



THE GOVERNMENT STANDARD

For current and retired government workers and their families since 1933 • American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO

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One Union, One Goal Winning in 2019 and Beyond

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District 6



A Message from AFGE's National President *J. David Cox Sr.*

Brothers and Sisters,
Since the close of our triennial convention in late August, I have toured our country talking to hundreds of members in nearly every district. I've heard your stories of management's attacks, answered questions about our plans to continue to push back against the administration's executive orders, and worked with many of you on ideas and plans for how to better organize in the workplace. But most of all, I have heard your frustrations with the status quo.

How we're always fighting against pay cuts instead of fighting for pay increases, fighting just to keep our pension instead of expanding benefits, the examples are endless.

Well Brothers and Sisters, I'm sick of it too. That's why I've been in six states over the last two months. To fire up our members and get them to the polls on or before November 6th.

The only way to get the respect that we deserve in Congress is to elect leaders who believe in our mission.

We have to vote our way out of this mess. To put it to you straight, we have to vote out members of Congress who don't support government employees, who don't believe in unions, who don't believe in rights in the workplace. And we have to replace them with leaders who will fight for us!

All those anti-union, anti-worker elected officials who you roll your eyes at as they're saying ridiculous things on the nightly news, they've got to go. And I mean at every level – state leadership, governors, schoolboard members, Senators, and House Representatives. If they don't support us, we don't support them.

If they don't support unions and the rights of unions to thrive in the workplace, we must vote them out at the ballot box.

Now, let me tell you what I mean when I say we: I mean every AFGE member, I mean every co-worker, I mean your family, your kids, your religious congregations, your sports teams, your neighbors. You have to ask

them to support you and their government by voting on Election Day.

Here's how critical of a mission this is: Over the last several years, we have seen some of the closest races in the history of our country. In January of this year, after a crucial Virginia House of Delegates race came to a tie, the election was ultimately decided by a coin toss. A coin toss. That's how close this midterm election will be and that's how high the stakes are. We can't forfeit one vote if we want to secure our country's future and preserve the government we're all so proud to serve.

Pulling together to change the course of our country's leadership is just the beginning. In 2019 we will join together and organize like never before. We know the bigger we are, the stronger we are, and trust me, we are going to need to be united for what lies ahead.

In Solidarity,

AFGE—THE GOVERNMENT STANDARD

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Pay Raise in Limbo, Latest on Premiums, Locality Pay



Congress adjourned for the November election without coming to an agreement on whether to provide federal employees with a pay raise next year, meaning there's still time to make our case to undecided lawmakers.

A 1.9 percent pay raise is included in a package of spending bills that Senate and House conferees failed to reach agreement on before the new fiscal year began on Oct. 1. Absent action from Congress, federal workers would be denied a pay adjustment next year under an alternative pay plan President Trump submitted to Congress in August.

Please contact your Senators and Representative at 202-224-3121 and urge them to support a minimum 1.9 percent pay increase for federal employees.

Federal Health Benefits Premiums Rise

Insurance premiums for federal employees and retirees under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) will rise 1.5 percent on average in 2019, while the government's share will rise 1.2 percent, the Office of Personnel Management announced in October.

Biweekly premiums for enrollees under Blue Cross and Blue Shield's standard option, the most popular plan in the federal program, will decrease slightly next year: by \$0.93 to \$112.23 for self-only coverage, by \$1.27 to \$256.54 for self-plus-one coverage, and by \$3.74 to \$268.21 for family coverage.

Premiums have increased nearly 20 percent on average during the past three years.

Lower-than-expected claims rates and other factors contributed to a lower increase for next year, OPM said.

New Locality Rates Coming

Workers in four metropolitan areas will receive a higher locality pay raise next year to account for large pay gaps with non-federal employers. These four areas are Birmingham-Hoover-Talladega, Ala.; Burlington-South Burlington, Vt.; San Antonio-New Braunfels-Pearsall, Texas; and Virginia Beach, Va. Tens of thousands of federal employees live in these areas.

The raise was a recommendation by the Federal Salary Council, on which AFGE National President J. David Cox Sr. and Public Policy Director Jacque Simon serve. OPM announced in July that it was adding the four areas to the list of pay localities for 2019.

All four areas have pay gaps that are more than 10 percentage points above the pay gap for the "Rest of U.S." locality area, which is the current criteria for establishing new pay localities. Federal employees who receive locality pay are those living in high-costs areas where agencies are finding it hard to recruit and retain workers because federal wages are not competitive.

