



# Local 300

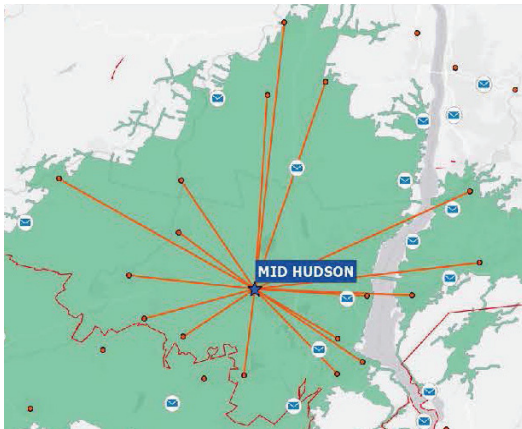
## Mail Handler News

National Postal Mail Handlers Union, AFL-CIO

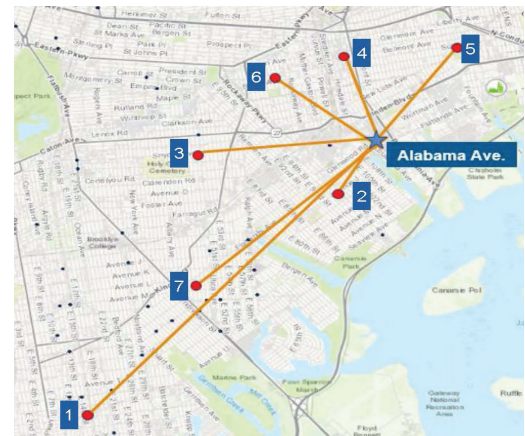
Winter  
2023

## Postal Service Network Redesign Delivery Operations

Mid Hudson, NY-SDC



Brooklyn SDC-Foot/Parcel Routes



## Mail Processing

Wave 1 RPDC Sites						
Region	City	State	Project Type	Project Start	GO-LIVE	# Months
US-R-0002	Sandston	VA	RESTACK	12/2/2022	7/28/2023	7
US-R-0003	North Houston	TX	RESTACK	1/13/2023	8/4/2023	6
US-R-0005	Santa Clarita	CA	RESTACK	2/10/2023	9/1/2023	6
US-R-0009	Bethpage	NY	RESTACK	3/10/2023	9/29/2023	6
US-R-0008	Gastonia	NC	NEW	6/10/2022	10/6/2023	15
US-R-0004	Greensboro	NC	NEW	1/9/2023	10/6/2023	8
US-R-0011	Jersey City	NJ	RESTACK	3/24/2023	1/13/2024	9
US-R-0001	Palmetto	GA	NEW	5/27/2022	3/1/2024	21
US-R-0010	Forest Park	IL	RESTACK	8/1/2022	3/1/2024	19
US-R-0012	Indianapolis	IN	NEW	5/27/2022	3/15/2024	21
US-R-0007	Portland	OR	RESTACK	4/14/2023	3/22/2024	11

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# **President's Report**

*By Kevin Tabarus*

## **President's Report**

There have been many issues affecting our membership since our last newsletter. Here are some updates on what has been going on around Local 300.

## **Postmaster General DeJoy Ten-Year Plan**

The current Postmaster General (PMG) had introduced his 10-year plan to Congress. He has slowed mail delivery for first class mail. Much of first-class mail that was transported on airplanes, is now being moved with trucks.

Initially, there were plans to realign mail processing having some plants only process parcels and others only process letters and flats. Now these plans have changed again! We do expect the Postal Service to face a major restructuring of the delivery & mail processing network. Future plans have not been fully discussed. Currently, there are no locations facing closing or consolidations in Local 300. We will be vigilant and prepared for any proposed closures or consolidations.

With the USPS Ten-Year Plan, management hopes to improve service and ensure financial stability. The major points of the 10-year plan include: (1) a commitment to 6/7 day delivery, (2) new delivery vehicles, (3) planning for package volume growth, (4) establishing 46 package support annexes, (5) stabilizing the non-career workforce while retaining benefits, (6) consolidating and standardizing mail processing network operations, (7) post plan -retail improvements, (8) increased utilization of ground transportation versus air transportation, (9) service standard modifications that include new 4 & 5 day delivery standards, (10) postal reform, and (11) acquiring postage rate flexibility.

PMG also wants to lower overtime, improve working

conditions by updating buildings, purchase new mail processing machinery, **and realign the mail network.** Such realignment will include both delivery and mail processing.

## **Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DCs)**

In July of 2022, we were notified of the Postal Service's intent to create Sorting and Delivery-Centers (S&DCs) consistent with the Postmaster General's 10-year plan, Delivery for America.

The Postal Service has stated that the purpose of creating the S&DCs is to reduce transportation and mail handling costs, as well as providing customers with additional services. The S&DCs will additionally allow for easier standardization and management of operations while improving building and operating conditions for the employees, as claimed by the PMG.

The Union was told that the S&DCs will be comprised of individual post office delivery units that are consolidated into one central location. Retail operations will not be moved from the current offices (for now). The Postal Service said that it initially identified existing facilities with excess empty space. USPS then identified the offices with city and rural routes that were within 30 minutes of one-way travel time. The offices must also have sufficient parking space to accommodate all the additional employees and routes. A total of 928 facilities of the approximate 30,000 existing delivery offices were initially identified as possible S&DC locations. These locations were then sorted and ranked by highest opportunity to be considered for a S&DC location.

**Mid Hudson P&DC** (Newburgh, NY) was initially identified as one of the first new SDCs. This would combine delivery operations from 17 nearby offices into one location. In July, the plan was to implement the Mid Hudson SDC prior to the start

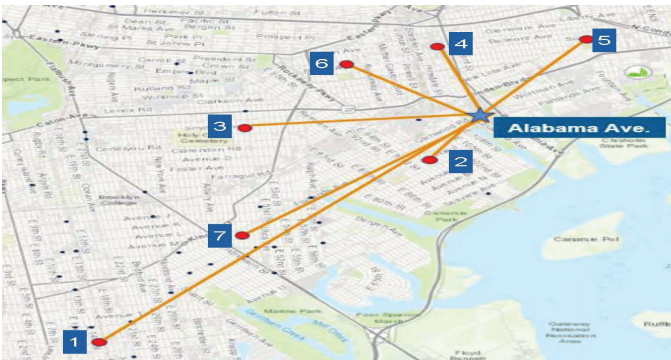


of election season and peak season in 2022. Now, these plans have been delayed with no set date for implementation.



