

Arbitrator orders AT&T Mobility to pay nearly \$300,000 back pay to 6 wrongfully laid off CWA members

When AT&T Mobility laid off Information System Technicians in Dallas, Texas in May 2007 for a reduction in force, the company did not implement the layoffs in seniority order as required by the contract. As a result, six high-seniority CWA members who should not have been laid off lost their jobs. CWA notified the company of its error by filing a grievance, but the company refused to settle the grievance, so CWA took the case to arbitration. After conducting hearings and studying the written briefs of the company and Union lawyers, the arbitrator ruled that the company violated the contract. He ordered the company to reinstate the senior employees who were laid off out of line of seniority and pay them full back pay for their lost wages. They returned to their jobs in June 2009, but the company did not cooperate with CWA in determining the amounts of back pay to which the 6 members were entitled. At CWA's insistence the arbitrator then conducted more hearings to determine the amounts of backpay the company owed the 6 CWA members. In February 2010 the arbitrator issued his final award, ordering the company to pay the 6 members back pay in amounts ranging from \$13,825.31 to \$99,479.55. Two of the awards were over \$90,000 each and the total amount awarded was \$288,423.47. The six reinstated Union members have now received their back pay, and have learned "up close and personal" what a real contract and arbitration can do.