NWSEO Reaches Agreement on NWS Employee Mobility

(May 10, 2022) A new agreement reached between NWSEO and the National Weather Service (NWS) will improve and expand job opportunities for existing employees, according to NWSEO President John Werner.

The memorandum of understanding (MOU), which was reached after months of negotiations, targets two areas of concern for NWSEO: filling vacancies and options pertaining to permanent change in station (PCS) expenses. Addressing these issues, Werner notes, is an important step toward a more equitable work environment for both new and existing employees.

"With this MOU, there are more avenues for employees to have a better work/life balance," says Werner. "There will be opportunities to have lateral transfers, as well as the ability to make career decisions that better fit your life."

In recent years, Werner says “NWS management’s priority has been on bringing in new hires which at times resulted in the depletion of healthy experience levels within offices. This has not only put a strain on existing NWS staff, but left new hires in an untenable position to complete training in tandem with operational shifts. This MOU will create a more balanced approach to hiring, training, and ensuring both new and existing employees get the support they need to do their jobs effectively."

There are two key components in the MOU that will amplify this new, balanced approach:

**Merit Assignment Plan (MAP)**

Per the MOU, MAP PCS assignment opportunities for GS11/12 1340 employees will double. Those wishing to relocate to a position with their PCS expenses paid for by the agency will have the chance to do so quarterly, compared to the previous twice-per-year agreement.

**Reassignment Opportunity Notices (RON)**

In addition to the enhanced MAP opportunities, employees will have the opportunity each quarter to transfer to another office using the streamlined RON process and without suffering a downgrade for 90 days. Unfortunately, because such transfers are primarily in the interest of the employee, the agency by law is precluded from paying PCS expenses.

These measures aim to foster a meaningful, equitable, and effective hiring strategy that will allow for both new and experienced employees to focus on what they need most — whether that be training, professional development, or location change.

For more information, read the full MOU here ([link](#)).

**NWSEO proudly represents more NOAA employees than any other Union. NWSEO serves bargaining unit employees of the National Weather Service, NESDIS Office of Satellite and Product Operations, Office of General Counsel, Aircraft Operations Center, and Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory.**