

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

JUN 18 2010

PERSONNEL BULLETIN NO: 10-06

SUBJECT: Electronic Tracking and Reporting System for Labor and Employee Relations Cases

1. **Purpose.** This Personnel Bulletin establishes policy for use of the Department-wide electronic tracking and reporting system for labor and employee relations cases occurring within the Department of the Interior (DOI).
2. **Special Instructions/Cancellations.** This is the initial issuance of this policy.
3. **Definitions.**
 - a. Administrative Grievance System. A formal process established to facilitate the expeditious adjudication of grievances from nonbargaining unit employees through a fair, equitable, and simple procedure. Regulations and guidance can be found in DOI Departmental Manual 370 DM 771 (September 2007), Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 5, Part 771, and in other related issuances. This process applies to any matter of concern or dissatisfaction relating to employment, which is subject to the control of agency management for nonbargaining unit employees.
 - b. Appeal. A form of redress filed with the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) that is available to employees who have been the subject of an adverse action (i.e. suspension over 14 days, demotion, or removal) in accordance with 5 U.S.C. Chapter 75, or other personnel actions resulting in the loss of pay or grade as found in 5 C.F.R. 1201. MSPB appeals are adjudicated by an administrative judge through a formal hearing process.
 - c. Disciplinary and Adverse Actions. These are formal penalties imposed on employees for sustained instances of misconduct, and may include: official letters of reprimand, suspensions, demotions, and removal from Federal service. In matters resulting in suspensions and removal, actions are taken in accordance with 5 U.S.C. Chapter 75, and provide redress through the applicable administrative or negotiated grievance procedure, statutory appeal, or complaint procedures depending on the severity of the action, bargaining unit status of the employee and contract language, and whether discrimination is alleged.

- d. Employee Labor Relations Tracking System (ELRTS). ELTRS is a secured web-based tracking system with reporting capabilities for labor and employee relations cases within DOI; and can be accessed by authorized staff within the DOI Headquarters and Bureaus/Offices.
- e. Negotiations. In the context of the federal labor-management relations statute contained in 5 U.S.C. Chapter 71, negotiations are part of the collective bargaining process through which representatives of the agency and labor organizations having exclusive representation rights meet and bargain in good faith in an attempt to voluntarily reach agreement with respect to conditions or employment for bargaining unit employees.
- f. Negotiated Grievance Procedures/Arbitration. Negotiated Grievance Procedures (NGP) provides bargaining unit employees represented by labor organizations an expeditious process for resolving grievances through a fair, equitable, and simple procedure. The controlling statute is 5 U.S.C Chapter 71, Section 7121, with NGP found in master collective bargaining agreements (CBA). Unless specifically excluded in a CBA, a grievance is any matter related to employment, any claimed violation, misrepresentation, or misapplication of any law, rule, or regulation affecting conditions of employment, or claimed breach or misinterpretation of a CBA. Arbitration may be invoked by either a labor organization or management as the means to decide an unresolved grievance. Arbitration is a third party proceeding, officiated by a third party (arbitrator), who renders a decision based on the evidence presented.
- g. Negotiability Proceedings. The processes, as described in 5 C.F.R. Part 2424, used by the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) to resolve assertions made by an agency that proposals made by a labor organization during negotiations are outside the agency's duty to bargain.
- h. Performance-based Actions. Agency-initiated personnel actions, based on 5 U.S.C. Chapter 43 or 75 to remove an employee from their position based on unacceptable performance in one or more critical performance elements following the employee's failure to improve their performance during a designated improvement period, Employees removed by adverse action may seek redress through statutory appeal or complaint (if discrimination is alleged) procedures. Depending on language contained in collective bargaining agreements, bargaining unit employees may be able to seek redress through the negotiated grievance procedure.
- i. Representation Proceedings. The processes, as defined in 5 C.F.R Part 2422, used by the FLRA to conduct elections that decide representation petitions, resolve dues

allotment eligibility issues, clarify or amend existing certifications of bargaining units, and/or consolidate bargaining units.

- j. Unfair Labor Practices. Unfair labor practices (ULP) are violations of the Federal Service Labor Management Relations Statute, by either a labor organization or agency, as determined by the FLRA. Special definitions of ULP are found in 5 U.S.C. Section 7116.
- k. Web-based. A term to describe a computer software application or site located on the internet and accessible via a web browser.

4. Policy.

- a. Employee Labor Relations Tracking System. ELRTS is the only authorized Department-wide computerized record keeping system for labor and employee relations information on the case types listed in this section. All DOI Bureaus and Offices, except the Office of the Inspector General, are required to use ELRTS as prescribed in this regulation to record case file information for all covered cases.

Covered cases include:

Labor Relations:

- Grievances filed under negotiated grievance procedures
- Arbitrations
- Negotiations
- Negotiability proceedings
- Representation proceedings
- Unfair Labor Practices

Employee Relations:

- Grievances filed under the DOI administrative grievance system
- Disciplinary and Adverse actions
- Performance-based actions
- Appeals
- Other non-disciplinary actions (i.e., Leave Restrictions, PIP, etc.)

