



Union Settles Illegal Transfer of TEA III

The union settled a grievance filed on behalf of a Local 983 member, Gary Pearson, who the Police Department wrongfully transferred from the Queens Tow Pound, where he had worked for nearly 30 years,

to the Manhattan Tow Pound. The settlement paid him a lump sum of \$1,250.

Pearson had 36 years' experience as a NYPD Traffic Enforcement Agent Level III and as a heavy duty tow operator. Believing that he was wrongfully transferred, he called the union. "By sticking with the union, members can accomplish anything," said Marvin Robbins, Vice President of Local 983.

Robbins and DC 37 lawyer Dena Klein handled the case. The union believed the TEA III was transferred without justification and that the transfer constituted wrongful discipline. The union filed a wrongful transfer grievance in 2019 shortly after NYPD moved Pearson to the Manhattan Tow Pound, which was very far from his home. He also stopped receiving the pay differential for operating the heavy-duty tow truck. The member had received written command disciplines by the NYPD right before the transfer.

NYPD management tried to justify the transfers.

NYPD claimed that the Manhattan Pound needed more heavy-duty tow operators, however, upon his transfer, it did not give him any shifts operating the heavy-duty truck. Also they pressured the heavy-duty tow operators to meet tow quotas, union leaders said.

The union pushed back. "Quotas are not part of the job," Robbins explained. "Our members get paid by the hour, not by the tow."

Pearson retired prior to the arbitration hearings beginning, but he "refused to give up the fight," said Robbins. "He came back to testify at the hearings."

TEA IIIs earn about \$46,500 a year to start. After 15 years of service the annual salary climbs to \$59,000 with benefits. Heavy-duty tow operators also earn a \$200 weekly differential, an additional \$10,000 a year, for towing very large vehicles and trucks.

"We did not give up. Even though this member retired, we protected his rights," said Local 983 President Joe Puleo. The local leaders urge members who believe they are wrongfully transferred to call the union. Puleo said, "When union members stick together and fight, we win!"