**Brooklyn SDC – Alabama Ave** shall be operational this peak season. This location is for Foot/Parcel routes combined from 7 nearby locations. The building has a new SIPs machine to process parcels.

We project to gain work with the SDCs. Combining various delivery operations into one location creates consistent Mail Handler work. Many of the SDCs will have parcel sorters (ADUS, SDUS, or SIPS). There are no current plans to create additional SDCs in the Local 300 area at this time.



### **Regional Processing and Distribution Centers (RPDCs)**

Consistent with the Postmaster General's 10-year plan, Delivery for America, the Postal Service also intends to create Regional Processing and Distribution Centers (RPDCs).

The RPDCs are also intended to reduce transportation and mail handling costs, as well as providing customers with better service. The RPDCs will additionally allow for easier standardization and management of operations, while improving building and operating conditions for the employees, as claimed by the PMG.

Wave 1 RPDC Sites						
Region	City	State	Project Type	Project Start	GO-LIVE	# Months
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US-R-0011	Jersey City	NJ	RESTACK	3/24/2023	1/13/2024	9
US-R-0001	Palmetto	GA	NEW	5/27/2022	3/1/2024	21
US-R-0010	Forest Park	IL	RESTACK	8/1/2022	3/1/2024	19
US-R-0012	Indianapolis	IN	NEW	5/27/2022	3/15/2024	21
US-R-0007	Portland	OR	RESTACK	4/14/2023	3/22/2024	11

We have been told that the RPDCs will be comprised of individual processing and distribution centers that are consolidated into one central mega location. The only information that we have been provided on the RPDCs is only one piece of paper of "Wave 1" for RPDC Sites. This one-page document lists 11 sites with projected start and go live dates. Obviously, these dates are subject to change.

There are 2 Local 300 locations on the "Wave 1 RPDC" list, Jersey City (NJ-ND) and Bethpage. This is the only official information we have. We do not know the full extent of impacts to our members at this time, nor have we been told how it will affect plans within the region. The mail processing network will have major changes. Be assured that the NPMHU shall fully enforce the terms and conditions of the National Agreement to protest any adverse changes.

### **New Machinery and Technology**

#### **Autonomous Guided Vehicles (AGVs)**

AGVs are the new version of the self-driven Power Industrial Vehicles (PIVS) that the Postal Service has been testing for the last several years in various postal facilities. There have been earlier versions of AGVs used or tested in different facilities since at least the 1980s. Three technologies are used with the new version of AGVs: Vision Guidance (Cameras on the AGV, ceiling, poles, or columns), Laser Technology (Sensors on poles and columns) and Magnetic Tape (Guide tape on the workroom floors to mark routes).



Based on meetings with the Postal Service, the agency's primary goal with these AGVs are to eliminate the labor costs associated with the PIV operators. The USPS claims that over \$900 million is spent annually on PIV operators who are moving containers and only a small portion of their time actually involves driving a PIV. The cost of the AGVs range from \$100,000 - \$200,000. The Postal Service will not be replacing all PIVs but their goal is to replace a good percentage of them with the AGVs.

There have now been approximately 300 AGVs deployed nationwide. There are AGVs in use within Local 300 in NJI-NDC, Brooklyn P&DC, Flushing P&DC. There is currently no funding for any additional sites.

### **Small Delivery Unit Sorter (SDUS)**

The Postal Service's original plan was to purchase and deploy more than 100 of these machines. They call it the "Baby ADUS." They are designed to process 2,250 pieces per hour but some are doing 2,800 pieces per hour. On September 22, 2022, we were notified that the Postal Service planned on installing an additional 34 SDUS by November 5, 2022, and 28 SDUS are tentatively scheduled to be installed in January and February 2023.

### **Non-Machinable Outsides (NMO) Sortation Program**

The Postal Service needs to have more NMO sorters due to volume of NMOs, which is approximately 5% of total parcel volume. There are three types of solutions for improvement, and which significantly reduce costs of processing. These are the Universal Sorting System (USS), the Robust Universal Sorter (RBUS), and the Manual Sortation Appliance (MSA).

**MSA** currently consists of Sort To Monitor (STM) and Sort To Light (STL) as part of the Cost Effective Overhead Scanning System for Manual Operations (COSSMO). These are used in Function 1 (Mail Processing Installations) but are similar to the PASS system used in Function 4 (Customer/Delivery Service). COSSMO is the device to capture the scans of package and the STM/STL are visual cues for the employee for which container the package goes in. MSAs can be used for NMOs or non-NMOs. Each

monitor is considered one system. Currently there are a total of 51 systems installed but there may be multiple MSAs at each site.

The **Robust Bulk Universal Sorter (RBUS)** is a mechanized, semi auto/manual assist conveyor system primarily used for non-machinable parcel processing. It is a very low-end sorter that was invented in the Southern Maryland NDC as an alternate to a "Spider" arrangement. It is only used in facilities that have low volume NMO sorting needs. There is no keyer. Some of the machines have either the sort to monitor or sort to light variations added.

The **Universal Sorter System (USS)** is a sorter that is an evolution of the HSUS and the LCUS. It is used for large volume NMO sorting. It uses the same technology of the smaller sorters. Configurations vary by facility. The goal for the machine is to process 1,350 parcels per hour.

### **Robotic Container System**

The current Robotic Container System (RCS) has been in use for 20 years using a Gantry style robot. It has been effective, but the machines are reaching end of life. There are currently 167 machines deployed to 42 sites. The Robotic Containerization System 2 (RCS2) will perform the same functions as the current RCS but will use newer technology as well as collaboration with Automated Guided Vehicle (AGVs). The AGVs will bring empty containers and extract full containers all while the Robot continues sorting. The Robot will also not need anyone to load. There will be no employees near the new machines. This system may possibly replace the HSTS and the LCUS. The USPS is currently still in the design and market research stage.

### **Parcel Sorter, Robotic Induction System (RIS) for APBS**

This is a robot induction upgrade that is focused on the APBS. The plan was to develop a robotic system with machine vision and machine learning to automatically induct parcels onto existing parcel sorters. It will replace the "face and place" Clerk operator at the induction belt on many parcel systems. The Postal Service plans to install the RIS to 30 APBS machines by June 2023.

