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**Preamble**

This Agreement is entered into by and between the Social Security Administration (hereinafter referred to as SSA or the Employer) and the American Federation of Government Employees (hereinafter referred to as the Union or AFGE).

The parties mutually recognize that the Congress of the United States has expressed public policy concerning labor relations in the Federal Government as follows:

"...the right of employees to organize, bargain collectively and participate through labor organizations of their own choosing in decisions which affect them, safeguards the public interest, contributes to the effective conduct of the public business, and facilitates and encourages the amicable settlement of disputes between employees and their employers involving conditions of employment; and the public interest demands the highest standards of employee performance and the continued development and implementation of modern and progressive work practices to facilitate and improve employee performance and the

23           efficient accomplishment of the operations of the  
24           government."

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26   Therefore, labor organizations and collective bargaining in the civil service are in  
27   the public interest. (5 U.S.C. 71)

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29   **The parties agree that a mutual commitment to cooperation promotes both**  
30   **the efficiency of the Agency's operations and the well being of the**  
31   **employees.**

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33   **The parties agree that the dignity of employees will be respected in the**  
34   **implementation and application of this agreement as well as related**  
35   **personnel policies and practices.**

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38   Pursuant to this policy, the parties have agreed upon the various articles  
39   hereinafter set forth. This Agreement constitutes a Collective Bargaining  
40   Agreement between the Social Security Administration and the American  
41   Federation of Government Employees.

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