

- E. Give the union representatives the opportunity to discuss the views of bargaining unit employees and/or make suggestions on subjects affecting those employees;
- F. Give the parties the opportunity to discuss the problems that give rise to outstanding grievances and to discuss ways of preventing contract violations and other workplace conflicts from occurring. The parties agree that the discussion of individual grievances is not an appropriate topic for Labor/Management committees;
- G. Proposed work rules will be an appropriate subject for discussion; and
- H. Such other items as the parties may mutually agree to discuss. All committees will be co-chaired by a Union and an Employer representative. The agenda for each meeting shall be jointly prepared by the co-chairpersons in advance of the meeting. The parties are committed to a timely completion and distribution of the minutes. The minutes shall not be construed as constituting a binding agreement or negotiations between the parties.

8.03 - Time Off

Unless mutually agreed otherwise, such meetings shall be held during normal work hours. Agencies which have provided the use of agency vehicles or which have paid mileage reimbursement shall continue the practice.

8.04 - Labor/Management Relations

The Employer and the Union recognize that the character and quality of the Union-Management relationship in each agency has an impact upon productivity and quality services. Accordingly, the parties agree to support joint labor/management training in skills and concepts which may contribute to increased Union-Management understanding and cooperative relationships.

8.05 - Joint Information Technology (IT) Committee

The parties shall each appoint four (4) members to a committee to review, discuss and examine the information technology environment as it applies to the state system. Topics such as, but not limited to, classifications, job groupings, career paths, education and skill sets that are necessary to meet the information technology services needs of state agencies may be examined. The committee shall meet as often as mutually determined that there is a need.¹

A. COMPOSITION²

THE PARTIES SHALL EACH APPOINT AN EQUAL NUMBER OF LABOR AND MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVES THAT WILL MEET TO ADDRESS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE ISSUES. THE COMMITTEE SHALL MEET AT LEAST QUARTERLY OR AS OFTEN AS MUTUALLY DETERMINED THAT THERE IS A NEED.

B. PURPOSE³

THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE IS TO:

1. **REVIEW PRACTICES AND DEVELOP EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVES THAT HELP BUILD THE CAPACITY OF THE STATE IT WORKFORCE. THE PARTIES ARE COMMITTED TO JOINT INITIATIVES THAT WILL DO THE FOLLOWING:⁴**
 - A. **ADDRESS CAREER DEVELOPMENT TO INCLUDE ELEMENTS SUCH AS IDENTIFICATION OF SKILLS/TALENT NEEDS, ASSESSMENT OF STAFF STRENGTHS, IDENTIFICATION OF SKILL GAPS, AND DESIGN OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLANS/PROGRAMS. THE PURPOSE IS TO BUILD A CAPABLE AND COMPETITIVE WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND OPERATIONAL NEEDS OF THE AGENCY.⁵**
 - B. **FORMALIZE A CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS TO IDENTIFY, COMMUNICATE, AND FOSTER THE CRITICAL SKILLS THE EMPLOYER MUST HAVE. THIS INCLUDES TRACKING AND COMMUNICATING CURRENT IT TRENDS, AGENCY SPECIFIC TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS, AND STATEWIDE STANDARDS.⁶**
 - C. **CREATE CAREER DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES THAT WILL INTEGRATE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING TO BUILD BENCH STRENGTH, REDUCE EMPLOYEE TURNOVER, AND MINIMIZE STAFF AUGMENTATION AND OUTSOURCING.**
2. **HELP ADDRESS WORKFORCE PLANNING ISSUES THAT ARE RELATED TO SKILL SHORTAGES, HIRING OR DEPLOYING THE WORKFORCE, AND MEETING COMPETENCIES REQUIRED BY THE STATE.**
3. **EXAMINE AND JOINTLY ADDRESS HIGH PERFORMANCE WORK INITIATIVES.**
4. **ESTABLISH PROCEDURES TO MAINTAIN AN UPDATED IT CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF STATE GOVERNMENT THAT INCLUDES RELEVANT JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND APPROPRIATE PAY FOR BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES.⁷**
5. **PROMOTE IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES AND MANAGEMENT THAT CAN INCLUDE ESTABLISHMENT OF AGENCY LABOR-MANAGEMENT IT COMMITTEES.⁸**
6. **THE COMMITTEE AGREES TO DISCUSS WAYS TO ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS TO DEVELOP THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY TO PERFORM STATE IT WORK WITH ALL AVAILABLE RESOURCES INCLUDING UET RESOURCES.⁹**

C. SUBCOMMITTEES

THE STATEWIDE JOINT INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MAY ESTABLISH ANY SUBCOMMITTEES THEY DEEM NECESSARY IN ORDER TO FULFILL ITS MISSION. SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS MAY INCLUDE AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES, SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS, OR ANY OTHER PERSONS DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE STATEWIDE JOINT IT COMMITTEE. ALL COMMITTEES WILL MAINTAIN AN EQUAL NUMBER OF MANAGEMENT AND UNION REPRESENTATIVES.

D. IT PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTING SUBCOMMITTEE¹⁰

NOTWITHSTANDING THE SECTIONS OF ARTICLE 39, WITHIN SIXTY (60) DAYS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE AGREEMENT, THE PARTIES WILL ESTABLISH A

¹ Housekeeping.

² Reconfigured Statewide Joint IT Committee will consist of equal members of Employer and Union representatives and will meet at least quarterly.

