



MEMO To The Branch 2184 Leadership Council, July 12, 2022

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Jackie McGregory
Darryl Clay
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Cathy Tondreau
Jim Powell
Phil Ashford
Tracy Mitchell
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Felicia Davis
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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
William Douglas
Jeffrey Webb
Nakia Whitfield
Katrina Jones
Ananias Epps
Ramon Robinson
Tonya Rutledge
Paul Bordine
Mike Tredway
Danita Hill

This month's Leadership Council Memo will begin as usual with an update on Branch administrative matters and scheduled events. There will be no regular membership meeting in August as the summer break continues. The next regular membership meeting will occur on Wednesday, September 7 at 7:30 p.m. The format of this meeting has yet to be determined, but it will be either via WebEx or possibly a resumption of our in-person member meetings, depending on the situation with Covid at that time. The availability of WebEx technology also provides the flexibility that the Branch will need for future meetings of all kinds.

There will be a steward meeting on Tuesday, August 16 at 7:00 p.m. This meeting will be conducted via WebEx. Please note that officers, stewards, and others that are Contract enforcers and that also are delegates attending the National Convention in Chicago August 8 through 12 will receive steward meeting credit for August, conditional upon their expected attendance and participation in the daily convention sessions and workshops. The Branch 2184 executive board will meet on Monday, August 29 at 7:30 p.m.

All "systems are go" for the NALC's 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago next month. Delegates having any questions or concerns should speak with Branch President Walt McGregory ASAP. Before and after the convention sessions on Monday through Thursday of the convention week there will be 40 valuable workshops and seminars offered on a wide variety of topics. Branch 2184 delegates are expected to attend at least two of these, and are encouraged to attend as many as possible. As customarily occurs, there will also be a welcome reception for delegates and guests on Sunday, August 7 in the late afternoon and evening.

The next and last convention in the current term of office for Branch 2184 delegates will be the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers (MISALC) convention at the Motor City Casino in Detroit on May 1 and 2, 2023. Nominations for Branch 2184 officers, station stewards, and convention delegates for the 2024-2026 term of office will take place at the regular Branch membership meeting on Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. National Conventions during the next term of office are scheduled in Boston, Massachusetts from August 5-9, 2024, and in Los Angeles, California from August 3-7, 2026. The dates and location of the 2025 MISALC convention have not yet determined.

Sunday, June 26 saw the return of the annual Branch 2184 picnic for members, family and friends. Warm summer weather provided the backdrop for a fine afternoon of fun, frivolity, and union fellowship for more than 350 attendees. A special note of thanks goes to everyone whose volunteer work helped to make the picnic a success and also to picnic committee chairperson

Erik Venzke and his committee members. Barring unforeseen circumstances, our picnic will be back again next year, bigger and better than ever.

Implementation and training for the new Technology Integrated Alternate Route Evaluation and Adjustment Process continues. Northville member and Step A Designee Beth Bays has been chosen as Route Evaluation and Adjustment Team (REAT) member for USPS Michigan District 1. Allen Park Steward Mark Owen has been chosen as 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 updates during the July steward meetings and during future meetings.

With a month to go in the current 6-month cost of living adjustment (COLA) cycle of January through July 2022, the accumulated amount is on a pace to potentially become the largest single COLA adjustment since the NALC gained the right to negotiate wages and benefits following the 1970 strike. The amount will be known following the release of the July Consumer Price Index (CPI) on Wednesday, August 10 and will become effective on Saturday, August 27, the first day of pay period 19. Although high inflation is never a good thing, NALC members are fortunate that their union has negotiated and maintained uncapped cost of living adjustments as part of the Contractual wage and benefit structure for the past several decades.

Two questions recently came up concerning continuation of pay (COP) following a traumatic, job-related injury. The first question concerned work hour credit toward the hours necessary for FMLA eligibility. Although COP is regular pay, the hours are not credited as work hours for purposes of meeting the 1250 needed during the 12 months immediately prior to requesting FMLA coverage for a qualifying absence. Only actual work hours are counted for this purpose. The second question is trickier and the answer is not commonly known. It concerned earning leave, both sick leave and annual leave, while in a COP status. Normally USPS employees will earn additional paid leave for all hours that they are in a pay status, including while on sick or annual leave. However, even though it is a "special kind" of pay status and it is required by the Federal Employees Compensation Act for the first 45 days of work loss following a traumatic on the job injury (OWCP Form CA-1), COP hours are actually considered to be leave without pay (LWOP), per the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM), section 514.4. Thus, neither annual leave or sick leave is earned on hours that are being paid as continuation of pay (USPS TACS Code 71).

With the continued aging of much of the postal vehicle fleet as well as dubious management planning and decisions regarding the assignment of vehicles, there is an increasing number of situations where letter carriers are being asked to use their personal vehicle for the transportation and delivery mail. **Stewards, please be aware of and strictly enforce the following contractual requirements**, per Article 41, section 4 of the contract (JCAM pages 41-36 to 41-38).

First, and most importantly, **under NO circumstances can any city carrier be involuntarily compelled to use their personal vehicle for any work-related function such as the transportation and delivery of mail.** There are NO exceptions – not for an alleged "emergency" or for any other reason. Second, should a letter carrier voluntarily choose to use their personal vehicle for this purpose (and this is discouraged) they **MUST** be compensated as set forth in Article 41, section 4. Reimbursement is determined locally by written agreement between the carrier and the installation head, per Article 41, section 4.A.2, but **shall not be less nor more** than the sum of the amounts computed for each of the factors listed in Article 41, section 4.A.3, parts a through e.

A member called with union office with a question about requesting to have an NS-day off instead of being scheduled to work. Apparently in this office form 3971 is used to "request" having an NS-day off. This seems to be common practice but it is an improper use of the 3971. Because the 3971 was used, the carrier erroneously thought that our LMOU "72-hour rule" for responding to annual leave requests also applied to requesting an NS-day. Simply put, it does not. Additionally, a supervisor denied the NS-day request, stating that "the leave board was full." **The carrier annual leave boards in each station have nothing whatsoever to do with NS days. Please be sure they are NOT be used for that purpose.**