



Branch 2184 ... "Speaks"

Official Publication of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO

July/August 2020

August 03, 2020

Statement from NALC on Service Issues

The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) thanks the American people for their long-term support and appreciation of the service our members provide to homes and businesses throughout the country. Letter carriers value their relationship with the public, and take great pride in serving their customers.

As they risk their health each day along with other front-line essential workers, letter carriers have become angry, frustrated and embarrassed by various USPS management initiatives that are now resulting in delayed mail and undelivered routes in many areas of the country.

The Postal Service must provide reliable service to postal customers, particularly during the pandemic when our role is more essential than ever. We will continue our engagement with Postal Service management and Congress as we work through a transition in USPS governance, the effects of COVID-19 and the consequent need for financial relief.

We appreciate the patience, support and continued confidence of the American people.

President's Report

Pandemically Speaking

As this issue of the Speaks goes to press it has been approximately five months since the first Coronavirus COVID 19 case was reported in Michigan. What a difference five months make. Since that first case was reported here in Michigan, there have been over 5 million infections reported and 164,000 deaths nationwide. The world has been turned upside down and inside out. As the COVID 19 Pandemic has swept across the country it has affected the way we live, both at home and at work. What used to be a routine trip to pick up some groceries or go to work or having a family member visit is now a process of adhering to CDC protocols and Executive orders, wear a mask, keep socially distant, and make sure to disinfect or wash your hands. While some are advising that we must adjust to the "new normal" I believe a better term would be the "new abnormal". It makes no

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Branch 2184

Western Wayne County, MI

National Association

of Letter Carriers

AFL - CIO

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Office Hours:

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Monday through Friday

Calendar

Branch Meetings:

October 7th, 2020

(7:30 p.m. - Union Hall)

Retirees Meetings:

October 14th, 2020

(12:30 p.m. - Union Hall)

Due to COVID 19 meetings

could be cancelled

September meetings (Cancelled)

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Officers

President.....	Mark Judd
Executive Vice President	Walt Gregory
Vice President	Joe Golonka
Recording Secretary	Jacqueline Gregory
Financial Secretary Treas	Cathy Tondreau
Sergeant at Arms	Scott Watts
Health Benefits Rep	Jim Powell
Retirees Officer	Leonard Zawisa
Trustee.....	Michele Szafran
Trustee.....	Gloria Warthen
Trustee.....	Felicia Davis
Editor.....	Leonard Zawisa
Branch Scribe	Joe Golonka
Injury Compensation	Michele Szafran
Injury Compensation	Joe Golonka
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.....	Karen Russell (alt)
.....	Tod Lilla (alt)
Belleville	Bryon Hendricks
.....	Greg Bodziak (alt)
Dearborn (Main).....	Darryl Clay
.....	Symone Coleman
.....	Yvonne Jackson (alt)
.....	Mark Spight (alt)
Dearborn (Annex)	Melvin MacDonald
.....	Jacqueline Gregory
.....	Rose Miller (alt)
.....	Tom Klecha (alt)
Dearborn Heights	Denise Viola
.....	Hassan Ghoteimi (alt)
.....	Christopher Tostage (alt)
Dundee	313-295-1640
Flat Rock.....	Lillian Bogosian
Grosse Ile	Christopher Biegalski
.....	Kim Bumbul (alt)
.....	Gloria Warthen (alt)
Inkster	Phil Ashford
.....	Scherrie Lacey (alt)
.....	Robert Clark (alt)
Lincoln Park	Scott Watts
Monroe	Joshua Nagy (alt)
.....	Shavon Alexander (alt)
Northville	Valerie Watkins
.....	Beth Bays (alt)
.....	Jennifer Rake (alt)
Plymouth.....	Tamara Bosman
.....	Diego Forshaw
.....	Kristie Nelson (alt)
Rockwood	Gloria Warthen
Taylor.....	Michele Szafran
.....	Keith Benedict
.....	Scott Horn (alt)
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Trenton.....	Tracy Mitchell
Westland	Walter Gregory
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.....	Nakia Whitfield
.....	Katrina Jones (alt)
.....	Ananias Epps (alt)
Canton.....	Ramon Robinson
.....	John Hite
.....	Tyler Haverstick (alt)
Ypsilanti	Paul Bordine
.....	Mike Tredway
.....	Danita Smith (alt)
.....	Alan Grajczyk (alt)



Branch 2184 Speaks is published 6 times a year by Branch 2184, National Association of Letter Carriers.

