



# Local # 171 ALERT

A.F.G.E Local 171 of Council of Prison Locals #33

FTC Oklahoma City & FCI El Reno, Oklahoma

Editors: B. Coker & J. Lepird

## Staffing Cuts

by J. Lepird

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Currently we are facing cuts of titanic proportions to the staffing levels of the BOP. As many of you have heard, the Bureau has in fact cut approximately 6,000 positions. Both El Reno and FTC Oklahoma City have lost approximately 47 positions each. El Reno has approximately 277 from 324 positions authorized, and FTC Oklahoma City has 279 positions from 326 authorized, and these positions have been eliminated or will be cut. These cuts are approximately three times the mission critical cuts, which were considered draconic at the time.

No one will be RIFed at this moment, so the Agency claims that the cuts are not an issue. It is important to remember that the positions cut were authorized, and that the Bureau was under a hiring freeze, though not officially. Few positions were filled, which is highly coincidental that the Bureau was able to cut all these positions without affecting staff in this region. This will most likely not be the case in other regions. South Central was one of the lowest staffed, as far as filled authorized positons, in the country. We needed those staff.

Unfortunately, there was always an excuse why hiring could not occur.

Combine these staff cuts with the direction from the Attorney General to seek tougher sentences for federal crimes, and it becomes clear that an increase in population and a decrease in staffing is a recipe for

disaster. This is not a money issue, either. Congress will be increasing the Bureau's budget, so the funding will support 99% of the positions previously authorized before the cuts. Most of the positions being cut will be in the field, from those positions that work with inmates on a day-to-day basis. With more cuts planned for next year, the Agency will be contributing to unsafe staffing ratios, and will be increasing workloads while decreasing programs.

The Union has been working extensively with Congress and the Senate. Currently, over 50 Congressmen/women have sent letters to the Director of the Bureau of Prisons and the Attorney General demanding answers for the staffing cuts. This was accomplished through the actions of every Union member that made calls and every Union Representative who contacted and had meetings with Congressional officials. Right now Union folks are working with Congress to develop language to direct the Bureau to stop cutting staff and curb augmentation. As long as folks continue to contact Congress and keep our staffing issue highlighted, we can keep up the pressure on Congress to mandate an acceptable, safe staffing level throughout the Bureau. Media contact and grassroots support will be essential in this fight.

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### Next Union Meeting:

Tuesday May 8<sup>th</sup> 2018  
5PM at the  
FTC Training Center

Meetings are held every other month.

## Current Events – Presidents Desk

by T. Townley

With the changing of seasons comes a changing of times.

The Previous Wardens at FCI El Reno and FTC, whenever possible, have always granted staff's reasonable accommodation requests.

Employees knew they would be able to provide for their families essential needs while recovering from their non-duty injuries.

FCI El Reno's new Warden Geilick, has decided to refuse

an employee's reasonable accommodation request while the employees medical retirement paperwork is being processed.

It is extremely ironic that Director Inch put out a message last month about compassion and mentioned the "Bureau Family". Meanwhile at FCI El Reno, you have an employee with over 20 years of service, who is trying to provide for his family while waiting for his

medical paperwork to be processed is being refused a reasonable accommodation.

I ask where is the compassion?



## Attention New Staff – Interrogatories

If you receive **interrogatories** in regard to your background investigation, contact the Union for assistance.

The Union has a great deal of experience in responding to these questions. Responding truthfully and in the correct format is crucial to getting your background cleared.

Interrogatories have timelines that you must stay within when

responding. The Union is here to help you through the process. Contact the Union as soon as you receive your questions.

If you would like assistance, contact C. Bishop (in ERE) or T. Russell (in OKL) (phone number available through control) or any Union Steward.



## Why Union?

by J. Lepird

Nowadays folks regularly ask why there needs to be a Union. They point to all of the current Labor Laws and claim that they are sufficient to protect employees in the workplace. What most people fail to realize is almost all of those laws were championed by the Union, through various Locals and Nationals throughout the history of this great country.

This article will be reoccurring throughout the life of this newsletter. The goal here is to educate the bargaining body about their rights and where those rights are granted. Education is power,

and being educated will protect you from ignorant supervisors, misunderstandings, and misconceptions.

The first right that will be discussed is the right to representation during any examination that may lead to discipline. This right is granted through the Supreme Court, and was championed by the Union when individuals were questioned without any type of representation. These rights are referred to as Weingarten rights for Administrative discipline (SIS, Counseling, ect) and Kalkines rights for Criminal matters.

The most important thing to remember is that if you feel a meeting or discussion can lead to disciplinary action, you have the right to request representation during that meeting. The meeting should be suspended until the Union is contacted and the Union will then assign you representation, not the Agency.

If you feel like you are getting disciplined or a conversation could lead to discipline. Request representation Immediately and ask to be excused until your Union Rep arrives.

## Recent Cases

by B. Coker

At FCI El Reno we recently had an Arbitration about staff Urinalysis<sup>th</sup> (UA) Testing on December 20<sup>th</sup> 2017.