**Flex Rover Sorter (FSR)**

This is an Autonomous Mobile Robot (AMR) based Package Sorter which can be configured in multiple configurations. A contract was awarded for 700 Rovers with deployment from September to November 2021. There are two different size systems that the Postal Service uses - 12 AMR system which sorts to 60 destinations and a 20 AMR system which sorts to 95 destinations. They said that a 12 AMR system can sort a minimum of 300 parcels per hour and with a good operator, can sort 500 parcels per hour. The AMRs can hold up to 70 pounds. The Postal Service has begun testing the efficiency of utilizing FSRs to provide supplementary assistance to employees performing manual sortation duties in a bullpen type environment.

**NDC Redevelopment**

This is a program to redevelop the space in many of the NDCs. It will include removal of unused conveyors and parcel sorting machines. Work will involve extensive structural steel removal. The work was to have begun in August 2021 at two locations - Atlanta NDC and Washington NDC with other locations to follow in 2022. However, the work has not begun yet, as the Postal Service has been working with consultant engineering agencies to figure out what must be done. So far, they have gone to five of the NDCs - Washington, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas and Los Angeles. They expect that those will probably be the facilities where work will begin first.

**PSM Intelligent Vision Robot (PIVR)**

This is a robot induction upgrade focused on the PSM at the NDCs. A pilot was installed at the Washington NDC in July/ August 2020. Currently they are in the pre-production stage; now there are 4 of the 8 induction lanes are robotic at the Washington NDC. Once they get to the production stage, 80 PIVR systems will be installed at 19 NDCs. The New Jersey NDC will not get these as their package sorters are very different than the ones in the other NDCs.

**DBCS Auto Feed**

Letter Automation Auto Feed Technology - New Tilt Over Tray Loader (TOTL) and Technological Enhanced Letter to Ledge System (TELLS) which

employs machine vision technology to handle “less than full” letter trays. This technology supports USPS “Processing Plant of the Future” and aligns with USPS “Dock to Ledge” processing concept. It is being tested in Dulles. The Postal Service anticipates labor savings as one Clerk operator (feeder) can be used for multiple machines.

**High Output Package Sorter (HOPS)**

This is the newest package sorter that is manufactured by Intralox. This package sorter will only be used in P&DCs and NDCs. It is similar to the ADUS and SIPS machines. The HOPS will not have people facing and singulating but will have one person who will make sure that there are no double parcels and that the package is in the middle of the belt and not on the edges. It can process packages up to 25 pounds, will have up to 300 bins, and is expected to process 11,000 pieces per hour. The plans are currently to use it to sort by zip code, but it does have capability to carrier route. Also, they mentioned that the Export/Import Customs compliance component can be added to the machines if used in the ISCs. One advantage to this sorter is that it has roller belts. Also, with most of the sorters, there is the challenge with sweeping as they have the staggered bins (meaning the containers for sweeping are one behind the other, that you have to pull both out to change/sweep the back container). This sorter does not have the staggered bins so sweeping will be much easier to keep up with. Currently three machines are in various stages of the installation process in the Los Angeles P&DC. The installation of the fourth machine has been paused while engineering is checking on design enhancements as well as trying to expand the number bins from 300 to 450-500. The HOPS that have been installed are currently sorting approximately 9000 per hour with a 90/91% acceptance rate when they should be at 11,000 with a 99% acceptance rate. So far, they have contracted a total of 25 machines. This sorter is being called the “Package Sorter of the Future.” It may possibly be the replacement for the aging APBS machines, some of which are 30 years old now (total APBS is 213 machines) or also may be used in facilities in addition to the APBS. The HOPS is very loud. Noise protection requirements show: >90 dBA - Required Hearing Protection, 85- 89 dBA- Optional Hearing Protection and <85 dBA is voluntary. The noise levels measured at various locations around the

machine is at 75 dBAs - 83 dBAs. They are working with the vendor to try to get the noise level lowered. Hearing protection is not required but it is available and use of it is encouraged.

### **Bio-Detection System (BDS)**

Currently the Postal Service is working on developing an updated Bio Identification Module changing from a 4-color spectrum analysis, which is outdated to a 6-color analysis system. They completed field testing in six sites and are now working on getting Safety Act certification from Homeland Security. The Postal Service is also migrating field support for the BDS from purchased maintenance to in-house USPS technician support. Training has started, with currently eight people trained. Total to be trained is estimated to be 526.

### **Regional Packaging Sorter System (RPSS)**

Currently in a competitive solicitation phase. Eventually RPSS will be located in the RPDCs, will have automated induction, scanning and distribution. The plan is that it will be much larger than the EPPS, possibly will be about 300 ft x 500 ft. They are wanting deployment to the Atlanta RPDC by October 2023.

### **FSS Operations**

Many locations have seen some FSS machines being dismantled. This is mainly due to low flat volume. The FSS has a large footprint, taking up a lot of floorspace. Officially, there is NOT a nationwide initiative to dismantle all FSS machines. We have heard of many rumors, but nothing has been confirmed. If you have a bid on the FSS, don't panic bid to a least desirable job. You will be notified as soon as possible with any projected job bid changes.

### **USPS Finances & Mail Volume**

The Postal Service has reported its financial results for fiscal year 2022's third quarter (April 1st -June 30th). Here are some highlights:

- ☐ The USPS reported a net gain of \$59.7 billion, but reflects the one-time non-cash benefit from Postal Reform
- ☐ Operational loss of \$459 million

- ☐ Total mail volume down 0.7% compared to same quarter last fiscal year
- ☐ First class mail down 5.1%
- ☐ Marketing mail increase 3.5% (but below pre-pandemic levels)

### **Surface Transfer Centers (STC)**

The NPMHU has prevailed in National arbitration concerning the Postal Service's decision to subcontract Mail Handler work at the Kansas City Surface Transportation Center or STC.

This case began in August 2019, when the Postal Service first notified the NPMHU at the National level that the Postal Service had decided to subcontract all mail handler work at the Kansas City STC. The National Union initiated a grievance at the Step 4 or National level, followed by additional grievances during subsequent months arising from similar situations in Chicago, Orlando, Atlanta, Washington DC, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Southern California, and Northern California.

The Arbitrator remanded the issue of remedy to the National parties for resolution.

### **Local 300 Finances**

Local 300 continues to have solid financial growth. A large part of our expenditures are for direct representational activities, providing quality representation to our members. Solid fiscal growth, shall ensure that Local 300 will be able to function while we face the major problems that lie ahead.

