



The Four Winds

National Weather Service Employees Organization

NWSEO Reaches Negotiated Agreement with NWS Management on 5-to-12 Program

(March 27, 2019) We are pleased to report that NWSEO and NWS management have worked together to make improvements to the proposed 5-to-12 plan, and we have now reached an agreement on its implementation. This agreement is subject to Agency Head (DOC) review which can take up to 30 days so we will have to wait for it to be implemented. As a result of this negotiated 5-to-12 agreement, we will withdraw the grievance after the agency review and the agreement is executed. This kind of collaborative effort between the union and management directly benefits the employees of the NWS who will be affected by this initiative and at the same time allows the agency to try new innovative approaches. We were happy to work with the agency to address our concerns and incorporate reasonable solutions, including:

Our concerns regarding restricted employee mobility; this issue is addressed by a twice yearly bid of GS-1340-11/12 positions MAP-only (i.e., they will be “bid internally”), so current NWS employees will have a chance to bid on these positions as reassignments. While not the perfect solution, it is a fair compromise that will allow at least some mobility between offices while reducing the PCS costs that will pay for the promotions to GS-12.

The agreement also addresses that the promotion process from GS-5 through GS-11 will remain as it is, in other words as addressed by Article 14 Section 7 of the CBA. Employees who are in the GS 5 through 11 will still use the Competency Assessment process to direct training and prepare them for going to GS 12 but the tool will not be the basis of their promotion to a GS 11. The new Competency Assessment Tool will be used as the basis for the promotion from GS 11 to GS 12.

Status quo was preserved for HMT/OPL by management’s agreement to continue bidding HMT positions simultaneously with entry-level Meteorologist positions. However, Management also agreed to work with NWSEO at the next National Labor Council meeting on a plan for the future of the HMTs/OPLs. While there is no promise except that we will have the discussion, this is the first time management has ever agreed to discuss career building opportunities for HMT/OPLs and we are excited about the prospect. Part of this discussion will be about preserving mobility and career progression for Met Techs in Alaska and Pacific Regions.

The concerns we expressed regarding 5-to-12 implementation at WFO Honolulu and some National Centers, where General Forecasters are GS-13s, are directly addressed in the agreement.

Management has agreed that they will continue to follow Article 20 in scheduling practices, and that implementation of 5-to-12 will not impact staffing levels in individual offices without a future agreement with the union. This addresses concerns we expressed regarding impacts of the 5-to-12 initiative on scheduling practices and office staffing levels are directly addressed. In plain language, when the plan discusses flexibility in scheduling and surge staffing, it is what you are already doing.

Additionally, GS 5-11 Meteorologist positions within the 5-to-12 progression will remain FLSA non-exempt, this ensuring true time and a half overtime for those employees.

As implementation of the 5-to-12 program moves forward, we will continue to work with management to evaluate and improve this initiative wherever possible.

-NWSEO-

**No one cares more for National Weather Service employees than
National Weather Service employees.**

**No one works harder for National Weather Service employees than
National Weather Service employees.**

We are NWSEO.