ELRTS is not a separate system of records, but rather an information management system used in conjunction with existing records systems established by the Office of Personnel Management and supporting file systems established within DOI. Data maintained in ELRTS is confidential and subject to control under the Privacy Act. Access to ELRTS shall be limited to DOI staff members that have been assigned labor and/or employee relations responsibilities in those program areas.

- b. Funding. Funding to procure and implement the system, initially as a pilot and later Department-wide, was designated by the Department as a Secretarial priority and authorized by the Departmental budget office. Start-up costs were allocated to Bureaus and Offices based on their employee population, a standard FTE algorithm used by the budget office. Implementation of the system Department-wide and on-going maintenance will be funded by the same algorithm. Costs associated with changes to ELRTS will be charged to the requesting agency.
- c. Mandatory Data Elements and Recording. To ensure consistency in data analysis and reporting, DOI's Office of Human Resources has established required data entry fields reflected visually through the use of highlighted blocks on the ELRTS program data screens. Records must be established and data entered into the record within 14 days of establishing the record. Information will be updated in the system as the case is developed.
- d. Reporting Requirements. ELRTS-generated reports to be used by the Headquarters (HQ) and Bureau/Office staff, and/or submitted to the Department will be established by DOI, OHR. Bureaus and Offices are authorized and encouraged to use the reporting capabilities of ELRTS for internal program monitoring and assessment purposes.
- e. System Security. Access to ELRTS will be on an individual employee basis as determined by the respective HQ and Bureau/Office Director or designees, and limited to only those employees whose performance is dependent on such access. Staff authorized access will be designated in writing and specified as to the level of access organizationally within each Bureau/Office.
- f. Program Modifications. Modifications to the ELRTS programming may be authorized only by the Director, OHR. Requests for modifications must be made in writing through the Bureau/Office Human Resources Director or equivalent to the DOI, OHR, and contain both justification citing benefits to be realized by the change and a commitment to finance any programming costs.

5. Responsibilities.

a. Director, Office of Human Resources.

- (1) Develops and approves ELRTS program policy in consultation with OHR staff and Bureau/Office Human Resources Directors.
- (2) Approves changes to ELRTS web-based program.
- (3) Ensures adequate staff and financial resources are available to support and maintain ELRTS.
- (4) Provides human resources information technology support to address ongoing application functionality issues.

b. Director, Workforce Management Division (OHR).

- (1) Provides administrative oversight for DOI employee and labor relations programs to ensure adequate staff resources are available to provide ELRTS technical support to Bureaus/Offices and staff.
- (2) Coordinates staff input for OHR Director on ELRTS program issues.

c. Program Manager for Employee Relations (OHR).

- (1) Establishes case types (e.g., discipline) and associated data fields required for employee relations cases contained in ELRTS.
- (2) Establishes reporting requirements and contents of Department generated reports from ELRTS data.
- (3) Prepares DOI employee relations reports based on ELRTS data.
- (4) Coordinates information sharing of Department-wide ELRTS employee relations data with the Office of Civil Rights.
- (5) Conducts employee relations program assessments.
- (6) Recommends ELRTS program modifications.

d. Program Manager for Labor Relations (OHR).

- (1) Establishes case types (e.g., unfair labor practices) and associated data fields required for labor relations cases contained in ELRTS.

- (2) Establishes reporting requirements and contents of Department generated reports from ELRTS data.
- (3) Prepares DOI labor relations reports based on ELRTS data.
- (4) Coordinates information sharing of Department-wide ELRTS labor relations data with the Office of Civil Rights.
- (5) Conducts labor relations program assessments.
- (6) Recommends ELRTS program modifications.

e. Bureau/Office Human Resources Directors or Equivalent.

- (1) Provides sufficient staff resources to ensure ELRTS program is administered according to Department policy.
- (2) Establishes Bureau/Office policies that address managerial aspects of ELRTS such as system security and access, minimum data entry requirements, and program assessment standards.
- (3) Authorizes employee access to ELRTS within their Bureau/Office staff.
- (4) Recommends agency or staff-initiated changes and enhancements to the Department.
- (5) Participates as a member of the DOI Human Resources Team in evaluating ELRTS effectiveness as a management tool.

f. Bureau/Office Employee Relations Officers.

- (1) In conjunction with the Bureau/Office Labor Relations Officer and human resources staff, establishes and monitors the administrative and operational policies for ELRTS to include: staff training requirements, system access and security, report preparation and distribution, and data quality and timelines.
- (2) Generates and reviews ELRTS reports for employee relations cases conducting periodic reviews and assessments; prepares reports for Bureaus/Offices or staff management and the Department; and provides assessment feedback to managers to improve ER program effectiveness and staff accountability.
- (3) Coordinates necessary sharing of agency ELRTS employee relations data with the Bureau/Office civil rights staff.

- (4) If delegated, authorizes employee access to ELRTS within their Bureaus/Offices.
- (5) Identifies and recommends ELRTS program enhancements and changes.
- (6) Ensures adequate ELRTS training is provided to ER practitioners.

g. Bureau/Office Labor Relations Officers.

