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## **MET INTERNS TO RECEIVE LOST OVERTIME WAGES AS A RESULT OF AN NWSEO GRIEVANCE**

NWS has sustained a grievance filed on behalf of over 200 Met Interns, which alleged that that management violated the Fair Labor Standards Act by failing to pay interns true time-and one-half for their overtime work. Met Interns who worked overtime during the past two years will receive the difference between the reduced overtime pay they received and “FLSA overtime,” computed at one and one-half times their regular hourly rate (which will include non-foreign COLA). In addition, affected interns will receive an additional amount, equal to their lost overtime wages, as “liquidated damages” to compensate them for the effects of not receiving their proper overtime pay.

This grievance was filed in the aftermath of the arbitration case in which the union sought career ladder promotions for met interns for journeyman forecaster positions. Met Interns have historically been exempted from the FLSA by the NWS because they were ostensibly covered by the exemption for “professional” employees, like the forecasters. But during that hearing, NWS senior managers testified that the “primary duty” of the met interns in the National Weather Service is to perform the duties of a meteorological technician – who are covered by the FLSA and receive true time and one-half overtime pay because their duties are non-professional. In his decision denying the claim that Met Interns are entitled to career ladder promotions, Arbitrator Vaughn found, based on NWS testimony, that:

“The record demonstrates that the Met Interns, . . . share many of the same duties and responsibilities as the Hydrometeorological Technicians, (a paraprofessional position), do not involve independent forecasting responsibilities (as General Forecasters have) and are considered a paraprofessional position within the organization.”

Following the April 28 hearing in that case, NWSEO filed a new grievance alleging that the NWS was violating the FLSA because if the interns allegedly perform the same work as the HMTs, they should receive the same FLSA classification, which is based solely on job duties - not job titles or the employee’s education.

For a full copy of the letter from NWS Labor Relations Management, [click here](#).