Local 300 is committed to continuing our customary and reasonable expense policies. Local 300 will have the financial resources to ensure that we will be able to continue our aggressive enforcement of the National Agreement throughout the Grievance-Arbitration procedure.

### **Local 300 Member Premiums**

We have been distributing more Member Premiums than ever before. We wanted the membership to know that their essential service is appreciated, especially



during the pandemic. Since we continue to save on our occupancy costs for Local 300 headquarters, with the purchase of our new office space, we have stepped it up with the premiums. Recently giving back to the membership with face masks, hand sanitizer, ID holders, shirts, fleece jackets, work jackets, aprons, pens, cell phone power banks, lunch bags, and tote bags. We have plans for more Member Premiums in the future.

Should you have any questions, feel free to contact

Local 300 headquarters.

Kevin Tabarus  
President  
NPMHU Local 300

## **PIT Operators, stop and take notice!**

Attention members, please recognize the harm we are causing ourselves. We powered industrial equipment operators are costing ourselves bid jobs, duty assignments, and placing ourselves at risk for potential injury and possible discipline. I am referring to the common practice of bulldozing equipment with forklifts, riding and walking big joes, and towing more than the allowed amount of equipment with tow motors, jitneys and jeeps. When PIT operators choose to forgo safety rules to enable themselves to extend their breaks and lunches, they do not see the big picture. Sure, you are getting more mail to the area and enabling yourself to have a longer break and lunch, but let me explain the long term effects of this practice. You are damaging the equipment you are using because it was not designed for that purpose. Each PIT has a load rating and usage manual. When the operator exceeds it, it puts additional strain on the motor. This accelerates the wear and tear of the equipment. This results in the PIT becoming damaged and taken out of service for repair. Now the PIT is in the shop waiting for repair and chances are the mechanic is overworked and has no readily available parts for the repair. More of a delay. Improper use of the PIT also drains the battery quicker. The batteries are designed to charge for 8 hours and cool for 8 hours to maximize its potential. Frequent recharging of the batteries outside this schedule shortens the lifespan of the batteries. Now more batteries are being taken out of service and good luck waiting on a purchase approval of more batteries. All this results in a shortage of PITS and then guess what will happen?

Your SDO will tell you to use a hand jack for the pallets and manually push the equipment to the area until a PIT becomes available. Do you really want to push pallets around the installation for several hours?

Management could not give a flying fig of what you are doing with the PITS as long as their mail is moving. But guess what happens when you injure someone or damage postal property because you were bulldozing more than 1 pallet or towing more than the authorized number of pieces of equipment? They will suspend your inhouse license and issue you discipline. It won't matter how much mail you moved. Your head is on the chopping block. They will throw you to the lions.

The additional damage that PIT operators do themselves and the mail handler craft as a whole is the loss of jobs. Management will not create additional PIT positions if the mail is being moved with what they have. Management is always, ALWAYS, striving to eliminate jobs. By PIT operators taking short cuts and breaking rules, we are helping them to eliminate our jobs. If we as a whole perform our jobs the proper way, we can assure ourselves of job security and stability. We can preserve the equipment integrity and longevity. Do the right thing sisters and brothers. Preserve our jobs.

Ray Bermudez  
DVD Branch President Local 300



## Vice President's Report

*by Marcenia Yvette Johnson*

Throughout the world, we have been informed about the physical effects of SARS-Cov-19 infection and steps to take to prevent exposure to the coronavirus and manage symptoms of COVID-19 if they appear. However, the long-term effects of this pandemic on one's mental health have not been studied at length and are still not known.

While we faced isolation, social distancing, and the past closure of educational institutes, workplaces, and entertainment venues people were forced to stay in their homes to help break the chain of transmission. However, the restrictive measures undoubtedly have affected the social and mental health of individuals from across the board. The separation and loss of loved ones, and the uncertainty caused a deterioration in individuals' mental health status.

In daily our lives, such cognitive effects on memory, attention, may have led to difficulties for some.

Many people have reported symptoms such as

but not limited to headaches, debilitating fatigue and "brain fog" or cognitive impairment, which is trouble remembering, learning and concentrating. While symptoms tend to go away once someone recovers, some Covid survivors experience lasting long-term effects. Others have reported issues with comprehending written materials, and even carrying on conversations with friends and family and include anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The fact is that there is no definitive treatments that exist to address long COVID but there are several healthy ways that we can help with the long term mental effects of Cov-19 and they include spending time with family members including children and elderly people, involvement in different healthy exercises and sports activities, following a schedule/ routine, and taking a break from traditional and social media. Recovery from long term Covid-19 is a very individualized process, Stay active and Stay Safe.

## Local 300 Scholarship Winners



Angelica Cimirro with her father, Lawrence



Kerissa Henry with her father, Gregory

## Arbitration Awards from around the Local

In an award coming out of Morgan P&DC, Arbitrator Stanton, sustained a grievance regarding the removal of a full time regular mail handler. Stanton cited the lack of management issuing progressive discipline, especially during the pandemic when all parties agreed to liberal leave policies putting several protections in place. BP Irene Delgado was the Union advocate.

Coming out of Jersey City NJ, Arbitrator Simmelkjaer, sustained a grievance regarding a mail handler violating the terms of a last chance agreement. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer ruled that even though the mail handler in essence had violated the LCA, there were extreme mitigating circumstances. The pandemic resulted in massive school closures and single parents had rare to no options when it came to child care. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer returned the mail handler to work. Steward Charles Price advocated for the Union.

Out of Flushing we have an award from Arbitrator Stanton sustaining the grievance of a member when the USPS attempted to remove her. Arbitrator Stanton decided that management's lack of due diligence and outright refusal to consider any exculpatory evidence, could only result in the grievance being sustained and the mail handler being returned to work with back pay. BP Trevor Stuart was the Union advocate.

Over at White Plains NY, we have another award issued by Arbitrator Simmelkjaer involving administrative leave. The grievance dealt with the storm of February 1st 2021. The Union filed a grievance for the mail handlers on tour 2. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer sustained the grievance citing the USPS lack of due diligence, the Union's plethora of evidence, and credible testimony from the Union's witnesses as to their efforts in attempting to come to work. BP Alberta Prieto was the Union advocate.

