

# MEMO To The Branch 2184 Leadership Council, August 1, 2022



Walt McGregory  
Jackie McGregory  
Darryl Clay  
Mel MacDonald  
Cathy Tondreau  
Jim Powell  
Phil Ashford  
Tracy Mitchell  
Gloria Warthen  
Felicia Davis  
Leonard Zawisa  
Dave Reise  
Erik Venzke  
Kris Shaw  
Mark Owen  
Bryon Hendricks  
Jillian Hudgins  
Symone Coleman  
Yvonne Jackson  
Karl Tamburro  
Shaun Fowlkes  
Marwan Ghotemi  
Chanel Harrison  
Lillian Bogosian  
Scherrie Lacey  
Scherkeira Wells  
Scott Watts  
Valerie Watkins  
Elizabeth Bays  
Tamara Bosman  
Kristie Nelson  
Diego Forshaw  
Otis Barney  
Keith Benedict  
Victor Siemiesz  
William Douglas  
Jeffrey Webb  
Nakia Whitfield  
Katrina Jones  
Ananias Epps  
Ramon Robinson  
Tonya Rutledge  
Paul Bordine  
Mike Tredway  
Danita Hill

This month's Branch Leadership Council Memo will begin as usual with an administrative and scheduling update. Branch President McGregory continues to monitor trends with ongoing COVID infections and transmission, and will make decisions regarding the format and structure of forthcoming meetings based on the most current information. **The September membership and steward meetings will be conducted online via WebEx.** The regular membership meeting in September is scheduled on Wednesday, September 7 at 7:30 p.m. Steward meetings are scheduled on Tuesday, September 13 and Monday, September 19, both at 7:00 p.m. The Branch Executive Board will meet on Monday, September 26 at 7:30 p.m.

Delegates attending NALC National convention in Chicago are reminded that they must prepare a brief written or verbal report on one of the convention workshops they attended. Delegates are also reminded to turn in their convention vests afterwards when it is convenient to do so.

All regular NALC members (active and retired) will be receiving ballots for contested NALC National officer positions following nominations which will take place at the convention. Every NALC member is strongly encouraged to make their voice heard by participating in this very important election. The National officers elected will be ones negotiating the next National Agreement with the Postal Service beginning sometime around February 2023.

As is customary in National convention years, the NALC and the USPS have agreed to a moratorium of time limits for all grievances at every step of the Article 15 process. The moratorium covers the period from Saturday, July 30 through Monday, August 29 and is M-01987 in the NALC Materials Reference System (MRS). Despite the moratorium, Branch 2184 stewards and from Step A designees are requested to continue to make every effort to develop, meet, and appeal any unresolved grievances within normal contractual timeframes. The moratorium exists if needed, but it should not itself be a reason to unnecessarily delay any grievance.

On Wednesday, August 10, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for July 2022 will be released, which is the final index number for the current cost of living adjustment (COLA) cycle. The resulting COLA increase, which is the largest in the history of NALC/USPS negotiated labor agreements, will be effective on Saturday, August 27, the first day of pay period 19. It will be reflected on checks dated September 16. The next letter carrier pay raise will be a general wage increase on 1.3% (2.3% for CCAs) effective Saturday, November 19.

Branch 2184 stewards and other contract enforcers have been contacted to request their attendance at the annual Region 6 training seminar conducted by National Business Agent David Mudd's office and taking place in Covington, Kentucky on October 8 through 10. This is the Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day holiday weekend. Those attending the training seminar will be receiving further travel and lodging information from the Branch.

The NALC and USPS have actively begun implementation of the New Employee Mentoring Program, with the goal of improving the atrocious retention rate of newly hired CCAs. Designated mentors in our participating offices are encouraged to regularly report to station stewards as well as Branch 2184 President Walt McGregory and other Branch officers. As always, this pilot program represents a good faith effort and commitment on the part of the NALC. It remains to be seen how much actual good faith will be demonstrated by USPS management, especially by their numbers-obsessed and often personality-defective local supervisors and postmasters.

Implementation and training for the new Technology Integrated Alternate Route Evaluation and Adjustment Process continues. Northville member and Step A Designee Beth Bays is a Route Evaluation and Adjustment (REAT) team member for USPS Michigan District 1. Allen Park steward Mark Owen is a Carrier Optimal Routing (COR) Tech for USPS Michigan District 1. Beth as well as Branch 2184 Route Adjustment specialist and Contract Enforcement Committee member David Reise will provide further updates during steward meetings and regular membership meetings in the next several months and longer as the process is implemented. Branch 2184 members in any station(s) or zone(s) that are jointly chosen as sites for this process will also be receiving extensive additional information and training from the union.

The Department of Labor's Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP) has issued a notification (FECA Circular 22-09) that should further reduce or eliminate postal management's obstruction of on-the-job injury compensation claim forms (i.e., CA-1, CA-2, CA-7) submitted by letter carriers and other Postal Service craft employees. As long as the injured employee submits the claim electronically, that is through OWCP's web portal – ECOMP, the form no longer requires an actual signature from the employee or the supervisor. This is because ECOMP now has the ability to confirm the claimant's identity through two-factor authorization. A claimant's signature through ECOMP is as valid as a "wet signature."

The FECA program has also determined that it is no longer necessary for agencies (including the USPS) to retain paper copies with wet signatures of any electronic forms it submits. ECOMP will do this instead. This FECA directive is yet another excellent step by OWCP to remove obstruction by employing agencies such as the Postal Service and their representatives from the injured employee claims submission process as much as possible. This directive came as a result of the Biden Administration's Executive Order 14058, "Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Restore Trust in Government" issued on December 13, 2021. The wider intent of the Biden Administration directive is to restore trust in government agencies after this had been intentionally trashed during the previous administration. Kudos go to the Biden Administration, the Secretary of Labor, and the Department of Labor for these pro-worker steps.

The Postal Service has announced the penalty overtime exclusion period for 2023. It will begin on Saturday, December 3, the first day of pay period 25, week 1, and will end on Friday, December 30, the last day of pay period 26, week 2. As always, stewards should be extra vigilant during this period to ensure that Article 8 procedures for assigning overtime work **continue to be enforced in their entirety**. Although there is no penalty overtime pay during this four-week period and work hour limitations for those on the Overtime Desired List (ONLY) are expanded, Article 8 of the Contract is otherwise unchanged – despite wishful thinking and false claims to the contrary that sometimes emanate from USPS management.