



# NHHPA

NASA Headquarters  
Professional Association

IFPTE  
Local 9

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## An Introduction

# WELCOME NEW COLLEAGUES

- **What is the NASA Headquarters Professional Association (NHPA)?**
  - NHPA is the professional association/union of non-supervisory civil servant scientists and engineers, as well as certain clerical, administrative, and technical civil servants, employed at NASA HQ, Washington, DC.
  - NHPA has a voice on all matters affecting working conditions, including reorganizations, work schedules, office space, and personnel policy/procedures/practices.
  - Democratically run, non-profit, and non-partisan
  - Established 1984

# PURPOSE OF NHPA

- Meaningfully engage with management and policy makers to address issues relevant to our careers, NASA's mission, and the critical service we provide to taxpayers, the scientific community, industry – and all our stakeholders.
- With your support we can continue to:
  - partner with management to achieve NASA's mission and help employees succeed;
  - negotiate improvements of employee working conditions and help resolve issues;
  - support fair and objective evaluations;
  - advocate for training and professional development;
  - ensure no one has to compromise their professional integrity over politics or ideology;
  - develop a contract spelling out the rights and conditions of employment while ensuring flexibility and professional discretion to get our work done;
  - advocate for or against legislation and policies that currently or will in the future impact NASA and our profession.

# WHO IS THE IFPTE?

- **The International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)** is a nonprofit, employee-based organization made up of several autonomous affiliates, like the NHPA.
  - Provides support, guidance, resources, and a network to other similar organizations like our own
  - Advocates on behalf of more than 80,000 individuals in professional and technical occupations in the United States and Canada
  - Members are employed within the private, public, and federal sector
  - Balances the broad range of our members' interests by adhering to democratic processes and consensus decision-making
  - Unique in advocating on behalf of highly educated and skilled individuals
  - Structured so Local affiliates control their own affairs, such as their budget, goals, and, if they wish, to participate or refrain from advocacy or legislative engagement

# IFPTE LOCAL AFFILIATES

- **A few examples of employers where IFPTE has Local affiliates.**

( \* With NHPA, member of NASA Council of IFPTE Locals (NCIL) )

- NASA Ames (AFEU)\*
- NASA Glenn (LESA)\*
- NASA Goddard (GESTA)\*
- NASA Marshall (MESA)\*
- U.S. Department of Defense
- U.S. Department of Justice
- The Boeing Company
- U.S. Government Accountability Office
- Pacific Gas & Electric
- Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)
- U.S. Congressional Research Service
- U.S. Social Security Administration
- Kaiser Medical
- U.S. Department of Energy
- Ontario, Canada Electrical Industry
- U.S. Army Corp of Engineers
- Legal Service Corporation
- Economic Policy Institute

# IFPTE MEMBER OCCUPATIONS

- **A few examples of occupations of IFPTE members:**

- Judges
- Engineers
- Technicians
- Scientists
- Physicists
- Analysts
- Biologists
- Accountants
- Librarians
- Optometrists
- Administrative staff
- Economists
- Non-Profit Staff
- Attorneys
- Researchers
- Auditors
- Chemists

# DEFINITIONS

- **Bargaining Unit**
  - Employees in a given work setting and occupation who have recognized collective bargaining rights
  - There two bargaining units covered under NHPA at NASA HQ (\* see your SF-50 form, block 37):
    - Scientists and Engineers (1292\*) ~ 180 people
    - Clerical/Administrative/Technical (5929\*) ~320 people
- **Union Members**
  - Employees within the bargaining unit/s who have voluntarily decided to become members of NHPA to have a voice and say
    - Anyone in the bargaining unit can become a member
- **Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)**
  - The main contract negotiated between NASA HQ and NHPA over the terms and conditions of work that ensure all of us have say over challenges that come up or changes in policy

# LEGAL RIGHTS & BENEFITS

- When federal employees have recognized collective bargaining rights, the following apply:
  - **Representational Duties under 5 U.S.C. (Title 5 of United States Code Chapter 71, the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute), for all bargaining unit employees**
    - Bargaining the Impact and Implementation of new policies
    - Protecting bargaining unit employees from retaliation
    - Grievances and other dispute resolution approaches (goal is to find solutions)
    - Weingarten rights (Union representation during an investigation)
  - **Advocacy beyond your Agency**
    - OMB/OSTP – Budget Advocacy (prior to President’s Proposed Budget)
    - OPM – Civil Service Policy Advocacy (Benefits, Pay, Working Conditions)
    - Congress – Authorization and Appropriations, Federal Oversight
    - White House – Federal Policies in general
    - Public, media



