SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
TWO LANDMARK SQUARE
SUITE 105
STAMFORD, CT 06901

# FAX COVER SHEET

FAX TELEPHONE NUMBER (203)975-1966

DATE: 8/15/07

TO: GS
(Addressee Name)

(Location)

(Phone Number)

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: FYI

FROM:

Number of Pages including Cover Sheet

FOR RETRANSMISSION CALL: (203) 359-9224

# SOCIAL SECURITY

Area Director I
O'Neill Federal Building, Room 432
Boston, MA 02222-1037
Telephone: 617-565-5530
Fax: 617-523-4594

August 6, 2007

Mr. Edward Myer
AFGE Local 1164 Area Vice President
Social Security Administration
2 Landmark Square
Suite 105
Stamford CT 06901

Dear Mr. Myer,

This letter transmits my decision in the Section 10 grievance filed on June 22, 2007 regarding your allegation that management officials in Connecticut are imposing a dress code on minority and lower graded employees. I met with you in New London CT on July 11, 2007 for your presentation.

Your grievance alleges that management in New Haven and Hartford have "selectively targeted individuals and ignored others". You contend that management has violated the Contract Article 3, Section 2 (A); Article 18, Section 1: Article 24, Section 10. In your written presentation, you allege that management is using the dress code to harass minority employees.

You expressed a very serious concern that only minority and lower graded employees were being held accountable to this dress code. This allegation of discriminatory behavior led me to discuss your allegations with the managers of CT. In several instances, management has given me examples of higher graded, non-minority employees with whom the same discussions have been held. In fact, last year, a non-minority claims representative filed a grievance regarding her manner of dress. I am convinced that the standard of dress is being administered fairly and evenly without regard to sex, race or position.

You made some very specific allegations about management behaviors which I have also investigated.

1) "In Waterbury, Pat Serafin walked up to 2 employees in particular and adjusted their shirts and made comments about what they wear." Ms. Serafin

denies ever touching any of the employees, or commenting about what they wear by touching their shirts.

2) "Hartford, Sal Anello, was heard to say in a recent staff meeting that if he had his way women would be dressed in blouses, skirts, and pearls." Mr. Anello never said this.

3) "In New Haven.....management in that office turns a blind eye to one of their own".... There is no evidence that management has violated its own standards. Management denies any issue with "open toed shoes". It is true that employees, both minorities and non-minorities have been asked to remove their flip-flops, sneakers, and jean jackets.

After a thorough investigation, I am convinced that the managers in CT hold their employees to dress and appearance that meet the requirements of the Annual Personnel Reminders. You have accurately quoted the Annual Personnel Reminders in your written presentation. Each of the managers has determined acceptable dress for work in their service area. This results in a variety of expectations from office to office. While they are not *prescribing a dress code*, they are making the determination of what is acceptable dress in the workplace using the criteria in the Standards of Conduct that appear in SSA's Annual Personnel Reminders. This is nothing new.

I have determined that there is no "dress code" being applied in the field offices in Ct, therefore there is no violation of the Contract articles stated above. For this reason, the grievance is denied.

Ellen Scopa

Ellen Scopa
Area Director 1