- (1) In conjunction with the Bureau/Office Employee Relations Officer and human resources staff, establishes and monitors the administrative and operational policies for ELRTS to include: staff training requirements, system access and security, report preparation and distribution; and data quality and timelines.
- (2) Generates and reviews ELRTS reports for labor relations cases conducting periodic reviews and assessments; prepares reports for Bureaus/Offices or staff management and the Department; and provides assessment feedback to managers to improve LR program effectiveness and staff accountability.
- (3) Coordinates necessary sharing of agency ELRTS labor relations data with the Bureau/Office civil rights staff.
- (4) If delegated, authorizes employee access to ELRTS within their Bureaus/Offices.
- (5) Identifies and recommends ELRTS program enhancements and changes.
- (6) Ensures adequate ELRTS training is provided to LR practitioners.

h. Bureau/Office Program Administrator. (these functions may be assigned to Bureau/Office Employee or Labor Relations Officers)

- (1) Serves as the Bureau/Office focal point for ELRTS operational program communication with OHR and Bureau/Office management on matters related to training, program deployment and updates and troubleshooting.
- (2) Updates Bureau/Office end user access in ELRTS as authorized.

i. ELRTS Users. (Bureau/Office designated specialists or technicians authorized by their respective Human Resources Director or designee to have access to ELRTS).

- (1) Ensure proper day-to-day entry and maintenance of data, report preparation and confidentiality of information contained in ELRTS.

- (2) Use ELRTS to enhance personal productivity and professional effectiveness.

6. Program Administration.

a. Security and System Access.

- (1) ELRTS may contain personal information on Federal employees; therefore, system access is limited to agency employees who have a need to know as a requirement of their position.
- (2) Disclosure or release of personal information contained in the Privacy Act is subject to requirements contained in the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. Section 552) and the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute (5 U.S.C. Section 7114(b)(94)).
- (3) Access to ELRTS is established by authorized Bureau/Office Human Resources Directors in writing on an employee-by-employee basis, given the employee's duties and responsibilities in the organization's labor and/or employee relations program. This authority may be delegated to the Bureau/Office Labor and/or Employee Relations Officers. A record of employees with authorized access will be maintained by each Bureau/Office human resources office. Notification of access changes, (i.e., granting, changing, or withdrawing) should be made to the designated ELRTS application support provider with the following information: user first and last name, social security number, e-mail address and access level by servicing organization level code(s).

b. System Upgrades and Program Changes.

- (1) Requests for program changes to ELRTS may be made at any time by a Bureau/Office human resources director or equivalent to the Director, OHR. Such requests must be in writing and include the following information: specific change(s) being sought, why the change is necessary (to include the anticipated benefits to both the requesting Bureau/Office and others, as applicable), when the change is needed, and the Bureau/Office or staff contact person and number. The decision to approve requested change(s) will be made by the OHR Director in consultation with the OHR staff and the requesting Human Resources Director(s).

- (2) System upgrades and other OHR-initiated changes will be made as necessary, with prior notification and applicable instructions or training provided to Bureaus/Offices and DOI human resources staffs.

c. Training.

- (1) OHR will develop resource materials for ELRTS to be used by the Bureau/Office and DOI human resources staffs for orientation and training purposes. Supplementation of materials to address Bureau/Office policies is encouraged.
- (2) Prior to authorizing ELRTS access, Bureau/Office and DOI human resources staffs must ensure new users receive basic orientation training to include access to procedures, security requirements, and protection of confidential information.

d. Reports and Reporting Requirements.

- (1) Standard reports will be generated as needed by those having ELRTS access at the Department and Bureau/Office to the extent of their access authority. For example, Bureau/Office officials can only generate reports for ELRTS data within their Bureau/Office and for servicing organization level codes within their authority.
- (2) Reports not available directly from ELRTS or third party query software may be requested by Department or Bureau/Office officials directly to the ELRTS application support provider, and can include data only within the requestors' access authority. Any cost associated with generating special reports will be borne by the requestor.

e. System Evaluation and Use.

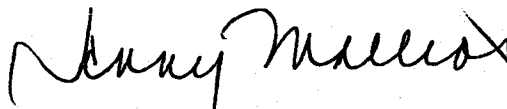
- (1) Annually, the Director of OHR will conduct an ELRTS program assessment which may include a survey of Bureau/Offices and DOI staff users, and Human Resources Directors. The assessment will include the following topics:
 - i. ELRTS utilization in ER and LR program administration to ascertain how and to what extent it is contributing to agency or staff program effectiveness as well as identification of "best practices" using ELRTS.
 - ii. ELRTS problems, limitations and needed improvements.

- iii. ELRTS costs.
- iv. The impact or potential impact of other HR enterprise systems on ELRTS, and how they should be addressed.
- v. Reports as a result of the survey will be briefed to Bureau/Office and DOI staff Human Resources Directors, with copies provided to Departmental Administration.
- vi. Bureau/Offices and staff are encouraged to use ELRTS in conducting internal program evaluations and assessments.

7. Inquiries. Questions related to the contents of this Personnel Bulletin can be addressed by email or telephone to:

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