³ Describes several distinct purposes of the Statewide Joint IT Committee.

⁴ Education and training for employees in current jobs will be a significant focus of the Statewide Joint IT Committee.

⁵ Identifies areas to be addressed regarding career development.

⁶ Formalizes career development initiatives that help the workforce to be more competitive and reduce outsourcing.

⁷ Statewide Joint IT Committee will develop a process to keep IT classifications accurate and current so it reflects the work performed by employees and addresses required competencies.

⁸ Allows for the development of agency-based Joint IT Committees.

⁹ Encourages bargaining unit members to look at all avenues to support their continued skill development including UET funds.

¹⁰ Establishes a labor/management committee to investigate the factors that influence agency decisions to contract out. The committee will identify solutions to result in the use of bargaining unit members to perform work ordinarily contracted out.

SUBCOMMITTEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF ANALYZING IT PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTS. THE SUBCOMMITTEE, IN CONJUNCTION WITH SELECTED STATE AGENCIES, WILL CONDUCT RESEARCH AIMED AT IDENTIFYING THE COST, CAPABILITIES REQUIRED, PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS, QUALITY, PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CONTRACTING OUT IT PERSONAL SERVICES WORK. THE SUBCOMMITTEE WILL BE PROVIDED ACCESS TO AVAILABLE INFORMATION REGARDING COSTS, PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES/EXPECTATIONS, AND OTHER INFORMATION RELEVANT TO CONDUCTING A COST COMPARISON BETWEEN STATE-OPERATED WORK AND IT PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTED WORK. THE GOAL IS TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO BETTER USE BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES TO REDUCE IT PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTED WORK.

ARTICLE 9 – OHIO EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM¹

¹ No change.

9.01 - Joint Promotion

The Employer and the Union recognize the value of counseling and assistance programs to those employees who have personal problems which interfere with their job duties and responsibilities. Therefore, in all agencies covered by this Agreement, the Union and the Employer agree to continue the existing Ohio Employee Assistance Program, including its referral and counseling services for employees and members of the employee's immediate family, and to work jointly to promote the program.

9.02 - Ohio EAP Advisory Committee

The parties agree that there will be a committee composed of nine (9) union representatives that will meet with and advise the Director of the Ohio EAP. This committee will review the program and discuss specific strategies for improving access for employees. Additional meetings will be held to follow up and evaluate the strategies. The Ohio EAP shall also be an appropriate topic for Labor/Management Committees.

9.03 - Ohio EAP Steward Training

The Employer agrees to provide orientation and training about the Ohio EAP to union stewards. To the extent practical, the Ohio EAP shall conduct such training in all agencies at least once every twenty-four (24) months, and the training will be conducted jointly with exempt employees. All new stewards shall receive Ohio EAP training within a reasonable time of their designation. Such training shall deal with the central office operation and community referral procedures. Such training will be held during regular working hours. Whenever possible, training will be held for stewards working second and third shifts during their working time.

9.04 - Employee Participation in Ohio EAP

- A. Records regarding treatment and participation in the Ohio EAP shall be confidential. No records shall be maintained in the employee's personnel file except those that relate to the job or are provided for in Article 23. In cases where the employee and the Employer have entered into a voluntary EAP Participation Agreement in which the Employer agrees to defer discipline as a result of employee participation in the Ohio EAP treatment program, the employee shall be required to sign appropriate releases of information to the extent required to enable the Ohio EAP staff to provide the Employer with reports regarding compliance or noncompliance with the Ohio EAP treatment program.
- B. If an employee has exhausted all available leave and requests time off to have an initial appointment with a community agency, the Agency shall provide such time off without pay.
- C. The Employer or its representative shall not direct an employee to participate in the Ohio EAP. Such participation shall be strictly voluntary.
- D. Seeking and/or accepting assistance to alleviate an alcohol, other drug, behavioral or emotional problem will not in and of itself jeopardize an employee's job security or consideration for advancement.

ARTICLE 10 – CHILD CARE¹

¹ No change.

10.01 - Child Care Expenses Reimbursement Program

The Employer will assure that eligible employees have the opportunity to participate in a child care expenses reimbursement program which provides the reimbursement on a pre-tax basis in accordance with Section 129 of the Internal Revenue Service Code as amended and other applicable law.

- A. Eligibility
 - 1. Employees must have been employed full time since January 1 of the previous year to receive full reimbursement; provided however, that
 - 2. Full-time employees whose employment began after January 1 of the previous year and part-time employees are eligible for this program on a prorated basis based on the number of hours worked in a calendar year.
 - 3. For the calendar year beginning January 1, 1997 the employee's adjusted gross family income for the calendar year for which they seek child care expenses reimbursement shall not exceed \$35,000.
 - 4. The employee had employment-related child care expenses in the previous calendar year equal to or greater than the amount of the payment as provided in Section C below;
 - 5. Employment-related child care expenses must have been for those children defined pursuant to IRS Section 129, at the time the expenses were incurred.
- B. Verification

No later than April 15, employees must submit a copy of their Form 1040 and a copy of their receipt(s) for child care expenses for the previous calendar year to be eligible for reimbursement. Employees, and spouses when joint income is used, may be required to authorize the Employer to obtain verification of tax information through State and/or Federal Tax authorities.
- C. Reimbursement Schedule

Maximum reimbursement shall be as follows:

 - 1. \$500.00 for one eligible child.