programs will be ongoing. March data will be reviewed with the Union as soon as it becomes available.
6. Increase opportunities for career development through details and work projects or any other approved career development vehicle that will enhance the career growth and career opportunities of our bargaining unit.

The Executive Board will continue to discuss the following issues with management :

- A. Production adjustments for annual leave and sick leave.
- B. Gainsharing or quality bonus in the current quarter. Due to the economic impact of the bonus cap on the examining corps, we are particularly interested in establishing a quarterly quality bonus initiative separate and distinct from the existing annual quality bonus program.

- C. Institution of a part-time TWAH program.
- D. Expanded areas of approved training.

We understand that you will have questions. Please feel free to contact any Executive Board member with your concerns. Please also be advised that the Union intends to hold a bargaining unit meeting at Thursday, February 19 at 1:30 pm in the Madison Auditorium. Additional information on the meeting will be forthcoming.

-- NTEU 245 Executive Board
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