

ARTICLE 26

NEGOTIATING PROCEDURES

1. This Agreement shall remain in full force and effect until mutually changed by the parties
2. Each year during the life of this Agreement negotiation on pay and a maximum of six (6) additional issues by each party may be required to take place by either party to the Agreement.
3. The parties shall meet at mutually acceptable times and locations, at least once a week.
4. All sessions shall be closed.
5. Each party may have up to eight (8) team members, with one being designated as lead negotiator.
6. If the parties fail to reach an agreement by September 1, or either party declares an impasse, either party may request mediation services from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS).
 - 6.1 A mediator from FMCS shall be assigned to assist in negotiations unless the parties agree to another mediator.
 - 6.2 The mediator shall provide services to the parties until the parties reach agreement or the mediator believes the mediation services are no longer helpful or until thirty (30) calendar days to start from the date when the mediator is assigned to the parties.
 - 6.3 If impasse continues after three thirty (30) days, either party may request a list of seven regional arbitrators from FMCS.
 - 6.3.1 One arbitrator shall be chose by the parties by alternately striking names from such list after coin toss to determine who strikes the first name.
 - 6.3.2 The arbitrator shall render a final, binding, written decision resolving all unresolved issues no later than thirty days after the arbitrator has been notified of his/her selection by the parties.
 - 6.3.3 The arbitrator's decision shall be limited to a selection of one of the two parties' complete, last, best offer.
 - 6.3.4 The costs of an arbitrator and the arbitrator's related costs conducted pursuant to the subsection shall initially be shared equally by the parties, unless determined otherwise by the arbitrator.
 - 6.3.5 Each party shall be responsible for bearing the cost of presenting its case.