Back in Jersey City NJ, we have an award from Arbitrator Simmelkjaer about the overstaffing for the holiday of President's Day 2020. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer ruled that the Union produced testimonial evidence from the Union representative's of management's admission of too many mail handlers

drafted to work. This in addition to management's refusal to provide the Union's RFIs, serves to buttress the Union's assertions. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer awarded all mail handlers drafted to work on their holiday and that did work be paid 1 and ½ times their hourly straight time rate for actual hours worked. The Union advocate was Steward Charles Price.

Still in NJ but at Kearny, Arbitrator Simmelkjaer sustained a grievance regarding the non reappointment of an MHA at the DVD P&DC. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer based his decision on the testimony of the MDO who made the decision not to reappoint the MHA. The MDO mislead the MHA prior to her reappointment date and gave the inference of pre-text. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer ordered the USPS to appoint the MHA to a second term. BP Ray Bermudez was the Union advocate.

Across the river in NY, there is an award from Arbitrator McDonough sustaining a grievance out Westchester P&DC. The issue was language in the LMOU being inconsistent with the CBA. Arbitrator McDonough found that the Union's argument that K2 of their LMOU was in conflict with the CBA. BP Alberta Prieto presented for the Union.

Jersey City NJ, Arbitrator Simmelkjaer sustained the Union's grievance on a notice of removal. The arbitrator ruled that the USPS manager of the mail handler, failed to conduct attendance reviews with the grievant, approved her absences without requesting medical evidence, and never charged her AWOL, provided sufficient evidence to overturn the notice of removal. The Union advocate was steward Charles Price.

Remaining in the Garden State, we have an award from Kearny NJ at DVD. Arbitrator O'Connell sustained a grievance of a notice of 7 day suspension for attendance. Arbitrator O'Connell relied on the Union's position that the grievant's occurrences were related to the pandemic and therefore under the mutually agreed MOUS under liberal leave, should have been treated as scheduled leave. Arbitrator O'Connell expunged the NOS7. BP Ray Bermudez advocated for the Union.

Moving out to the island, this award is from Bethpage NY. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer sustained a grievance for the removal of a mail handler. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer relied on the grievant's prior 35 years of service with no prior cited discipline. The mitigating circumstances of losing his



childcare provider due to the pandemic, as well as the ambiguity of the documentation submission failure. Union advocate was steward Robert Cappuccio.

In Brooklyn NY, Arbitrator McDonough sustained a grievance regarding the loss of COP pay. Arbitrator McDonough ruled that the USPS violated article 5 of the CBA by unilaterally failing to inform the grievant of her right to file for COP through the DOL and compelling the grievant to use her own personal leave. Arbitrator McDonough ordered the USPS to make an adjustment to pay the grievant ADLV and restore her annual leave. Chief Steward Malik Sheppard was the advocate for the Union.

Back in Long Island, Arbitrator LoPreste sustained a grievance stemming from management failing to adhere to a prior agreement to consider change of schedules on a case by case basis. Arbitrator LoPreste stated that USPS management instituted a "blanket" policy of denials on change of schedules. He awarded the grievant will have 16 hours of annual leave restored. BP Robert Lussos was the advocate for the Union.

Also in Long Island, Arbitrator McDonough sustained the grievance filed by the Union for ADLV for tour 2 mail handlers on January 29th 2022. Arbitrator McDonough determined that the Union had established the storm in question amounted to a community disaster and the USPS had closed associate offices within the same general area supporting the Union's position. Arbitrator McDonough awarded that all tour 2 mail handlers that were unable to report to work due to the Act of GOD shall have their paid leave restored. BP Robert Lussos was the Union advocate.

Back to Brooklyn. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer granted the Union's grievance for a mail handler who had her COVID-19 positive test result not being classified as an Act of GOD. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer awarded the USPS shall restore the grievant's 80 hours of annual leave and change the time in question to ADLV. Chief Steward Malik Sheppard was the advocate for the Union.

While in Brooklyn lets rock and roll. Another award from Arbitrator Simmelkjaer granted the grievance for the Union when the USPS denied light duty to one of our members. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer ruled that the USPS did not show the greatest consideration in the request for light duty nor provide the reasons for the denial as per 13.2C of the CBA. The grievant was awarded back pay for a period of time. Chief Steward Malik Sheppard was the advocate for the Union.

The hat trick in Brooklyn. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer sustained the Union's grievance on a notice of removal issued to an MHA for violation of the zero tolerance policy. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer concluded the USPS failed to conduct an independent and thorough investigation as required and demonstrated disparate treatment in the issuance of discipline regarding the party. The arbitrator awarded partial back pay and the reappointment of the grievant to another 360 term as an MHA. Chief Steward Malik Sheppard advocated.

Across the Hudson we find an award from the DVD P&DC in which arbitrator McDonough sustained the Union's grievance of a full time regular mail handler that management was attempting to separate under disability. Arbitrator McDonough stated the USPS committed 2 fatal flaws in the issuance of the separation under disability which the Union clearly identified. Arbitrator McDonough restored the grievant to her former position with no loss of benefits and seniority. BP Ray Bermudez advocated.

Daily double from DVD. Arbitrator Stanton awarded the Union the grievance for a full time regular issued a notice of removal. Arbitrator noted that the grievant was the victim in an assault at work and sustained injuries. The grievant had not reported back to work for fear of being victimized again since the aggressor was still employed by the USPS. Additionally the grievant had only a LOW on file and to issue an NOR was egregious in lieu of the circumstances. The arbitrator nullified the NOR and required the USPS to assist her in seeking reassignment to another installation. BP Ray Bermudez advocated.

Back in NY city. Arbitrator McDonough sustained a grievance for a full time career issued a NOR for CAWOL. Arbitrator McDonough pointed out that the USPS failed to rebut any of the testimony presented by the grievant and the Union. The USPS failed to produce any 3971s signed by either party to demonstrate the AWOLS. Nor could the USPS provide evidence that the documents allegedly mailed to the grievant were ever delivered. The arbitrator restored the grievant to work. BP Irene Delgado advocated for the Union.

White Plains NY, Arbitrator Simmelkjaer awarded the Union their grievance regarding the overstaffing of the APBS utilizing clerks to setup the machine. Arbitrator Simmelkjaer awarded the Union a monetary amount for the violation. Testimony from numerous witnesses by the Union helped to solidify the case. BP Alberta Prieto was the Union advocate.

