



# Introduction to VA/AFGE Master Agreement Part I

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# Introduction to VA/AFGE Master Agreement

- ✓ What is a Union?
- ✓ What determines Bargaining Unit status?
- ✓ What is a collective bargaining agreement (CBA)?
- ✓ What topics are covered in the CBA?



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# What is A Labor Union?

- Organization formed by workers
- Particular trade, industry or company
- Purpose is to improve conditions of employment
- More than ½ of jobs in Federal Government are union-eligible or “bargaining unit”



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# Labor Unions in VA

- American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)
- National Nurses United (NNU)
- National Association of Government Employees (NAGE)
- National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE)
- Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

VA Labor Unions - Office of Labor-Management Relations  
(LMR)



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# Who Does AFGGE Represent?

- Represents all bargaining unit employees
- No requirement to “join” the union
- Eligible employees may elect to become a member, typically involves regular dues
- Employee can become a member at anytime; there may time requirements for canceling membership



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# Bargaining Unit Status (BUS)

- Determined by classification of position description
  - 1272 – Included in Bargaining Unit
  - 8888 – Ineligible for inclusion in Bargaining Unit
  - 7777 – Eligible for inclusion in Bargaining Unit



# Knowledge Check

**What does BUS stand for?**

- A. Bargaining Under Stress**
- B. Base Unit Statue**
- C. Based Upon Status**
- D. Bargaining Unit Status**



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# Knowledge Check - Answer

**What does BUS stand for?**

- A. Bargaining Under Stress**
- B. Base Unit Stature**
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- D. Bargaining Unit Status**



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# Knowledge Check

**An employee must join the Union to be covered by the collective bargaining agreement.**

- A. True.**
- B. False.**
- C. It Depends.**



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# Knowledge Check - Answer

**An employee must join the Union to be covered by the collective bargaining agreement.**

**A. True.**

**B. False.**

**C. It Depends.**



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# Bargaining Unit Exclusions

- **Confidential Employee**
  - Acts in a confidential capacity to an official
  - Official formulates or effectuates management policies in labor relations
  - Has regular access to confidential labor relations material
- **Investigator/Auditor**
  - Primarily engaged in investigation or audit functions
  - Agency duties directly affect internal security of agency
- **Management Official**
  - Duties and responsibilities require or authorize individual to formulate, determine or influence policies or participates in formulation of that policy



# Bargaining Unit Exclusions

- **Personnelist**
  - Engaged in personnel work other than purely clerical
  - Personnel work is more than clerical in nature, and;
  - Duties of position are performed in a nonroutine manner, and
  - Require the exercise of independent judgement and discretion
- **Supervisor**
  - Authority to hire, direct, assign, promote, reward, transfer, furlough, layoff, recall, suspend, discipline or remove employees
  - Authority to adjust grievances or effectively recommend such actions
  - Authority is not merely routine or clerical in nature but requires the consistent exercise of independent judgement.



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# Knowledge Check

**What determines Bargaining Unit Status?**

- A. Position Title**
- B. Position Grade**
- C. Collective Bargaining Agreement**
- D. Classification of Position Description**



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# Knowledge Check - Answer

**What determines Bargaining Unit Status?**

- A. Position Title**
- B. Position Grade**
- C. Collective Bargaining Agreement**
- D. Classification of Position Description**



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# Knowledge Check

**How Many Bargaining Unit Exclusions Are There?**

- A. 7**
- B. 4**
- C. 5**
- D. 2**



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# Knowledge Check - Answer

**How Many Bargaining Unit Exclusions Are There?**

**A. 7**

**B. 4**

**C. 5**

**D. 2**



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# Knowledge Check

What is the code for “Ineligible for inclusion in the bargaining unit”?

- A. 1215
- B. 1272
- C. 8888
- D. 7777



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# Knowledge Check - Answer

What is the code for “Ineligible for inclusion in the bargaining unit”?

A. 1215

B. 1272

**C. 8888**

D. 7777



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# Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

- Various Names –
  - Collective Bargaining Agreement
  - Master Agreement
  - “Green Book”
- 2011 is most recent version of VA/AFGE Master Agreement

Master Agreement between the Department of Veteran Affairs and the American Federation of Government Employees (va.gov)



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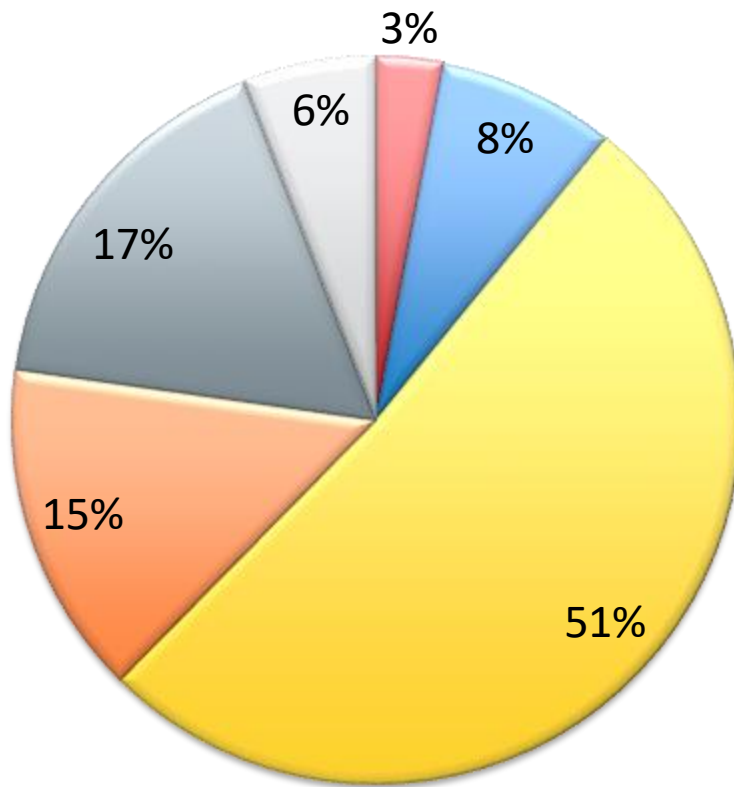
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# VA/AFGE Master Agreement

