

Work load committee gathering evidence



Sytsma and Webb agree on workload committee.

Assistance workers -- and OSEA members -- in Adult and Family Services will have a direct role in support of an AFS budget issue which lowers assistance caseloads from 138 to 123.

Four assistance workers join four managers on an agency committee to try to document those things that have occurred to the job of assistance workers since the legislature set the 138-caseload standard, said AFS field operations manager Leonard Sytsma.

The committee, chaired by Lane regional manager Kim Scranton, includes OSEA

members Donna Bowers from Klamath Falls; Frankie Dunlap, Central Point, and Fred Simmons, Roseburg. In addition to Scranton, the managers on the committee are North Salem branch manager June Hughes and Woodburn WAW supervisor Fred Ruiz. Another worker and another manager will be added so that representation will come from the Multnomah, Marion, Lane and Jackson regions of AFS.

This committee, thought to be the first of its kind in AFS, is a result of a year and a half long effort on the part of OSEA members in AFS and OSEA staff members to do something

about the overwhelming assistance caseloads in the agency. In a conversation recently with OSEA Director of Field Services Gordon Webb, Sytsma was careful to say that he does not plan to run the agency by putting everything out to a "townhall-type vote." But, he said, "we need to have an analysis of activities that have happened since the 138 standard was set up." Sytsma said he has heard assistance workers say that theirs has become a far more complicated job; he says he is saying, "Okay, document that."

In an Aug. 14 memo to the committee members and others, Sytsma said "AFS has submitted a budget issue to reduce the ADC caseload budgeting standard from 138 cases to 123. We have also initiated other budget issues to increase staff in relation to caseload. It is necessary to study the workload involved for each case in order to support these budget issues."

The committee has a Nov. 30 deadline to submit its report. The next meetings are set for Sept. 13 and 14 in the Lane County regional office.

Previously, caseload issues have been handled on a grievance by grievance basis and the OSEA-AFS agency contract says that as directives and other things which affect the workload are issued, employees shall have the work plans adjusted accordingly. OSEA job representative Webb and OSEA Employee Representative Phil Deas have been constrained in what they could accomplish by




On OSEA's AFS workload committee are Bowers, seated in center, Simmons, right. They go over plans with staffers Webb and Deas, standing. A third member of the committee, Frankie Dunlap, is not shown.

the legislatively-enacted caseload standard of 138.

The labor-management committee is the first step of a direct assault on the caseload standard itself. The OSEA members on the committee will

be getting in touch with job representatives in each AFS branch to gather evidence for the justification; OSEA members everywhere will watch the committee to judge its success.



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