## Local 300 recognizes it's retirees throughout the Local The very best to all of them!



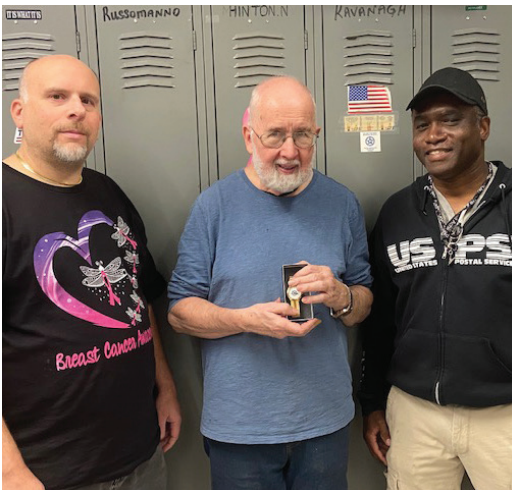
Dawn Licata-Bethpage



Roselin Idicula-Bethpage



Virginia Regano-Bethpage



James "Doc" Forrester-DVD  
Flanked by Stewards Cimirro and Henry



Willis Isler-DVD  
With BP Ray Bermudez



Jesus Rafanan-DVD  
With BP Ray Bermudez



Steve Martinez-DVD with BP Ray Bermudez



Min Ong-ISC JFK



Joseph Solomon-DVD  
Ray Bermudez BP



# OWCP Reimbursement for Medical Travel Expenses

Many federal employees who have been injured on duty and had their claim accepted by OWCP fail to take advantage of a benefit available to them. Those employees are entitled to be reimbursed for their expenses when they travel to receive treatment for their OWCP accepted claim. Yet, I see so many of them forgo this benefit. When a federal employee is injured on duty and files a claim with OWCP and has that claim accepted, they can submit an OWCP-957 form, Medical Travel Reimbursement, to recoup all the monies they have paid out to travel when they see their doctors for treatment related to their on the job injury. Office visits, physical therapy, referrals to other physicians, X rays, MRIs, and so on are all eligible for this benefit. So if you drive to your medical appointments, you would submit for mileage reimbursement. Mileage would be from your home to the medical appointments and back. With the price of gasoline being what it is now, this can add up to a substantial amount of money. If you pay tolls and for parking, these too would be reimbursed. You would need receipts obviously. Those employees that utilize mass transit instead of driving, I would suggest that you purchase a Metro Card, in the NY tri state area, only for the purpose of transportation for your on the job injury. You would submit the receipts every time you reload the card. DO NOT mix personal travel with the medical treatment travel on this Metro card.

The monetary amounts can be substantial when you tabulate the totals. Local 300 has an OWCP specialist available to Union members only, that can assist you with this process of how to submit for medical travel reimbursement. I can walk you through the process over the telephone or if you prefer you can schedule an appointment with me at our headquarters to proceed in person. Either way, I am more than happy to help you receive all the benefits you are entitled to. Please remember that you will need receipts for your expenses such as parking, tolls, and any travel money cards you

use. The doctors and medical facilities would print out the dates you visited their facilities to validate your dates on the claim form. Once you get started with the process and familiarize yourself with the forms, it will become much easier as you go forward. Each medical travel reimbursement form has entries for 3 separate dates. This will minimize the amount of paper you would need to submit. Also, you can prefill the form with your personal information, which is required on every form, make copies and then all you would need to do after that is just fill in dates and expenses. Don't let this money go unclaimed. You are entitled to it. There is a time frame for submission though. You have one year from the date of travel to submit for reimbursement. Also, keep in mind that your claim must be accepted to be eligible for this benefit. Those of you who are waiting on a decision can still complete the medical travel reimbursement and save them until the claim is accepted. Don't wait until the claim is actually accepted because then you could be looking at months of dates to submit for. Complete them as you go along to make it simpler on yourself. I stand at the ready to assist you with this process.

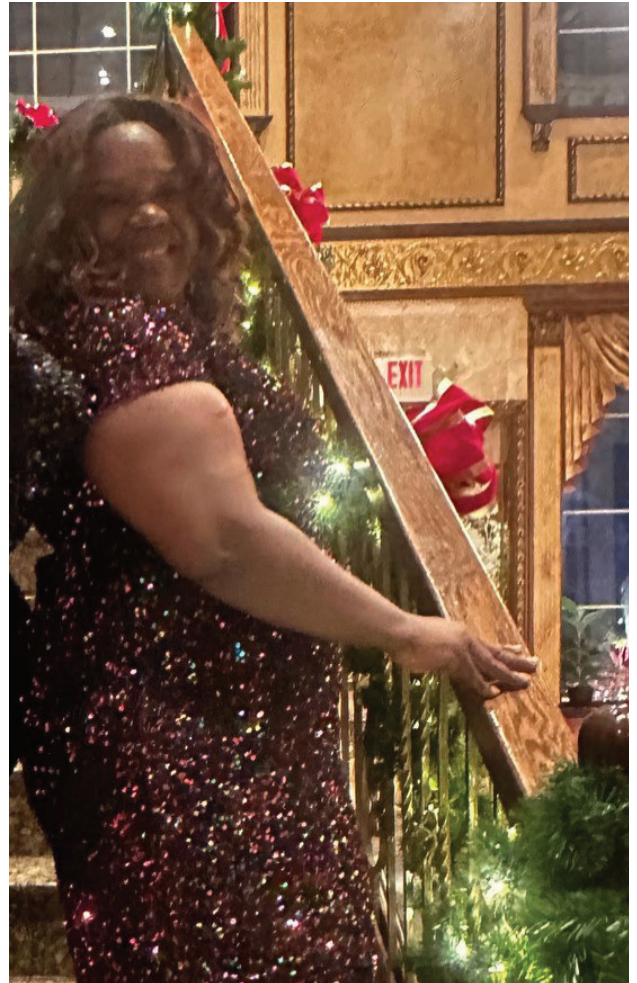
Being injured on duty is stressful enough, and the monies you can be required to spend to get treated can add up. But, there is help available to our Union members who have questions and require guidance on how to proceed. Local 300 has had for many years an OWCP Specialist at the ready to assist our members with their claims, forms completion, forms submission, and even representation at hearings should the member have to choose that option when their claim is denied.

