

# Agenda: MNIT Meet & Confer

Date: 5/19/2021

## Introductions & Housekeeping

* Chad Thuet – HR Director; Brian Fitch – Labor Relations Mgr; Rachel Dopson – Labor Relations; LaNesha Bryant – Labor Relations; Dana Matson – Labor Relations; Greg Naumann – MN State Academies; Tyrone Plunkett – MNIT @ DHS; Tess Flom – MNIT @ BCA; Ben Blanchard – MNIT Enterprise; Lyz Martin – MAPE BA
* Moving past supplemental negotiations

## Agenda Items

### Student Loan Repayment

* MNIT Supplemental Agreement to the 2019-21 Contract indicates MNIT would establish a Student Loan Repayment Pilot
	+ Email sent to Jon Eichten and Chad Thuet May 6th with a follow up email May 12th – receipt of second email was acknowledged by Jon.
* When will MNIT staff be notified of the policy and/or inability to fund the program?

Response:

* Commissioner would like to move forward with the pilot, just heard this morning.
* Waiting on legislative outcome as far as budget, but MNIT management has developed a form and a draft communication to managers/supervisors, followed by communication to all staff.
	+ Communications will be sent before the end of the month, hopefully as early as next week.

### Return to Work Plans

* Email sent to all MNIT staff May 7th regarding Phase One – thank you for updating our staff
* What should an employee do if they are being told to return to the office despite being able to complete their work from home?
	+ Medical concerns for themselves or a family member
	+ Just generally concerned about the safety of being in an office
* Is there guidance on what an employee should do if someone in the household is exposed to Covid and needs to quarantine?
* Is there guidance on what an employee should do if their child(ren) need to be home for distance learning for a short time due to a Covid case in their classroom/school?

Response:

* Know that people are anxious to get more information on return to work plans. There are a lot of moving parts.
* Phase One will look much like the past 15 months. Remains that if you can telework, you must continue to do so.
* Business needs may dictate a need to be in the office. Managers should be understanding about employee needs and hope is for them to be flexible, but employees need to understand business needs.
* Have discussions with supervisor/manager about any concerns regarding return to work, exposure, childcare concerns.
* Will be somewhere in the middle of pre-Covid and mid-Covid.
* MNIT will come forward with more information as we move forward. Agencies will have plans which may influence MNIT plans at individual agencies. When there is a disagreement between the agency policy and MNIT policy, they will work through the CBTO to compromise.
* Jon Eichten has communicated with the deputies regarding MNIT’s return to work plans and there wasn’t much resistance.

### Job Postings

* We occasionally see job postings that are up over the weekend and just one business day (Job ID 45991). This makes it appear that the hiring manager already knows who they are going to select and keeps people from applying, potentially ruling out good candidates.
	+ Why is this acceptable? The contract requires a posting of 7 calendar days.

Response:

* Posting referenced (Job ID 45991) is a MNIT Trainee position. When those first started being posted, they were getting an overwhelming number of candidates. It became an unmanageable issue.
* MMB has provided an exception to allow for a shorter posting in instances like this. Sometimes there are exceptions made when positions have to be reposted because a candidate dropped out or something similar.
* Chad Thuet has to approve all postings with an exception to the contract requirements.

### Updates from Management

* Commissioner Tomes recognizes the culture of the agency and is excited to move forward with the Student Loan Repayment Pilot.
* Regarding return to work, MNIT will be taking an intentional 12-month period to see what the needs are across the Executive Branch.
	+ Will do everything possible to meet the needs of staff while also serving Minnesotans.
	+ Input from employees will be important, but information from business partners will be equally important.
* Engagement and Inclusion survey results will be shared soon.
	+ Improvements across the board comparing 2018 to 2020 (only one item did not show improvements).
	+ MNIT had higher ratings on every statement than other state agencies.
* Intercultural Development Inventory Pilot (Proof of Concept)
	+ Coordinated with state inclusion officer
	+ Will initially be 20 MNIT employees. There are 5 trained administrators.
	+ Cross-cultural assessment of inter-cultural competence
	+ Used by thousands of companies.
	+ Will assess how each person’s intercultural development stands and what can be done to grow that in order to improve our Connected Culture.
	+ More information will be distributed in the future.
* Achievement Awards are back
	+ Already have over 200 nominations.
	+ Many employees will receive a monetary award by the end of the fiscal year.