



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, DC 20460

OFFICE OF
PREVENTION, PESTICIDES
AND TOXIC SUBSTANCES

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Agreement Between OPP Management and NTEU Chapter 280 Concerning
Establishing Additional GS-15 Non-Supervisory Scientist Positions

FROM: Marcia E. Mulkey, Director
Office of Pesticide Programs (7501C)

Freshteh Toghrol, Vice-President and Chair for OPP Affairs
NTEU Chapter 280

TO: All OPP Employees

We are pleased to announce the attached agreement under which OPP expects to establish and advertise additional GS-15 non-supervisory scientist positions over the next several months and into the future. This agreement has been entered into by OPP management and NTEU Chapter 280 in the spirit of the partnership principles established in Executive Order 12871. It reflects agreement between OPP management and the union representing OPP's scientists and other professional employees that there should be more GS-15 non-supervisory science positions in OPP, taking into account the complexity and importance of the work inherent in implementing the Food Quality Protection Act and our other statutes.

Under this agreement, OPP management and NTEU Chapter 280 will work together to ensure that the OPP's most difficult and critical science jobs are classified at the grade level they warrant and that all qualified OPP employees have the opportunity to compete for these senior-level positions. This agreement marks another in a series of productive areas of dialogue and cooperation between EPA's management and unions to ensure that our employees are appropriately recognized and rewarded for the exceptional contributions they make on an ongoing basis to protecting public health and the environment.

Separate from this agreement, OPP also expects to establish and advertise during the same time frame additional non-supervisory GS-15 positions in other disciplines, such as information technology, risk management or other areas. These positions also will be filled competitively under EPA's Merit Promotion procedures and using rating panels as provided in the OPPTS Diversity Action Plan.

Of course, our efforts to implement this agreement and any other non-supervisory GS-15 positions will comport fully with any new policies of the new Administration. Through these actions and others we seek to give OPP a strong competitive edge in hiring, developing, and retaining dedicated employees with the expertise and experience needed to meet our many and difficult obligations.

Attachment



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AGREEMENT BETWEEN NTEU CHAPTER 280 AND OPP

This agreement is between National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) Chapter 280 and the Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The parties agree as follows:

1. This agreement is established in the spirit of the partnership principles described in Executive Order 12871.
2. Science issues in OPP are among the most complex and critical in all of EPA. Many of them require a very high level of professional expertise, widely recognized by scientific peers and consistent with a grade 15 position under the position classification standards established by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM).
3. Based on a review of its program requirements, OPP management has concluded and NTEU Chapter 280's representative has agreed that additional GS-15 non-supervisory scientist positions should be established in a number of divisions.
4. OPP expects to establish approximately 15 to 17 such positions at this time. During the three months following adoption of this agreement OPP management will work diligently with EPA's Office of Human Resources and Organizational Services to establish and advertise these GS-15 positions using EPA's Merit Promotion procedures. All qualified OPP scientists currently at the GS-14 level will have the opportunity to apply for these positions. OPP expects to establish additional GS-15 non-supervisory scientist positions in subsequent years.
5. Consistent with EPA's Merit Promotion procedures and the OPPTS Diversity Action Plan, OPP will use rating panels to evaluate and rank the qualified applicants for these positions. Within six weeks following adoption of this agreement NTEU Chapter 280 will give OPP management a list of GS-15 scientists in OPP and other EPA offices that NTEU believes would be good candidates to serve on rating panels for non-supervisory GS-15 scientist positions. OPP management will consider NTEU's suggestions, along with other qualified GS-15 scientists, in naming rating panels for these positions.
6. Following advertisement of these positions, OPP management will diligently pursue the subsequent Merit Promotion process steps and make a selection decision for each position as quickly as practicable.

Signed and dated: *January 18, 2001*

For NTEU Chapter 280:

F. Toghiani
Freshteh Toghiani, Vice President
and Chair for OPP Affairs

For the Office of Pesticide Programs:

Marcia E. Mulkey
Marcia E. Mulkey, Director