

Agreement on 7 FAM 1300 Appendix AA Systems Outages and Disruptions

The parties to this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are the National Federation of Federal Employees, Local 1998 (NFFF) and the Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Passport Services (PPI). The parties have exchanged proposals on the instructions contained in two upcoming revisions of 7 FAM 1300 Appendix AA. The Parties recognize that, without ameliorative measures, system disruptions or outages may impact the organization's ability to meet its mission and employee's ability to meet their performance standards. Some of the directives in 7 FAM 1300 Appendix AA are intended to mitigate the impact that system disruptions or outages may otherwise have on an employee's ability to adjudicate passport applications or meet his or her performance standards. This agreement settles all outstanding issues related to this matter.

1. The Agency affirms that short-term outages and disruptions carry equal weight when determining the amount of system downtime to record in MIS. The Agency will clarify the word "outage" in 7 FAM 1320 Appendix AA, section b, to say "disruption".
2. Agency/center management must notify passport specialists promptly about whether any or all the day will be counted as measurable (for tasks containing minimum production requirements) when a short-term or long-term outage occurs, and not just for systems disruptions as listed in 7 FAM 1300 Appendix AA section b.
3. This notification will generally occur within 2 hours of the disruption or outage. If the outage or disruption happens within the last two hours of a typical agency or center business day or shift, the notification can be made during the first two hours of the next business day or start of shift. If at all possible, the notification should happen before specialists are required to certify their MIS record for a day that the outage occurred. Outages that also impact management's ability to notify BUEs of these disruptions and outages, e.g. e-mail outages, network interruptions, power outages, are examples of reasonable reasons for the notification to be delayed.
4. When the Agency does not promptly advise Passport Specialists about whether or not a day is measurable, those specialist that reported systems outages/latency for a given day are granted an extension on entering MIS until the Agency's notification on measurability for the day in question is provided.
5. Any such notification generated by provision 2 of this agreement will also include which systems may be bypassed by Passport Specialists. Since outages of particular systems at particular locations may be infrequent, agency/center management is encouraged to, but not required to, cite or provide a cut/paste of the relevant FAM section that gives instructions on how to bypass the impacted system so that there is a clear

understanding of each employee's responsibilities. In the interest of communication, cooperation, and meeting the organization's mission, specialists should keep management informed as systems become active after disruptions and management should keep specialists informed of information regarding systems disruptions or outages, as appropriate.

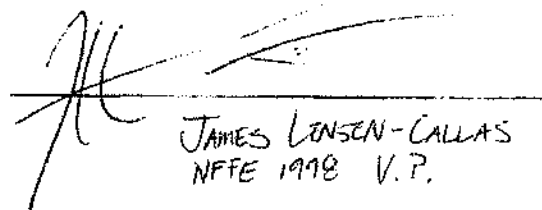

6. The Agency affirms that specialists are only required to update TDIS text during FR disruptions when they are suspending an application pursuant to 7 FAM 1343.2 Appendix AA (2)(b). Specialists must also follow the notations requirements listed in 7 FAM 1343 Appendix AA section c, subsection 3, part b. If the Agency eventually requires a standardized notation when there is a systems outage, it will bargain, if appropriate.
7. The Agency and the Union recognizes that system disruptions or outages affect individual employees differently, and recorded system downtime or unmeasurable time in MIS may fluctuate from employee to employee based on how each employee experiences the outage or disruption. If a specialist is able to access systems that are disrupted or down for others, even if they have been notified that that system is down by management, they will record their time in MIS as they would if there was no systems outage. The Agency recognizes that certain systems may become functional for some specialists before others and will consider specialists claims for additional system outage time. Specialists experiencing longer outages should keep their supervisor informed of what they are experiencing as provided in Article 18 of the Master Agreement. Passport Specialists are encouraged to report systems problems in the appropriate MIS category, as well as in the "comments" portion of MIS.
8. The Union affirms that notification of any documented system disruptions or outages by management does not mean a specialist must record system downtime in MIS if their systems are not down, nor does it prevent the specialist from accurate record keeping as described in Article 18 of the CBA, as this agreement is not meant to alter the intent of Article 18.
9. If there are future changes to 7 FAM 1300 Appendix AA, the Agency will follow Article 12, Section 9(a), as appropriate.

For the Agency



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