The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the officers of the branch.

We invite all members to contribute articles for publication. Copy should be typed, double-spaced and signed by the contributor. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit, delete or reject the article for the good of the branch.

In the hope that material contained herein may be of benefit to the goals of the NALC, permission is hereby granted to copy or use material in this publication with our best wishes.

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President's Report

sense to argue the science (to mask or not to mask) the numbers of affected or infected don't lie. The challenge we face going forward is how do we adjust to the "new abnormal" period we find ourselves in.

Here at the Branch Office we have tried to maintain a semblance of normalcy while still adhering to the Executive orders from the Governor as well as adhering to the CDC guidelines. While we have had to cancel our monthly Branch meetings since April and our Branch activities that we had planned for the year, we still have been able to keep the Branch office staffed since the beginning of the COVID crisis and have maintained our membership services without missing a beat. While we have been able to keep pace with OWCP claims and retirement counseling it has been at a distance telephonically. We continue to have our twice monthly stewards meeting and our monthly Executive Board meetings via teleconference. While we continue hope for the best regarding a time when we can all meet together again, we have been exploring possible options for alternative ways to conduct meetings. Until that time we will continue to follow the science and the Governor's office for the all clear.

With events changing so rapidly with the COVID 19 crisis as well as its impact on the United States Postal Service we have chosen to run President Rolando's statements regarding the crisis in our last two editions. The information from President Rolando were very comprehensive and addressed the very latest information and news that the membership needed to know. This month we are running on the front page the statement from the national office regarding service issues we are currently facing. One of the challenges in putting out a newsletter is to make sure the information that the members need and depend on is timely, in that regard I would encourage all members to monitor the NALC website as well as signing up for the NALC app for the latest and most current late breaking news and useful information. It can be accessed in mere seconds with a tap on your hand held device or cell phone. With that being said I will attempt to go over the very latest news from the national office.

On July 16th the national office received notice

from the USPS that they intended to roll out a new delivery test initiative called (ESAS) Expedited Street/Afternoon Sortation. This test is being implemented unilaterally without input or participation from the NALC. ESAS is similar to the old (EPM) or Expedited Preferential Mail Program that was widely used some years ago and still can be found in the handbooks and manuals, it involves the casing of non-preferential mail in the afternoon after completing your street duties. The stated purpose of the test is to determine if the EPM program can be enhanced by further reducing the morning office time, and get carriers to the street sooner. On July 25th the Trenton office became the only station in the Branch at this time that is part of the test. We will be closely monitoring the test and its results; the national office has filed a national level grievance regarding the unilateral implementation of the test.

The national office has reported that all COVID-19 MOUs have been extended till the end of September. These agreements cover a wide range of issues including:

Temporary sick leave for dependent care (M-01910),
Temporary additional paid leave for CCAs (M-01911),

Temporary use of the 7:01 rule (M-01913),

Temporary workplace changes to promote social distancing (M-01915),

Temporary use of TCAs (M-01916).

For more information regarding these and other workplace changes go to the NALC web site www.nalc.org.

On August 6, during our teleconference with Region 6 we were informed by President Rolando that the USPS plans to roll out another new initiative called (SER) Sorting Equipment Rationalization. This initiative is being rolled out to review, evaluate, and optimize the utilization of post office sortation equipment. This initiative allegedly will reduce the physical footprint in the office and create more space for packages, while reducing every assignment down to one piece of equipment. We are following the implementation of this program closely and have addressed the process with our stewards, regarding the case configuration requirements per the M-41 and M

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President's Report

-39 and the mandatory requirements that management "perform carrier consultations" before any changes are implemented.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your hard work and dedication to the USPS and to the American public for which you continue to deliver and serve. Please continue to work safely, and make sure you are taking the necessary precautions for your safety and that of your family as well.

-- Mark Judd
President

EVP'S Report

Constant Changes with our Job(s)

Everyday it seems like there is something new to deal with relating to our jobs as letter carriers. There is some new change that management wants to implement pertaining to Letter Carrier work. From changing our starting times, to having some of us case our flats in the (PM) time after we finish carrying our routes for the day.

