

Take the NTEU Challenge

Get to Know Your NTEU-IRS Contract — Performance Awards —

Performance awards not only offer additional compensation for deserving IRS employees, but they also provide extra points for promotions and can even increase employees' pensions. In this quiz, third in a series on your new contract, NTEU takes a close look at your rights in the crucial area of performance awards.

Which of the following rights are included in Article 18 (Performance Awards) of the NTEU contract? Check your responses with the answers on the back page.

	<u>In</u>	<u>Not In</u>
1. While the average federal agency only budgets 0.9 percent of its total annual salary funding for employee awards, the NTEU contract requires IRS management to distribute 1.6 percent of the total annual salary budget—or approximately \$50 million a year.	___	___
2. Cash awards go to employees with the highest annual performance ratings.	___	___
3. In addition to cash awards, the contract requires IRS management to distribute an extra step increase each year to approximately 4 percent of the workforce.	___	___
4. The contract requires that employees asked to use their bilingual skills on a regular basis receive an award of at least \$350.	___	___
5. Employees who earn cash awards can convert them into time off instead of taking the cash.	___	___
6. Employees whose suggestions are accepted are entitled to 25 percent of the savings the idea produces for the IRS in the first year.	___	___
7. NTEU receives data that enables it to “audit” the awards program each year, including data on awards given to managers.	___	___
8. The only option for employees who do not receive an award is to talk to their managers.	___	___

Answers:

1. **IN** your contract. See Art. 18, Section 1A1.
NTEU has negotiated for \$20 million more than the government average in awards for IRS employees.
2. **IN** your contract. See Art. 18, Section 2A.
This establishes a guarantee for top-performing employees.
3. **IN** your contract. See Art. 18, Section 2B1.
Under this clause, thousands of employees are entitled to a three-percent permanent salary increase each year.
4. **IN** your contract. See Art. 18, Section 5.
While bilingual employees can get even higher awards for performance, this clause establishes a floor to reward them for using extras skills on the job.
5. **IN** your contract. See Art. 18, Sections 4B.
Some NTEU members would prefer more time off rather than cash, and this clause gives the individual employee that option.
6. **IN** your contract. See Art. 18, Sections 3D.
This is true for employees who submit ideas through the formal suggestion program. In fact, NTEU has already taken one employee's claim to arbitration to enforce his right to thousands of dollars.
7. **IN** your contract. See Art. 18, Section 1B.
NTEU's professional staff in Washington, D.C., crunches these numbers to ensure the program's accuracy and based on the 2005 data, filed a national grievance winning employees an extra \$5 million in awards owed to them.
8. **NOT IN** your contract.
Your best option is to see a local NTEU representative because they have data even your manager does not. He or she can review that data with you and help you make the best presentation possible to your manager—either informally or through a grievance. Thousands of employees received more award money in 2005 as a result of grievances.

Be sure you know your rights and see an NTEU representative for help enforcing them.

NTEU. Working for you.

Look for the next NTEU quiz on the Family Medical Leave article coming soon.