Fraternally,

Raymond Bermudez  
OWCP Specialist Local 300



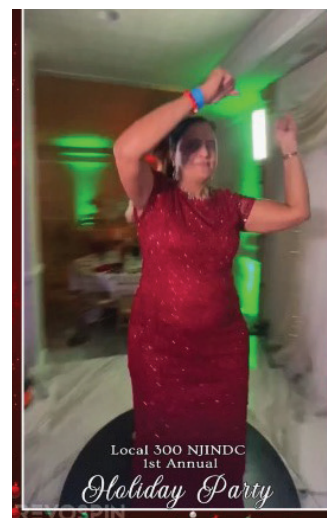
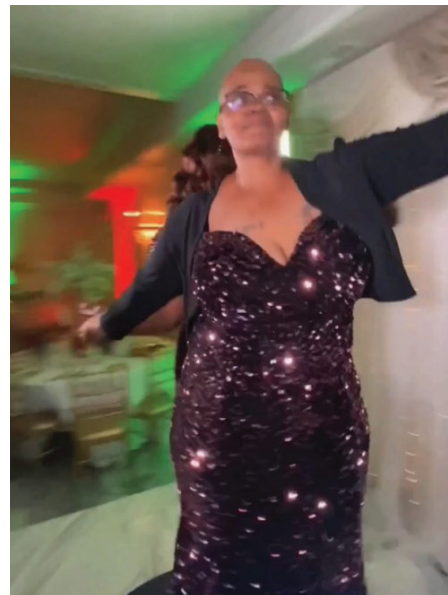
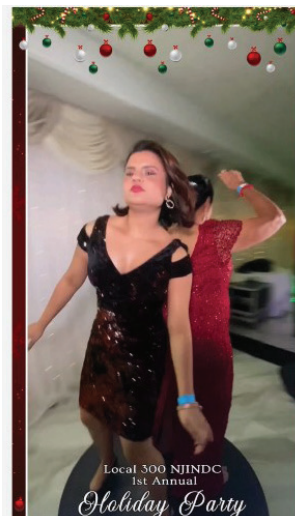
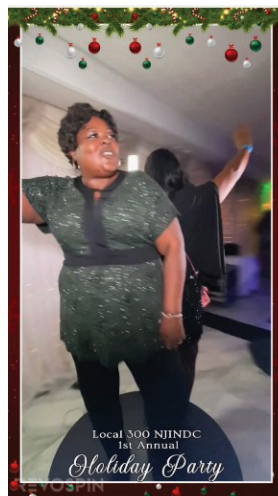
## NJ NDC 2022 Holiday Party



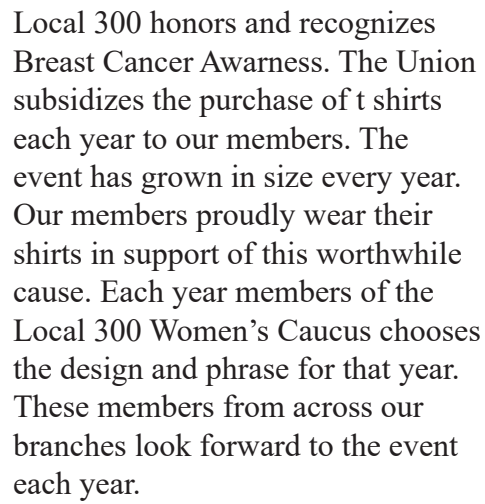
**The NJNDC had a marvelous holiday party.  
Glamorous was the theme and it showed.**



## NJNDC Holiday Party 2022







Veteran



Joseph Campbell



Michael B Williams US Army SGT



# NPMHU Convention

Local 300 represented it's members at the 2020 NPMHU National Convention which was held in Denver Colorado. The convention was delayed two years due to the pandemic.



## Vote Yes To Ratify The 2022 NPMHU National Agreement

### Wage Improvements:

- Continuation of COLA payments (6 during the term of the Agreement)
- 3 General Wage Increases of 1.3%
  - o The first, retroactively effective to November 19th 2022, will be 1.3%;
  - o The second, effective on November 18th 2023, will be 1.3%; and
  - o The third, effective on November 16th 2024, will be 1.3%
- Additional 1% Increase for Steps BB, AA, and A
- Over \$2700 in wage increases for the Mail Handlers at top step (not including COLA)
- Night Shift Differential Increases
  - o 1% effective May 20th 2023
  - o 1.5% effective May 18th 2024
  - o 2% effective May 17th 2025.
  - o For employees in step AA or below, night shift differential rates will be increased by 2% each year.

### Changes to Salary Schedule:

- Elimination of (lowest) Step BB, new career employees start at Step AA
- Shorten waiting period between all steps from 52 to 48 weeks
  - o Overall reduction in more than 2 years to reach top step (will be less than 15 years to reach top step)

### MHA Improvements:

- Additional 1% increase each year
- Additional 50 cents increase per hour retroactive to November 2022
- Creation of MHA Step B (additional 50 cents per hour after 6 months)
- Automatic conversion to career position after 24 months (Full-Time Flexible)

### Other Improvements:

- Annual Clothing allowance increases of 2.5% with new carry-over provisions
- Consecutive days off for career employees in 200+ man-year offices
- Guaranteed nonscheduled day each week for MHAs and PTFs
- Layoff protection for career Mail Handlers employed as of September 20th 2022
- New MOU on Dignity and Respect for all employees
- Health Insurance
  - o No change in health insurance, the percentage of employee contribution to health insurance shall be the same.
- Added Juneteenth National Independence Day holiday (total of 11 paid holidays)

**Ballots mailed out January 31st 2023.**

## **NPMHU POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)**

The National Postal Mail Handlers Union Political Action Committee (NPMHU PAC) contributes to campaigns of candidates for and incumbents of Congress who repeatedly demonstrate "concern for working people and for [the] aims and objectives of the NPMHU and the entire trade union movement." The PAC is non-partisan in its operations, and, by federal law, is financed completely through voluntary contributions from members and groups who subscribe to the objectives of Mail Handlers PAC.

Your Union needs your active involvement in contributing to the Political Action Committee and **YOU NEED TO BE INVOLVED**, to assist candidates who will work to protect the wages and benefits of all mail handlers.

Our PAC membership is growing each year. We invite you to join the NPMHU Political Action Committee, and to help grow our PAC even larger this year.

