

18 February 2011 - Letter to NARR Membership

Dear NARR Members,

Thanks to the fantastic bridge-building accomplished by our immediate past president Barry, communication with the NMB continues to improve. To that end, Roland Watkins and the arbitration staff invited me to Washington for a “heart to heart” in December. We covered many of the issues that create friction and delays during the processing of our paper work. We made some huge progress in shedding light on how NARR members can help the arbitration staff help us.

I will be following this letter up with additional information as I get it. Meantime, here are some suggestions that will greatly improve our interaction with the arbitration staff, and may avoid some of the time-consuming errors we run into (and I am certainly among those who need help on this score!).

1. It is helpful if we send in our Form 6 request for work and travel – properly labeled for the month in the subject line of the e-mail and on the document name – as a separate e-mail from our other forms. This helps the request get acknowledged properly and promptly.
2. For NRAB awards: We are supposed to send NRAB awards to Linda and Kim at nrab_inbox@nmb.gov (that’s an underscore between nrab and inbox) rather than to arb@nmb.gov. SBA and PLB awards go to arb@nmb.gov. (This was news to me, as well, but makes terrific sense.)
3. We need to keep our resumes updated if they have been changed. You can do this by sending an entirely new correct resume to arb@nmb.gov. The NMB also asks if we can limit them to two pages (for us former academics, that’s positively painful). Most important, keep in mind that these are **publicly accessible documents**, so do NOT include any private or EEO sensitive information (age, date of graduation, SSN, etc.).
4. Check the NMB web site for cases to see what has been assigned and/or approved for you to hear. That way you can notify the NMB of any discrepancies, and won’t get caught in a six month bind for a case you never heard. Also, notify the NMB when a case is withdrawn or held for third-party notification. Remember that what is on the web site is in the NMB official records. (The NMB version of wysiwyg).

I’ll follow this letter up with another next month. Now that the lines of communication are open (again, thanks to Barry) feel free to send me an e-mail with a question or contact Carol Conrad (Conrad@nmb.gov) directly.

Think spring!

Betsy