April 19, 2022 MAPE & DNR Meet and Confer

Review completed items – spreadsheet for tracking. Lots of tasks resolved.

Organization Health Team kickoff – proposal was 2 meetings per year with unions. Unions asked for more.

* May 5 or 10 for first meeting with mediator
* Assistant area Fisheries Classification Appeal – Managers submitted appeal. 4/8/2022 – appeal to Denise. Denise not present to share timeline. Denise said “next couple weeks” in email.
* Nursing Mothers in the Workplace update – Gov signed law stating nursing time is paid time. Doesn’t have to be during breaks.
  + Could DNR please share with supervisors and managers.
  + Could we revisit having a page on intranet with links to DLI.
  + Who would ensure that all spaces have nursing space? – Site coordinators are responsible. No master tracking sheet.
  + Could there be a list of pumping locations at all sites that staff can access, in case they are traveling. Barb and Adam said they weren’t aware of need.
  + Does DNR have a proactive plan? Or just as need arises.
* Adam said there is a draft of changes for intranet. Next 3 weeks to update.
  + Where will this go on the intranet?
* Barb suggests – need to get on same page about DNR obligations for pumping mothers under the law.
* Megan clarifies – there are needs under law, but we are also asking about proactive measures, is this something that DNR is thinking actively addressing.
* Needs Follow up – let’s get clear about legal obligation AND additional items to consider for nursing mothers.
* We have reports of what staff have been told – bathroom, use supervisors office etc… some examples where we don’t think this is in line with law.
* Small group meetings set up with Adam – parents in the workplace with nursing mothers component.

Telework Appeal form

* During appeal process… what does “telework agreement in place mean”? Contested agreement or other that was in place? Appeal process includes provision for division director or HR director to apply an interim schedule while appeal process is underway. Supervisors should be providing a couple of weeks for employees to make schedule transition. DNR recognizes need to clarify language.
* If someone wants to pursue asking division director or HR to make an interim adjustment, send request. Ask to DNR to put in language about this.
  + What type of circumstances would qualify for this sort of ask?
* Barb joined – shared example of someone who contacted her with sort of appeal. Disagreement between employee and supervisor about # of days. Employee has asked for extension of “effective date” due to previously planned days off. Supervisor may be getting feedback from their supervisor. Denise says “really is case by case”.
* Some interim measures need to go back to pre-covid procedures and that means there’s more of an in-office need. But sometimes employees don’t like these changes. Ie. Check cashing.
* How many appeals have been received? Denise doesn’t have any on her desk – she’s just heard of some from informal poll of supervisors.
* Ask – could there be a best practices guidance related to flexibility around “work in office days”?
* Barb – there’s a broader challenge that we have, not due to lack of trying. There’s a difference between peoples telework schedule under their agreement, and what they might do in any given week. Telework agreement is default. There are processes and culture and unique supervisor/employee communication procedures. We’ve never had a “specific way” that things need to happen. Hope we have a culture that allows flexibility within supervisor/employee communication.
* Policy allows for flexibility? DNR says yes.

Folks are wondering about communication around meeting front desk office needs.

Are we serving our customers if we have a greeter at the door but no subject matter updates on-site? At our larger offices, we’ll have to see how that goes. May need to look at our telework schedules of subject matter experts. Have looked at this with DDs and RDs. Barb thinks there is a system in place that meets current demands, but it’s an evolving process. If someone arrives at an office without an appt and need a person to answer their question, maybe that’s not a reasonable expectation.

How a particular region is planning to staff greeter function – gave RMTs charge to figure that out. Consider equity of burden on divisions, not all divisions have same amount of staff. Regions need to figure it out. R3 is unique because they held a vacancy and hopefully Grant is looking at that staffing.

Bottom line – CMO has established expectation of hours with co-located and regional offices. At small offices, similar to pre-covid, might not be staffed always.

**Wildfire topic**

Megan – are we ready to talk through some solutions?

Denise – we have clarity around main issues and proposed solutions. Have consulted with forestry and fire leadership. Take all these issues seriously. Care deeply about safety and health of employees.

-Can bundle issues and concerns into “MMB issues”, “not solution that MAPE proposed but alternate approach”, things in DNR discretionary realm that could be directly responsive to request and might meet DNR exact ask” categories.

-Reimbursement of safety footwear – on Adam’s plate, will send update to staff and supervisors. Have employees across bargaining units. Adam wants that update to be clear, helpful and comprehensive. Some folks may be “eligible” but what does that mean. Adam has been working with Safety (Ben Wood) – which boots meet requirements is in safety realm and guidance will provide more clarity.

Will this make clear that safety toe fireboots are included?

Purchasing becomes tricky because some boots are under state contract… this is a bit complex. Want to ensure employees and supervisors aren’t making purchasing violations.

* Hope to finalize this by ?? Adam working on it with safety and procurement, but in the meantime, folks can purchase and get reimbursed at $175.
* Can this go on the intranet? No clear answer. Communication plan not ironed out yet.

Options to address concerns that are different than proposed.

* On call staffing issues and staff fatigue and ability to take leave – forestry has been working on their planning and have begun “entertaining” vacation requests so they can build that into their planning for the season to achieve work/life balance.
  + Dan says MAPE wants more on this.

Issues of bargaining

* DNR doesn’t have ability to bargain things that are in master contract. Interest in going to MMB and asking for delegation to negotiate. DNR thinks there are other ways to address these issues. DNR doesn’t want to go to MMB to negotiate delegation.

Issues that can be addressed in DNR

Want to ensure folks have flexibility and build planning steps. Want employees to have avenues for addressing concerns. Want to build planning process for fire season.

On-call – in terms of paying for the 16 hours in compliance with contract. Discussed with fire leadership. Scheduling for 24 hours but only paying for 16 is the issue and “fire management is working on this”. Have to provide coverage for our fire dept partners and this is possibly the area where folks are on call for 24 hours. Goal will be to avoid this.

Megan – there are lots of complex issues about time off. Differences between contracts and positions. The issue isn’t flexibility, that’s part of the job, it’s unequal compensation for personal time that’s given up.

Denise – part of the issue is status of positions under FLSA. Are already moving people from exempt to non-exempt work for fire and this issue gets messy. Have been able to allow straight time overtime for exempt positions, but for the 1.5 time, would need to move people to non-exempt and that would cause legal issues with FLSA (fair labor standards act). That’s why trying to address through “flexibility planning” because it’s easier to address. Movement to non-exempt is fire work, but Denise thinks this doesn’t always end up being totally fire work.

Ask for some written clarity on this issue and we will provide written response for transparency. Denise will provide by end of week 4/22. Barb clarified that this will be comprehensive to all proposed solutions, not sure FLSA issue.

MOU need to expand 16 to 24 hours during non-exempt