## Overview of AFGE/VA Master Agreement



- Introduction
- L/M Collaboration
- Employee Rights and Privileges
- Union Rights and Privileges
- Title 38
- General Provisions



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# Knowledge Check

**What is the most recent version of the VA/AFGE Master Agreement?**

- A. 2005**
- B. 2011**
- C. 2020**
- D. 2022**



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# Knowledge Check - Answer

What is the most recent version of the VA/AFGE Master Agreement?

- A. 2005
- B. 2011**
- C. 2020
- D. 2022



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# Introduction to VA/AFGE Master Agreement

## SECTIONS



- Introduction
  - **Article 1 “Recognition and Coverage”**
  - Article 2 “Governing Laws and Regulations”
- Labor-Management Collaboration
  - Article 3 “Labor-Management Cooperation”
  - Article 4 “Labor-Management Training”
  - Article 5 “Labor-Management Committee”
  - Article 6 “Alternative Dispute Resolution”
  - Article 7 “Quality Programs”



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# Introduction to VA/AFGE Master Agreement

## SECTIONS



- Employee Rights and Privileges
  - Article 8 “Child Care”
  - Article 9 “Classification”
  - Article 10 “Competence”
  - Article 11 “Contracting Out”
  - Article 12 “Details and Temporary Promotions”
  - Article 13 “Reassignment, Shift Changes, and Relocations”
  - **Article 14 “Discipline and Adverse Action”**



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# Introduction to VA/AFGE Master Agreement

## SECTIONS



- Employee Rights and Privileges (continued)
  - Article 15 “Employee Assistance”
  - Article 16 “Employee Awards and Recognition”
  - Article 17 “Employee Rights”
  - Article 18 “Equal Employment Opportunity”
  - Article 19 “Fitness for Duty”
  - Article 20 “Telework”
  - **Article 21 “Hours of Work and Overtime”**





# SECTIONS



- Employee Rights and Privileges (continued)
  - Article 22 “Investigations”
  - Article 23 “Merit Promotion”
  - Article 24 “Official Records”
  - Article 25 “Official Travel”
  - Article 26 “Parking and Transportation”
  - Article 27 “Performance Appraisals”
  - Article 28 “Reduction in Force”
  - Article 29 “Safety, Health and Environment”





# Introduction to VA/AFGE Master Agreement

## SECTIONS



- Employee Rights and Privileges (continued)
  - Article 30 “Occupational Health”
  - Article 31 “Silent Monitoring”
  - Article 32 “Staff Lounges”
  - Article 33 “Temporary, Part-time and Probationary Employees
  - Article 34 “Job Sharing”
  - **Article 35 “Time and Leave”**
  - Article 36 “Timely and Proper Compensation”





# Introduction to VA/AFGE Master Agreement

## SECTIONS



- Employee Rights and Privileges (continued)
  - Article 37 “Training and Career Development”
  - Article 38 “Uniforms”
  - Article 39 “Upward Mobility”
  - **Article 40 “Within-Grade Increases and Periodic Step Increases”**
  - Article 41 “Workers Compensation”



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# Introduction to VA/AFGE Master Agreement

## SECTIONS



- Union Rights and Privileges
  - Article 42 “Affiliations”
  - **Article 43 “Grievance Procedures”**
  - Article 44 “Arbitrations”
  - Article 45 “Dues Withholdings”
  - Article 46 “Local Supplement”
  - Article 47 “Mid-Term Bargaining”



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# Introduction to VA/AFGE Master Agreement

## SECTIONS



- Union Rights and Privileges (continued)
  - **Article 48 “Official Time”**
  - Article 49 “Rights and Responsibilities”
  - Article 50 “Surveillance”
  - Article 51 “Use of Official Facilities”
- Title 38
- General Provisions
- Duration of Agreement
- Index



# Knowledge Check

**How many Articles are contained in the VA/AFGE Master Agreement – Version 2011?**

- A. 55**
- B. 51**
- C. 17**
- D. 22**



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# Knowledge Check - Answer

**How many Articles are contained in the VA/AFGE Master Agreement – Version 2011?**

**A. 55**

**B. 51**

**C. 17**

**D. 22**



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# What We Covered

- ✓ What is a Union?
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# Looking Forward

- Next training will cover specific Articles in VA/AFGE Master Agreement
- Email EMO by 5/19 if there is a specific article you would like to see covered.



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# Resources

- White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment
  - [Microsoft Word - Worker Organizing Task Force Report FINALPRINT.docx \(whitehouse.gov\)](#)
- VA Labor Unions
  - [VA Labor Unions - Office of Labor-Management Relations \(LMR\)](#)
- VA/AFGE Master Agreement – 2011
  - [Master Agreement between the Department of Veteran Affairs and the American Federation of Government Employees \(va.gov\)](#)



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