

Portals Move

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Cc: Matulef, Mark L; Gross, Jerry

To Affected Bargaining Unit Employees,

On August 4, the Union received notice that several OGC Divisions would be moved to the Portals Building until March because of emergency roof repairs. The Union (Local 476) responded within days with a demand to bargain and proposals based on the swing space move agreement between HUD and the Union as to Capitol View ("CV"), which includes up to 5 day telework. Since the temporary move of OGC employees to CV, the Union has had to work against OGC's roadblocks to expanded telework while employees are at CV.

The Union has been working with OGC Admin and HUD Space Management from the very beginning to make the best of the move - for example, making sure there is sufficient storage for files, copying/faxing facilities, and equitable work space assignments. We arranged for the meeting and walk-through at Portals. But management did not start formal negotiations on an agreement (contract supplement) until this week, and we do not have an agreement yet. Management has rejected virtually every proposal we have made to compensate for small, non-private work stations than we are used to in Headquarters or CV.

We could have been very militant. Personally, I worked against providing managers with private office space at CV. We need shared sacrifice. In the Portals the managers sit in their castles, completely private, with commanding views of the river and the monuments. The vassals are allowed in the castle but are in open space. The serfs are down below with no natural light, guarding the castle. Please note that these vassals and serfs once had much larger enclosed space.

We could easily seat four employees each in Ms. Aronowitz's and Ms. Acevedo's space. But budgetary issues and outlet locations made such a proposal too costly. Thus, we only could bargain over telework and compressed schedules.

OGC Management does not want to give expanded telework. This position is contrary to the policy management accepted for CV swing space and to the Department's policy encouraging telework. It would also make OGC the one entity that would not accept up to five day telework for those in long term swing space.

You are already aware of OGC's rejection of the career ladder 15. And Management has still not announced the student loan subsidy program for this year, making it very difficult to commit the money by September 30. So frankly, this decision not to accept language already negotiated re telework in swing space in CV is outrageous.

What can you do now? Under the Department's telework policy and the telework supplement agreed to by HUD and the Union, you can:

- (1) Apply for telework if you don't have a telework agreement now.
- (2) Apply to modify your telework agreement to increase the number of days you telework on a scheduled basis (up to three days per week).
- (3) Request situational telework if you have a telework agreement in advance of particular days you want to telework.

Your telework applications and requests cannot be rejected without an explanation. For more information and a link to the application, go to <http://hudatwork.hud.gov/po/arh/eap/telework.cfm>.

We have limited abilities to engage in job actions. It is legal for all of you to apply now. Who knows? Maybe the applications will be granted. And even if you get the expanded telework, you can choose not to take it.

What will the Union do? We will continue to press for a Portals move agreement with expanded telework. We will file grievances if your telework applications and requests are rejected or not responded to. We will negotiate for expanded telework in connection with every move you will have to endure until all the Weaver Building work is done.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact stewards Mark Matulef, Jerry Gross, or me.

In solidarity

Eddie Eitches
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