The one consistent thing you as a Letter Carrier can count on is that NALC will continue to defend Letter Carriers at every level of our great union. From the local branch level, state, regional and headquarter level.

President Judd and your officers are working tirelessly to disseminate all of the information to your stewards coming from NALC Headquarters and our regional office. Remember, management has the right to run their operation, however, those management rights are always subject to our NALC contract scrutiny.

ESAS

On 07/25/2020, our Trenton office started the ESAS (Expedited Street/Afternoon Sortation) test. This test alters the way letter carriers perform their a.m. casing duties. This test is in violation of provisions in the M-39 section 121.211, the M-41 section 223.11, 262.1, as well as Article 19 of the CBA. Letter carriers are being prohibited from withdraw-

ing mail from their hot cases and this test doesn't allow for letter carriers to receive their accountable mail until they have pulled down.

Our National office has filed a National Level grievance regarding this ESAS test earlier this month (August 2020). Branch 2184's Leadership team will be discussing this test with all of the stewards in the August monthly steward meeting via Teleconference.

Stewards will be given grievance templates for filing grievances for violations pertaining to this ESAS test program.

If you think that you have possibly been aggrieved, always remember to request to speak with your steward so he/she can properly investigate your issue.

Reducing Casing Equipment

You may have already heard in a Stand-Up Talk given by management that upper management has instructed your local management team to reduce our casing equipment to free up office space within the Postal Service across the country. Remember, management has the right to manage their operation, again, however, it is always subject to scrutiny.

The unions position is that if a route has four hundred and twenty (420) stops or more, then that route should have more than one piece of equipment.

Management is obligated to get input from you the carrier assigned to the route prior to making any case changes. If management fails to do so, then request to speak with your steward immediately to file a grievance under the M-39 and the M-41.

CCA Uniform Bank During COVID-19

We are still collecting your gently used uniforms for our CCA brothers and sisters. Please bring in your gently used uniforms and give them to your steward. He/she will drop the donation off to the union hall. you will receive credit by your name appearing in the next Branch 2184 speaks. We need summer, fall and winter gear.

For CCAs looking to shop at the uniform bank, because of COVID-19 and to protect your health as well as the branch officer working, you have to give your sizes to your union steward. They will forward the sizes to the branch office, An officer will pick out a few items and get them to your steward so that they can give them to you.

LCPF

By now, we all should have heard of the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). We all should be contributing to this fund now more than ever our employer is in need of help from the politicians on the hill that have the ability to enact favorable policy for our employer.

If you are not signed up for the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF), what are you waiting for? Five (\$5) dollars a pay period is all that NALC is asking for you to donate a pay period if you are an active carrier and at least five (\$5) a month if you are a retired carrier. There are multiple ways that you can contribute to LCPF:

- 1 **Payroll deduction:** Contribute automatically, using PostalEase (either online or by phone) to set up an allotment deduction from your USPS paycheck.
- 2 **Direct bank withdrawal:** You can authorize the fund to withdraw a monthly electronic contribution directly from your personal checking account.
- 3 **Annuity deduction:** Retired letter carriers can elect to give monthly via an automatic deduction from your monthly annuity.

You can also contact any of your branch officers at (313) 295 1640, and they will be happy to assist you. The job you save just may be your own!

In unionism,

-- *Walt McGregory*
Executive Vice President

VP's Report

Keeping It Simple

It is an all too common human tendency to make many things more difficult for ourselves than necessary. Unfortunately, that much too often applies to the letter carrier job, which is a straightforward and honest occupation that is unnecessarily complicated by ridiculous Postal Service micromanagement and frequently by overthinking on the part of letter carriers.

On the management side of that equation, when there is little else to justify your existence, you

create the appearance of necessity where it otherwise does not exist. Excess management at all levels has long been "the elephant in the room;" in the USPS - well known and understood but allowed to exist anyway. Hence, they occupy themselves with programs and policies that add nothing of value to the Postal Service. Similarly, higher levels of USPS management are obsessed with process management gobble-dygook such as the "Lean Six Sigma," nonsense that is essentially irrelevant to letter carrier work.

