

1 Article 20

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3 Child Care

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6 Section 1. Policy and Purpose

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8 This article addresses the child care needs of SSA employees. The parties
9 recognize that working parents/personal primary caregiver may have special
10 child care needs during working hours. The parties recognize the need for such
11 parents to secure appropriate child care arrangements. SSA, hereafter referred
12 to as the Agency, will continue its efforts to secure adequate funding in order to
13 support and foster child care services for its employees, consistent with this
14 Agreement and SSA's funding policy.

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17 Section 2. Child Care Activities

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19 The Agency will continue to provide and/or support various activities in order to
20 meet ongoing child care needs. These may include, but are not limited to, such
21 things as child care and parenting information, child care resource and referral
22 information, workshops, and counseling as available through the Employee
23 Assistance Program.

24

25 It is the Agency's intention to utilize available funds nationwide to foster local
26 solutions to child care needs. These may include construction of onsite facilities
27 or near-site facilities, participation in shared facilities with other federal Agencies,
28 establishment of mini-centers or other child care services. The Agency will
29 continue to work with GSA to establish child care services.

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31 In accordance with P.L. 101-509 of the 1991 GSA Appropriations Act, the
32 Agency agrees to pay legally permissible expenses for training, conferences or
33 other meetings in connection with the provision of child care services for Agency
34 employees who have oversight responsibilities for the operation of child care
35 facilities; e.g., members of local child care committees, board of directors, etc., if
36 the Agency determines such training, etc., is relevant and necessary.

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38 The head of each installation or the appropriate designee will provide inquiring
39 employees with current listings of the qualified, licensed child care centers in the
40 immediate area. Recognizing that a broad range of child care needs exists, in
41 compiling such listings, Management will request specific information; e.g., age
42 groups served, types of program offered, and special needs programs.

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45 Section 3. National Child Care Committee

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47 The National SSA/AFGE Child Care Committee will be comprised of one
48 representative from each national component of AFGE and an appropriate
49 number of management members. The Committee will meet for ~~one week~~ **two**
50 **days** (or longer by mutual agreement) at least annually (or more often by mutual
51 agreement). ~~These~~ **This** meetings will **utilize appropriate technology, as**
52 **determined by management** ~~take place at a mutually agreeable location.~~

53

54 The major purpose of the Committee will be to monitor all child care activities and
55 provide recommendations to the Agency on child care options/solutions for SSA
56 offices such as construction, consortium, resource/referral activities, educational
57 programs, emergency drop-in child care (occasional care), sick child care, school
58 age program, etc. The Committee will gather, analyze and share information on
59 child care activities with the local child care committees. This information may
60 include, but is not limited to, the status of current activities, availability of funds,
61 and results of surveys and/or feasibility studies. The Committee will also
62 research the availability of grant monies and other fund raising alternatives, etc.
63 In addition, the Committee will provide guidance to local child care committees.

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65 Based on a consensus, Committee recommendations will be forwarded to the
66 Deputy Commissioner for Human Resources for a decision. At the same time, a
67 copy of the recommendations will be forwarded to the Spokesperson, AFGE/SSA
68 General Committee. Agency decisions, including rationale, will be forwarded to
69 the Committee within a reasonable timeframe, not to exceed 90 days.

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71 The Agency will have subject matter experts available to meet with the
72 Committee on an as needed basis.

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74 **The six** Union representatives on the Committee will be authorized official time in
75 accordance with Article 30. ~~SSA will pay travel and per diem expenses for the~~
76 ~~six Union representatives' participation at Committee meetings.~~

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78 The Agency will consider sending some members of the National Child Care
79 Committee to the annually sponsored GSA Child Care conference. The Agency
80 will pay travel and per diem for any union representative approved to attend the
81 conference. Official time will be handled in accordance with Article 30.

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84 Section 4. Local Child Care Committees

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86 When a site for an SSA Child Care Center is selected, the parties will establish a
87 local committee comprised of one management representative, one Union
88 representative, parents and other parties as appropriate. The Agency will have
89 subject matter experts available to meet with the Committee on an as needed
90 basis. The Committee will guide development of the local child care program,
91 including development of marketing strategies, operating procedures, and
92 admission priorities. If SSA participates in a GSA sponsored child care

93 committee, SSA will consider a union nominee to be a SSA representative on the
94 committee.

95

96 The local Committee will forward copies of information concerning these issues
97 to the National Child Care Committee. The local Committee will have the
98 opportunity to review and make recommendations which will be considered in the
99 design of the facility. The Committee will participate in the selection of the child
100 care provider. Any unresolved issues shall be referred to the National Child Care
101 Committee. Once the center becomes operational, the Committee will be
102 replaced by a Board of Directors which the Committee will assist in establishing.
103 The Union will designate one representative to serve on the Board of Directors.
104 Union representatives on the Committee will be authorized official time in
105 accordance with Article 30. Non-Union Committee members will be allowed
106 necessary administrative time, consistent with the needs of the Agency, to
107 participate in Committee activities.

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110 Section 5. Employee Needs

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112 The Agency agrees to grant emergency annual leave requests and to consider
113 emergency requests for leave without pay brought about by unexpected changes
114 in child care arrangements contingent upon operational emergency unless
115 management determines that the employee's request is not an emergency and

116 that the presence of the employee is necessary to meet current and immediate
117 work requirements.

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119 The Agency agrees to utilize programs which may assist employees with child
120 care needs; for example part-time employment, job sharing, leave, flextime, etc.

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122 The Agency recognizes that it may be necessary for employees to contact child
123 care providers during duty hours.

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126 Section 6. Facilities

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128 In accordance with 40 U.S.C. ~~490(b)~~ **590**, the Agency will provide space,
129 equipment, furnishings and other services that the Agency determines necessary
130 to support the operation of each SSA child care facility.

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133 Section 7. Miscellaneous

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135 The parties agree that this Article will not delay or impact on any pending child
136 care initiatives. The Union will be kept informed of the child care initiatives.