# EXAMPLES OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Make suggestions** to management to improve our work environment
  - Over the years NHPA has been at the forefront of working with NASA HQ managers and HR personnel to make things better in areas such as telework, alternative work schedules, fare subsidies, and parking, just to name a few.
- **Resolve challenges** that come up through constructive discussions
  - Our goal is to resolve issues, not create them – as NASA employees, our interest is to achieve a fair and productive work setting. When issues come up, the NHPA can work with management early on to resolve challenges.
- **Negotiate** with management over our changes in working conditions
  - For example, if there is a reorganization, or even a reduction in force (RIF), NHPA would negotiate with management to protect employee rights and limit the impacts.
- **Advocate** for our members to legislators about work related issues
  - IFPTE and its members have worked to restore funding to neglected research areas and to remove work place practices that hamper scientific independence and professional integrity
  - NHPA and IFPTE representatives were out front during the 2019 Federal shutdown

# MEMBERSHIP / GOVERNANCE

- **Membership supports our good works – to benefit all of NASA HQ**
  - Runs and votes for elected union leadership positions
  - Negotiates and ratifies collective bargaining agreements and major internal decisions
  - Serves on committees that address certain issues
  - Access discounts and eligible for IFPTE scholarships
  - **Membership meetings typically 2nd Wednesday of month, 12 Noon**
- **Officers:**
  - Responsible for the administration of NHPA in accordance to the constitution and policies determined by the members
  - President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Stewards, Trustees: **Board typically meets bi-weekly**
  - Stewards assist bargaining unit employees with individual issues and concerns
- **Dues**
  - Only \$10 per pay period
    - Used to finance our organizational needs, which include, but not limited to: legal support, insurance, training, travel, office supplies/equipment, communications, and meetings.
    - Our dues money does **NOT** go to political candidates or Political Actions Committees (PACs)
- **Join by filling** out an **[NHPA application and SF-1187 form](#)**, found on our website  
**[www.nhpa.org/join](http://www.nhpa.org/join)**

# Q&A

- **What is the “value added” of membership?**
  - Through the network the NHPA provides, we gain a much boarder perspective of our agency, leading to new and better insights and solutions.
  - As individuals, we face limits in our influence on agency policies and decisions, but by working together as a unified group we have more sway in the eyes of management -- and legislators.
  - Members get access to benefits and discounts through UnionPlus, including special prices on phone plans, car rentals, insurance, movie and theme park tickets, and more. ( See <https://www.nhpa.org/resources.html> )
  - Active members can advocate for each other, and advise NASA management on policies and changes that impact our careers and the future of our agency.
- **Can membership advance my career?**
  - Yes, active members can gain a unique agency wide perspective of current issues and problems being worked. Those in NHPA leadership positions get to work on challenging issues with fellow employees and directly with management and can get training and invaluable leadership experience.
- **Does NHPA engage in politics?**
  - No – we are a politically neutral organization (we do not participate in partisan politics).
  - We do advocate to legislators over issues that impact our agency, similar to other professional associations.

# Q&A (CONT.)

- **How much involvement is required as a member?**
  - As much or as little as you want
    - Some members take on leadership roles, act as mentors, conduct research, and serve on committees. Working volunteers are critical to running our union, but we also understand not all members can or wish to do so.
  - Simply becoming a dues-paying member is more than enough to show your support and interest in improving NASA HQ
    - All we ask is that our members do their best to stay informed by reading emails, responding to surveys, and attending (in-person or teleconference) membership meetings.
- **How does the NHPA address employee workplace issues?**
  - Our goal is to resolve problems, not create conflict. We will consider the circumstances and merits of each case based on objective standards when advising the employee on how to proceed with their grievance.
  - A grievance is an official statement to the agency that either an individual, or the union, believe there has been a violation on part of the agency/management over a NASA/federal policy or our collective bargaining agreement.

# NASA HQ – NHPA COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

- Agreement finalized September 2020. <https://www.nhpa.org/resources.html>
- Key elements:
  - “By endorsement of this CBA, the Parties are committed to NASA mission success and the aspirational core values of safety, integrity, teamwork, excellence, and inclusion.”
  - Defines Employee, NHPA, and Management rights and responsibilities.
  - Codifies NHPA right to negotiate with NASA HQ management over workplace issues—**opens the door** to resolving issues and advancing employee interests.
  - Provides access to Alternative Dispute Resolution, e.g., mediation.
  - Defines the Grievance Procedure:
    - Key timelines: **Grievances must be filed within 15 days of event**. Deadline may be extended when the employee establishes that they were unaware of the circumstances leading to the grievance or were prevented by matters beyond their control from filing a timely grievance.

# NASA HQ – NHPA COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

- **CBA CONTENTS:**

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF AGREEMENT

1 AUTHORITY AND UNIT DESIGNATION

2 EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3 UNION RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4 MANAGEMENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5 UNION REPRESENTATIVES/OFFICIAL TIME

6 SERVICES TO UNION

7 CHANGES IN CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

8 DISCIPLINARY AND ADVERSE ACTIONS

9 ACTIONS BASED ON UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE

10 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

11 ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION FOR WORKPLACE DISPUTES

12 ARBITRATION

13 NOTICES TO EMPLOYEES/INFORMATION TO THE UNION

14 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

15 DURATION, MODIFICATIONS, AND TERMINATION OF THIS AGREEMENT

# THANK YOU

## Questions?

Contact us by email or our website online form

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