On the letter carrier side of the same equation, there is no need to justify the real work that is performed on the daily basis by the world's finest and most efficient delivery service employees. Letter carrier work is self-evident. It requires commitment and responsibility, focus and attention to detail, and it presents physical challenges under a wide range of working conditions. Each of those requirements is by nature self-managed. External badgering and micromanagement only interferes with letter carrier work.

Everything Else Is Just Details

In our fishbowl of life, you simply need to just show up for work and then do the work assigned. That's all there is. Everything else is just details. Ignore the chatter, the "but what about..." Ultimately, none of that stuff matters. Unlike many in management, letter carriers have real jobs. Again, there is nothing to be justified. **Without letter carriers, there is no Postal Service.**

Regarding showing up for work - unless you are physically unable to work because of illness or off the job injury, report to work as scheduled. Accumulated sick leave is a valuable insurance policy, providing financial security and peace of mind in the event of serious illness or an off the job injury.

If you have an on the job injury or medical condition legitimately caused by your work, you can be protected by initiating and providing evidence for a claim under the Federal Employees Compensation Act. NALC members can receive detailed and competent assistance from their union.

Ignoring Mr. DOIS

Central to Postal management's absurd micromanagement of letter carrier work are their pet

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VP'S Report

"tools" such as DOIS (Delivery Operations Information System). Supervisors are trained to treat and apply this computer program as some sort of workload management god instead of the highly flawed and ultimately useless garbage that it is.

Management relentlessly and zealously attempts to program letter carriers (especially newer letter carriers) into falsely thinking that management "gives" them the time allowed to complete their daily work. Instead, it is the other way around. Sure, a supervisor will come around and give you a time that he or she "thinks" you should be done with your work. The supervisor can even instruct you to return by a specific time.

However, that has nothing whatsoever to do with completing all your assigned work within any specific timeframe. That is your determination and is solely governed by the time that is actually needed to complete your work. That's where reporting requirements, as set forth in the M-41 Handbook, come in. **Reality is not defined by what your supervisor thinks; it is only defined by what you do.**

So, don't sweat the details. If you are instructed to work 8 hours, then work 8 hours. If you reasonably believe that you can't complete all work within 8 hours, then complete and submit a PS Form 3996 to notify management of this. If while performing delivery duties you become aware that you won't be able to finish and return in the time previously authorized, then notify management. It's their job to manage, not yours. Always follow the last instruction you are given.

Stop Caring About What Management Thinks

Most of all, please STOP caring about what management thinks - about anything! It's not who you are, but rather it's only what you do that matters, in the workplace and in life. In the hierarchy of the workplace, supervisors and management employees can give instructions to craft level employees. However, that's all there is, and having authority to give instructions does not convey any special status or respect to anyone.

You owe to the Postal Service an obligation to do the best job that you can and to promote the best

interests of the organization. You owe nothing to your supervisor or to any other management representative. The best interests of the USPS and the best interests of its management are often different things. Don't confuse them. Your loyalty is to the Postal Service, which is NOT your supervisor or anyone in management. Their paycheck comes from the same source as yours.

The most effective way to keep stress out of your job is to always keep it simple. It's about providing quality service to USPS customers. It's about a paycheck every two weeks. It's about taking care of your own life and of those that matter to you. That's all there is, and you should always keep it that way. If you have another agenda, don't bring it work. It's not wanted or needed.

So just show up, case and deliver the mail and then go home again. Again, that's all there really is, and all there needs to be. It's the business of postal management to be concerned with the details. It's the business of your union to protect your interests in the workplace. If your contractual rights are violated, then let us deal with management.

Life is complicated enough. Don't add your employment to that list of complications!

-- Joe Golonka
Vice President

NALC - Region 6 National Business Agent July/August Report

Brothers and Sisters,

Pandemic - still in the middle of it! There is no rest for the weary. The number of positive COVID-19 cases continue to rise. This trend will continue until there is a vaccine; therefore, we must remain vigilant regarding our safety measures. Social distancing and the wearing of face coverings will protect our co-workers and their loved ones - don't you want the same for you and your loved ones? Please insist everyone conforms to these noninvasive measures. Show you care about others-wear a face covering.