**Contact your Senators and Representatives at 202.224.3121
Tell them to support a minimum of 1.9% pay increase**

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One Union, One Goal



In 2018, thousands of AFGE members and activists rallied for the rights of federal workers.

As 2018 draws to a close and we head into the new year, it's important to remember what we have accomplished together and what more we can achieve in 2019.

In 2018, we were able to stop retirement cuts, governmentwide outsourcing, attacks on our rights to join together in unions, and the repeated attempts to wipe us out of the federal government, just to name a few.

Our Year of Strength

Despite these unprecedented attacks on federal employees, a key factor in our success was your resolve.

You continued to rise up because you knew your voice mattered not only for yourself and your coworkers but for the American people you served.

Some of these attacks are still ongoing – the Trump administration, for example, is appealing a judge's decision declaring its three executive orders illegal – but if we continue to come together and be fully engaged, there is no doubt we will win.

Sisters and brothers, our goal for 2019 is to win.

We live in a world where politicians, backed by powerful special interests, are treating federal employees like a punching bag and trying to tell us that our voice would never mean anything. Make no mistake. They are attacking us because WE have an impact. They know that when we join together, we are able to fight back and win.

Winning in 2019 and Beyond

That's why in 2019 and beyond, we want to be so powerful that no politicians want to even think about attacking our pay, our earned benefits, or our legal rights to join together to bargain for a better life.

No matter how these special interests and their mouthpieces in Congress are trying to paint us, we will find our voice and our collective power for all government employees.

We will remind them that it's we who find cures to diseases, protect the homeland, make sure our air, food, and water are safe, keep bombs off the planes, take care of our veterans, save lives during natural disasters, and provide the critical services that keep our country running.

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How We Will Win in 2019





But we need to stand together and get 100 percent engaged.


How Will We Win?


Here are some easy steps you can take:


 On your way to work, make a phone call to a member of Congress about the issues you care about, like pay and workplace rights.


 During a lunch break, ask a co-worker who is not already an AFGE member to join our union. Tell them what's in it for them. To get people to join, oftentimes all you need to do is ask.


 Wear red every Wednesday and ask everyone to wear red to encourage 100% participation for Red for Feds in your local.


 Hold a picnic and invite your coworkers to talk about what's going on in your workplace and what all of you can do together.

 Write a short Letter to the Editor and send it to your local newspapers. Explain what you do and how it affects your local community.

 Establish a relationship with your members of Congress' district directors.

 When your members of Congress are back in their home district, reach out to their staff to schedule a meeting with them to go over our issues.

 Participate in your local Central Labor Council and State Feds to build allies and be part of your local community.

 Find new ways to boost higher PAC participation in your local. Explain to people what happens when anti-union candidates get elected, and what good comes from electing pro-AFGE candidates.

In 2019, we will come together like never before. We will amplify our voices because we know that our voice can move mountains. Together, we can and will overcome. Let's win!

For more ways to win in 2019 visit afge.org/fightback

Contributions or gifts to AFGE PAC are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. All contributions to AFGE PAC are voluntary and will be used for political purposes. Contributions are not a condition of membership or employment and refusal to contribute is free of reprisal. In accordance with federal law, AFGE PAC accepts contributions only from AFGE members, executive and administrative personnel, and their families. Contributions from other persons will be returned.

A Recap of our Weekend of Action 2018



AFGE National President J. David Cox Sr. knocks on doors during a labor walk.

Government workers have faced a lot of challenges. We've worked through government shutdowns, pay freezes, job cuts, privatization, union-busting, executive orders, and more. Together, we've risen to every challenge we've been dealt. We have joined our union family to rally for our rights, to call our lawmakers, and to do everything we can to fight for our jobs, pay, and retirement.

When Congress and the Administration threatened to dismantle and privatize the VA, our members and our veterans stood up to push back. They organized dozens of rallies across the country to show their communities the importance of a fully-funded VA.

Weekend of Action Stats: 65,919 Calls and 65 Rallies

But our activism cannot stop with rallies and phone calls. We must carry our fight through to elections.

When the VA refused to fill the 45,000 vacancies plaguing the system, our members and our veterans took to the streets to tell their stories and demand full staffing. And when the administration issued union-busting, democracy-busting executive orders,

AFGE led the fight and sued President Trump for violating our rights.

We know the value of having allies in state and federal government – and this election is our chance to grow our AFGE majority by electing pro-worker candidates.

Government workers like us can't afford to sit this election out. With the threats facing us and our union this election, we have done everything we can to help pro-worker candidates win in November. That's why on Saturday, October 20 and Sunday, October 21, AFGE members across the country participated in a Weekend of Action.