### **You Can Be a NPMHU POLITICAL ACTIVIST**

*There is a quick way for Mail Handlers to contribute to the NPMHU PAC. Simply call in to the PostalEASE system, or visit the PostalEASE option on the web at [www.liteblue.usps.gov](http://www.liteblue.usps.gov). Follow the instructions printed in this magazine. Your PAC contribution will be made directly from your bi-weekly postal payroll. You also have the option of sending in a personal check or authorizing a credit card contribution. Your contributions will also be entered into the incentive program that entitles you to awards based on your contribution level. There are five distinct PAC membership levels/ awards. Awards will vary from year to year, but all awards provide the opportunity for our PAC members to show their support for this important program.*

### **NOTICE CONCERNING PAC CONTRIBUTIONS...**

*Contributions to the Mail Handlers PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for purposes of federal income taxes. In addition, federal law requires that the Mail Handlers PAC report to the Federal Election Commission the name, mailing address, occupation, and name of employer for each individual whose contributions in any calendar year total in excess of \$200. Please also note that the Mail Handlers PAC has political purposes, and that all members have the right to refuse to contribute, and the right to revoke their authorization for any continuing contributions, without any reprisal.*

#### **You can make your PAC contribution by bi-weekly salary allotment through PostalEASE**

- Dial 1-877-4PS-EASE -- (877-477-3273)
- Press # 1 for PostalEASE
- When prompted, enter your eight-digit USPS employee identification number.
- When prompted again, enter your USPS PIN number.
- When Prompted, **Choose Option # 2** (to select payroll allotments)
- Then Choose Option # 1 (to select allotments)
- When prompted Press #2 to continue
- When prompted Press #3 to add the allotment
- When prompted for the routing number enter **054001220**
- When prompted for the account # enter the following:  
**11260001** \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_  
(the last nine digits of your account number is your social security number – this info will

allow us to identify you as the PAC contributor).

- Press #1 if correct
- When prompted Press #1 for "checking"
- When prompted, input the bi-weekly dollar amount of your PAC allotment.
- Press #1 if correct
- When prompted Press #1 to process
- You will be provided a confirmation number as well as the start date for the salary allotment.
- Record the confirmation number for your records
- Record the start date of the salary allotment
- Press #1 to repeat or Press #9 to end call

#### **Or, to initiate your bi-weekly PAC contribution on the web**

- Simply go to [www.liteblue.usps.gov](http://www.liteblue.usps.gov)
- Enter your eight-digit USPS Employee ID Number and your USPS PIN
- Follow the link to PostalEASE you will again

be asked to enter your Employee ID Number and USPS PIN

- Follow the link for **PAYROLL-Allotments/NTB** Continue to the ALLOTMENTS section
- Your ROUTING TRANSIT NUMBER is: **054001220**
- Your ACCOUNT # will be: **11260001** \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_  
(the last nine digits of your account number is your social security number – this information will allow us to identify you as the PAC contributor).
- For ACCOUNT TYPE – please select **"CHECK-ING"**
- When prompted, please input the **AMOUNT** that you would like to contribute to the PAC each pay period.
- To process your PAC allotment, you will need to select the **VALIDATE** button, and to finalize the transaction, please select **SUBMIT**. Be sure to print out a copy of the confirmation page for your records.

PAC contribution by personal check, money order, or credit card: (cut here and return to NPMHU PAC)

You can contribute directly to the Mail Handlers PAC by filling out the following information and mailing it to the P.O. Box listed below. Please enclose your check or money order, or provide authorization to charge your credit card.

My contribution of (please circle one): \$26 (Member) / \$52 (Sponsor) / \$100 (Activist) / \$250 (Leader) / \$500 (Ambassador) / other amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Acct. # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card as indicated above.

MAIL TO: Mail Handlers PAC  
P.O. Box 65171  
Washington, DC 20035

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_





# 2023 PAC

## Incentive Awards



LEVEL	DONATION	AWARD
Member	\$26 (\$1 per pay period)	PAC Pin
Sponsor	\$52 (\$2 per pay period)	PAC Wool Hat
Activist	\$100	PAC Polo
Leader	\$250	PAC Leatherette Duffel Bag
Ambassador	\$500	PAC 9-Pack Cooler & Bottle opener
Super Ambassador	\$1,000	All Incentive Gifts



# How to protect your right to 45 days of COP

USPS employees are protected under Federal Employee Compensation Act for wage loss and medical expenses should they be injured at work. Should the employee sustain a traumatic injury while working, they should complete and file a CA1 form. The employee reports the injury immediately to their supervisor and the employer will complete the CA1 form with the employee. Do not allow the employer to convince you that the form can wait. The CA1 form is time sensitive when it comes to the continuation of pay, COP, election. COP, if selected by the employee will provide for up to 45 calendar days of pay from the date of injury. But, you must submit the CA1 form within 30 calendar days of the date of injury to be eligible for COP.

It has become a very common occurrence throughout our Local recently, that USPS management is failing to accept, file, or even acknowledge the CA1 from the employee. They are deliberately delaying the processing of the CA1 to disallow the COP. OWCP is very specific when it comes to approving COP. If the CA1 is not filed within 30 calendar days of the date of injury, OWCP will deny the COP, even if the claim is eventually accepted for the injury. There are steps you can take to protect your right to COP if you encounter an anal aperture of a supervisor who refuses to accept your CA1 or "misplaces" it. Always, request a Union representative when you are reporting an injury. If a Union representative is not available at the time, contact one as soon as possible to notify them that you were injured. Request a copy of your completed CA1 form after you complete it. Request the receipt of the CA1 form which is part of the form. If management will not provide

you copies, contact the Union to have them make the request for you. Should you encounter the occasional moronic manager that refuses to complete the CA1 or accept one from you, you can file it directly to the Office of Workers Compensation. If you select this option, make sure to send it priority mail with tracking and attach a cover letter naming the manager that is refusing to accept or complete your CA1. Notify the Union immediately so they can file an article 3 grievance as well as OSHA and NLRB charges against the USPS. Documentation is crucial in supporting your assertion that your CA1 was filed within 30 days and you are eligible for COP. The USPS will do whatever they can to prevent your right to the 45 days of COP if they can get away with it.

The USPS is not your friend when it comes to being injured on duty. Their sole interest is in getting you back to work ASAP and make it as difficult as possible for you to remain out of work. The 45 days COP are paid as if you were at work. You would be paid your full salary and benefits. Just be sure you see a doctor immediately after the injury and provide medical documentation to management if you are not able to work. Your Union is available for assistance, information, and we have an OWCP specialist for union members only.

Ray Bermudez  
Local 300 OWCP Specialist

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National Postal Mail Handlers Union  
Local 300, AFL-CIO  
20 W 33rd ST Suite 8A  
New York, NY 10001



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