The new Postmaster General has taken of-

fic. Like most PMGs, he is anxious to put his fingerprint on the organization. The Postal Service announced a new concept (not really) they are planning to try. It is called Expedited to the Street/Afternoon Sortation (ESAS). Those of you that have been around a while may remember the old Expedited Preferential Mail (EPM) concept. EPM is still addressed in some handbooks (check out M-39 section 121.21 and the glossary in the M-41). The new ESAS program has similar characteristics.

Here's how ESAS is described in a Postal Service Stand Up Talk:

In this initiative, City carriers will not sort any mail during the morning operation. They will clock in, retrieve mail that was pulled down from the previous day and load with the following items:

Scanner, Mail in the Hot Case, Accountables, SPRS, Parcels, Sequenced sets as directed, DPS/FSS (as applicable)

Any unsorted First-Class flats will go directly to the street with the carrier and will be routed in delivery sequence while on the street.

Upon return from the street delivery, carriers will sort all mail, as directed by management. During this time, they will also handle any ancillary duties previously performed in the morning (edit books, hold mail, etc.) In summary, the basic guidelines of Expedited to Street/Afternoon Sortation are:

No morning sortation, Retrieve, Load, and Go, Minimal morning office time, Vehicle inspection, Service/safety talk, accountables
Afternoon Duties

Sort all available mail, Pull down route for next delivery day, Edit books, hold mail, etc.

END OF TALK...

City Letter Carriers have an instinct to want to provide the best service to our customers. Delivering all mail received that morning, especially First-Class mail, is what we are "programmed" to do. However, like it or not, our supervisors and managers have the right to instruct us to curtail or even delay mail.

Management is required to give you a 1571 upon instructing you to curtail mail. M-

39 section 111.2.j states:

"Issue PS Form 1571 when the carrier is instructed to curtail mail, indicating action thereon. Upon request, a duplicate of the completed form will be provided the carrier".

What do you think the chances are management will issue you the form without you asking for it? It is imperative you cover yourself by filling out the PS Form 1571 completely, have a manager sign acknowledging the curtailment and ask for your copy of the completed form for your records. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) can issue you a citation if you do not have a completed PS Form 1571.

To be clear, this ESAS initiative was supposed to be conducted in six sites in each district for approximately 30 to 60 days; however, the Great Lakes Area has decided to roll out the basics of this initiative throughout all installations.

I ask all City Letter Carriers to remain professional and continue to give the best service to our customers no matter the obstacles thrown at us by our employer.

Take Action. Congress is set to return to Washington D.C. Monday, July 20. Their next recess is to start August 7. They have little time to hash out the next American stimulus package. I am sure you are aware of the urgent need for the Postal Service to be included in this next package. Between the House bill HR 6800 (Heroes Act) which passed on May 15, 2020 and the Senate bill S 4174 introduced July 2, 2020, the groundwork is laid for the Postal Service to be included for some relief. However, we must not take anything for granted. Please, while Congress is back in session, contact your congressperson and senators to stress the importance for the Postal Service's need for assistance due to the financial impact of the pandemic. The NALC website is set up for your convenience to contact your members of Congress. Go to the "Take Action" tab and follow the easy step-by-step instructions. It takes less than two minutes and can save your job and the future of the Postal Service.

Stay Safe. Stay Healthy.

In Solidarity,

-- Troy Clark

*National Business Agent - Region 6
Kentucky - Indiana - Michigan (KIM)*

STAY SAFE

VOTE FROM HOME

Register from home

Recommended options (through 15th day before an election)

Register online

- Go to Michigan.gov/Vote and register.
- A valid driver's license or state ID is required to register online.

Register by mail

- Go to Michigan.gov/VoterRegForm.
- Download and fill out the Application to Vote and mail it in.

In-person option: Voters can register in person up to and on Election Day at their township or city clerk's office. Verify office hours first. Proof of residency must be provided if registering within two weeks of an election. Acceptable documents include a driver's license, state ID card, current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check or other government document. Documents must have name and current address. Digital copies are acceptable.