This case has to do with the Agency not providing a Union Representative to the Bargaining Unit Staff who requested one during the UA process. When the Agency did this, they violated our Local Supplemental Agreement, the Master Agreement and our Agreed Upon Past Practice.

All Bargaining Unit Staff have a Right to Union Representation

according to El Reno's Local Supplement under Article 6, Rights of the Employee, Section h.

"During the collection process of Drug Testing, a Union Representative, at the employee's request, will be present, provided the designated representative is available within a reasonable period of time as defined in Article 6, section h of the Master Agreement. A Union Representative will be allowed to accompany the sample to the Post Office".

The Union encourages every

Bargaining Unit Staff member to request a Union Representative for the UA process. When a Representative is present they observe the entire process and stay with your sample until it is placed in the FedEx box and on its way to the lab. This ensures that there is no tampering with your sample.

If you are called to give a UA sample, make sure to tell the Collector that you want a Union Representative present for the process and check "Yes" on the form provided.

## Workers Comp (OWCP) - The Process

by B. Coker

The Union is here to help you with the Workers Comp (OWCP) process.

If you are hurt at work make sure to immediately report it to your direct supervisor. At that point if you need immediate medical care you should go to the Hospital to get urgent care. You can always fill out the CA-1 or CA-2 later.

If you have a Traumatic Injury you always fill out a CA-1. This could be from getting hurt responding to

an emergency. If you have an Occupational Disease or Illness you fill out a CA-2. This would be for something that develops over

**"The Best Way to File a  
CA-1 or CA-2 is on ECOMP.  
[www.ecomp.dol.gov](http://www.ecomp.dol.gov)"**

time like carpal-tunnel or knee problems.

Both the CA-1 and a CA-2 have different document requirements. Contact the Union to help you with the process.

In Oklahoma City contact T. Russell for help with your Workers Comp Case. In El Reno contact B. Coker for help through the process.

## Chief Stewards Corner – El Reno

by J. Lepird

We have several new Stewards who have volunteered their time for the bargaining body. They are doing phenomenal work in a variety of areas. There have been a slew of issues where the Overtime MOU has been violated. The Local continues to hold management accountable, and most of these issues have been solved amicably and to the satisfaction of the folks involved.

There are many grievances pending, including one where

management is monitoring staff via video, outside of investigations, which violates a settlement agreement previously reached with the Agency. Several members have been treated unfairly and inequitably. There are currently multiple cases to address these issues.

The Local continues to address all problems brought by the bargaining body and encourages anyone that is having an issue to contact a Union Official. Not every issue is a

violation of the contract, but every issue is important and Union representatives will do their best to assist you even if there is no clear violation. As always, we are ready and willing to work with Management to resolve issues as quickly and easily as possible. We will take your issue through the appropriate steps to ensure you are treated fairly and equitably. The Union exists to ensure that all of our agreements, the law, and policy are followed in the workplace.

# Local 171 E-Board/Stewards

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We're on the Web!

[www.afgelocal171.com](http://www.afgelocal171.com)

## E-Board

T. Townley – President

S. Johnson - Secretary/Treasurer

B. Coker – Vice-President ERE / OWCP

B. Hutchinson – Vice-President OKL / CPOF

J. Lepird – Chief Steward ERE / Legislative Coordinator

T. Russell – Chief Steward OKL / OWCP

S. O'Brien – Sergeant at Arms

## Stewards – El Reno

R. Barger – Correctional Services/OWCP

C. Bishop – Correctional Services

K. Menz – Correctional Services

G. Strider -- Correctional Services

T. Norton -- Correctional Services

D. Boling – Education/Recreation/DAP

J. Headrick – Facilities/Unicor

G. Brueggen – Health Services/CPOF

B. Kuykendall – Trust Fund

J. Delk – Food Service

## Stewards – Oklahoma City

B. Houck – Correctional Services

M. Michon – Correctional Services

C. Hannaford -- Correctional Services

D. Jones -- Correctional Services

J. Williams -- R&D

M. Hennessy -- EEO

J. Taylor -- Facilities

D. Watts -- Business Management/CPOF

T.J. Howard -- Business Management

J. Grigsby -- Food Service

D. McMullin – Food Service

C. McPherson -- Unit Management

J. Lyon -- Unit Management

## Your Rights During Disciplinary Meetings

**Local 171** wants to remind all Bargaining Staff of their right to a Union Representative during any examination that could lead to disciplinary action. This includes Office of Inspector General (OIG), Office of Internal Affairs (OIA) and Special Investigative Services (SIS). The agency does not pick the representative, the Union does. The agency also has an obligation to inform you of your right to union representation prior to any

examination that they know could lead to disciplinary action. Even if you don't ask for it, they still must tell you of your right. This is normally done with a form B during SIS Affidavits.

However, anytime you feel that a conversation could lead to disciplinary action you may request a Union Representative to be present and the meeting will stop until you are represented.

Do not fall for the old line:

"Well, you're not the subject of the investigation". Ask them to call the Union President. The Union is the one who assigns representation.