The Labor 2018 campaign is our chance to make sure we have allies in the Senate, in the House of Representatives, and in our state legislatures. We volunteer on pro-worker campaigns, knock on doors, talk to our neighbors and friends, make phone calls, and volunteer to make sure working people have a voice in government.

It's not too late to get involved.

Visit www.afge.org/vote2018
and help elect pro-AFGE candidates.

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Our Legislative Wins Grew This Year



This year was a challenging year for government workers. But, along the way, AFGE fought for and secured many wins for our union sisters and brothers that will help protect jobs, pay, and your rights at work.

Those include:

- Continuation of moratorium on A-76 privatization studies at DoD;

- Legislation allowing correctional officers to carry pepper spray;
- Creating and funding a national cancer fire registry to protect firefighters;
- Provision requiring the VA disclose vacancies;
- Legislation enacted that repealed a DoD reduced per-diem policy;
- Defeated repeated efforts by the Trump Administration and Congress to cut \$160 billion in federal pay, retirement and health care;
- Blocked legislation reducing due process rights which protect us from arbitrary dismissal, suspension, and reduction in pay;
- Protected right of federal employees to choose payroll deduction for union dues;
- Stopped plans to shutter commissaries;
- Prevented the division of the Army Corps of Engineers;
- Blocked confirmation of unqualified nominees to serve on the Merit Systems Protection Board;
- Stopped efforts to privatize the FAA; and
- Blocked the Base Closure Commission, which would have led to needless closure of key bases.

Our Union Stands Up for BOP Employee and Wins

An EEOC Administrative Judge (AJ) assigned to hear a complaint filed against the Department of Justice, Bureau of Prisons, found that the Complainant had been discriminated against on the basis of race and sex when he was not selected for two different positions.

The Complainant applied for and was certified as qualified for the positions of Assistant Trust Fund Supervisor and Trust Fund Specialist. Although the Complainant possessed experience directly related to the positions that the selectees did not, he was not selected for either position.

The Agency at the hearing had to provide clear and specific reasons for not selecting the Complainant, and it failed to do so. The Agency witnesses, at the hearing

and upon cross-examination, provided contradictory, inconsistent and illogical reasons for not selecting the Complainant.

In rendering a decision, the AJ noted the Complainant possessed experience directly related to the Assistant Trust Fund Supervisor position that the selectee did not.

The Complainant was awarded a retroactive promotion to either Assistant Trust Fund Supervisor or Trust Fund Specialist, back pay, thrift savings plan pay differential, restoration of leave, compensatory damages, and attorney fees.

Women's and Fair Practices Supervisory Attorney Jenny Celestin-Pratt represented the member in this case.

The Most Shared Photos of Action and Power in 2018



Members rally in front of the VA.



AFGE activist protests against VA staffing shortages.



A stand against Department of Education illegal edicts.



#RedForFeds



AFGE members will never stop fighting for workers' rights.



Thousands rallied at the Red for Feds Day of Action.



AFGE members volunteer for Habitat for Humanity.

3 Ways to Be a Better Organizer in the Workplace



We have all heard our union's mantra: organize! organize! organize! When it comes to making sure our voices are heard in the workplace, we know our strength is in numbers.

AFGE is the largest federal employee union in the country and has grown for 27 consecutive years.

The growth of our union would not have been possible without AFGE activists. AFGE members are the best workplace organizers, but we need to do better.

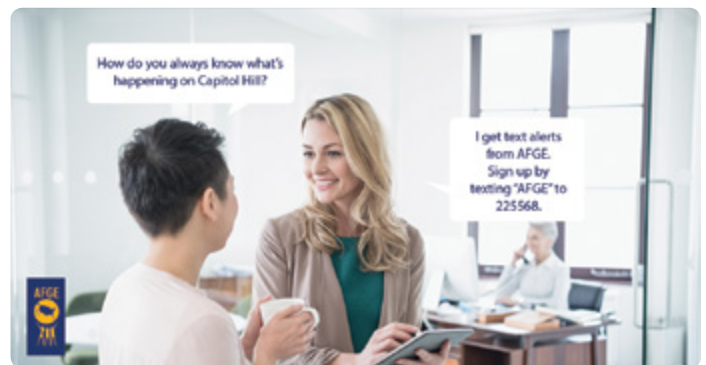


All of us must be prepared to talk to our coworkers about the importance of joining.

Here's a few facts you should know about AFGE and our union:

- AFGE works hand-in-hand with agency management to ensure working conditions are protected.

- We have the power to negotiate an employment contract that helps with things like your workload, benefits, flextime, and more.
- Because of our union, members have better pay, more flexibility on the job, and a voice in the workplace.
- AFGE leaders and our members advocate for employees and provide employee input on developing agency policies and regulations.
- We stand up to Congress, lobby for your interests, and demand that lawmakers introduce and pass legislation that preserves government employee pay and benefits.



Here are a few things to keep in mind when organizing in the workplace:

- 1 Don't assume people know who AFGE is. Be ready to discuss who our union is, what the union does, and why we do it.
- 2 Always refer to AFGE as the American Federation of Government Employees. Stay away from other acronyms like DoD, VA, SSA, etc.
- 3 Always keep your audience in mind. Their job, age, and where they live are all things to consider when speaking about how the union can specifically help them.

Use these tips and encourage your coworkers to be part of AFGE and help us improve and preserve government employees' rights on the job.

For more information about how to organize in the workplace, please contact the AFGE Membership and Organizing Department at 202-639-6410.

All organizing must be done during lunch or off-duty time.

Our Union By The Numbers: AFGE in 2018

41,732

New AFGE Members

As of October 22, 2018



2,000

Protesters

**At the Red For Feds
Rally in Washington, DC in
July and thousands more
across the country.**



65,919

Phone Calls to Congress



Over 372

Pro-AFGE candidates endorsed



Over 150

Rallies and protests across the country



Are you ready to vote on Nov. 6th?

To find candidates AFGE has endorsed in your state, visit www.afge.org/Vote2018.



To plan your visit to the polls visit www.aflcio.org/Plan.

This Veterans Day We Honor the Service of Government Workers

Government workers are America's workforce. We all swear an oath to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." For more than one-third of us though, this is the second oath we've taken.

Veterans Day is November 11 and with more than 700,000 veterans in the federal workforce, it's important to know why these women and men decided to continue serving the public after their tours of duty ended. Here's what AFGE members say inspired them to become federal workers after leaving the military.

Karen Cummings – AFGE Local 0054

"When I became a civilian, I remained part of a valued team and decided to join public service to continue serving and providing selfless service to everyone. I believe it's important to keep serving to show my dedication and exhibit my Army values. The most rewarding thing is being an advocate for our patients and family members, ensuring patient safety at all times and making them comfortable."

Quentin Horn – AFGE Local 0236

"Growing up in New York without a dad made me figure things out myself – sometimes the hard way. I needed a job and learned I could better myself by

joining the military, so I did. I work hard daily to save taxpayer dollars while ensuring everyone gets fair treatment at the workplace."

Tonya Stonewell – AFGE Local 2657

"I served 15 years in the Army National Guard. I wanted to be able to continue serving and assisting in my civilian career as well. I went to school to be a social worker to specifically serve American veterans, and I'm proud of what I get to do."

Jerry Davies – AFGE Local 1709

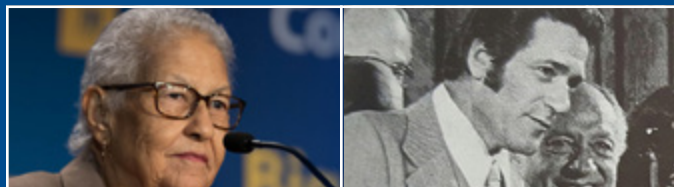


"I served 20 years in the military. In my tours of duty, I saw firsthand what we did for our community and the people. We are appreciated by so many people here and that support draws us tighter together as a city, state, and country."

Nancy Ali – AFGE Local 1228

"I was drawn to public service and specifically the Department of Veterans Affairs because I can help veterans. It is my way of supporting those who served before me, with me, and after me."

AFGE Mourns Loss of Two Iconic Labor Leaders



Our AFGE family suffered two incredible losses in October, as two of our most iconic former national officers died on Oct. 10.

Augusta Y. Thomas served as AFGE National Vice President for Women and Fair Practices from 2009 until August of this year, following 42 years of service to AFGE at the local and regional levels. Ken Blaylock served as AFGE national president

from 1976 to 1988, working to achieve passage of legislation ensuring collective bargaining rights for federal workers.

"Augusta Thomas was a tireless advocate for civil and human rights and an inspiration to everyone who knew her. Ken Blaylock was a visionary who laid the groundwork for building AFGE into the growing, diverse union we are today," AFGE National President J. David Cox Sr. said. "They were two of the finest leaders in our federation, and their contributions to the labor movement and to building a better world for current and future generations cannot be underestimated."

AFGE



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GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO**

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