Apply from home for a ballot

Recommended options (note deadlines below)

Request an absentee ballot

- (1) Apply online at Michigan.gov/Vote.
- (2) Get an application or accessible application at Michigan.gov/Vote or from your clerk's website. Fill it out and sign it.
- Or (3) **sign up to automatically receive an application** before every election, so you always have the option to vote by mail. Visit Michigan.gov/Vote and enter your voter information on the home page. If you're not already on the permanent absent voter list, select "Yes" to join it and follow the instructions.

Submit your application

- **Online** – Your application form is transmitted electronically to clerk.
- **By mail** – Applications must be received by your clerk **by 5 p.m. the Friday before an election**. Your ballot will be mailed to you, so send your application at least two weeks prior to Election Day.
- **By email** – Scan or take a picture of your application and email it to your township or city clerk. It is recommended that you do this at least two weeks before Election Day.

In-person option: Drop off your application to your township or city clerk **by 4 p.m. the Monday before Election Day**, get your ballot and vote while you are there.

Vote from home with an absent voter ballot

Return ballot by mail

- Ballots must be received by your clerk's office **by 8 p.m. on Election Day**. Return by mail at least two weeks prior.

In-person option: Return your ballot to a dropbox or in person at your local clerk's office (especially if within two weeks of election). Call first for locations and hours.

Visit Michigan.gov/Vote for personalized voting information.



Branch 2184 2020 Scholarship Application

Qualifications:

1. Must be a dependent child of a Branch 2184 member in good standing (active or retired) or a child of a member now deceased.
2. Applicant's parent must be a member in good standing of Branch 2184 for at least one (1) year prior to making application, with the exception of children of members now deceased who were previously members in good standing of Branch 2184 at the time of their death.
3. Must be a high school senior, high school graduate, GED recipient, or attending college or technical school (undergraduate) at the time of submitting the application, and attending an eligible school in the fall. **
4. Only one application per child per year. Only one scholarship per family will be awarded each year.
5. Student must have maintained a 2.0 grade point average or above. A copy of grade transcript or equivalent must accompany application for scholarship.
6. If the NALC parent of a successful applicant is suspended by the Branch or makes an application for a supervisory position before monies are paid, the scholarship will be cancelled. Children of members who have applied for a supervisory position are excluded from making application for two (2) years following withdrawal of the supervisory application.
7. Students with full scholarships are not eligible.
8. Eligible schools: accredited and licensed colleges, trade schools, community colleges and schools of higher education only. The institution's eligibility shall be determined by the scholarship committee.
9. All decisions of the scholarship committee will be final.

**** TO BE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR THIS SCHOLARSHIP YOU MUST BE ENROLLED IN OR ENTERING AN ELIGIBLE SCHOOL FULL OR PART-TIME IN THE FALL OF 2020.**

Awards:

1. The scholarship committee shall award the scholarships by random drawing of all eligible applicants.
2. Scholarships will be on a yearly basis and will be awarded at the October monthly meeting.
3. Scholarships will be awarded in allotments of \$500.00. Four (4) scholarships of \$500.00 shall be allocated.
4. Four (4) alternates will be selected in the event that any scholarship winners are later ruled ineligible. The alternates' names will not be disclosed.
5. The scholarship will be disbursed to the student when a copy of a receipt for tuition, room and board, or books is provided to the committee. The student must be full-time or part-time as established by their school or college.

Member's Name:		Member's Phone Number:	
Member's Station:			
Applicant's Name and (Date of Birth):		Name of School:	
Address:		Address:	
Signature of Member:		Date:	
Signature of Applicant:		Date:	
Signature of Steward or Officer:		Date:	

**THIS APPLICATION
MUST BE MAILED TO
THE FOLLOWING
ADDRESS:**

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
BRANCH 2184, NALC
6969 Monroe
Taylor, MI 48180-1815

**Applications
Must be Received by
SEPTEMBER 28, 2020**

Injured During COVID

"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

We need to add 'nor pandemic' to this famous creed.

I want to thank all of you for all your hard work and dedication during this unprecedented time. Even though we do our best to work safely, accidents and injuries do happen. If you are injured and file a worker's compensation claim, you need to stay vigilant. The United States Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP) communicates via mail, and we all know how well the mail has been running lately.

The DOL responds to every claim that is submitted to them, usually within two weeks (pre-COVID). This first communication is just a letter letting you know they received your claim and it is being processed. This letter will be followed up with either a decision letter or a letter requesting additional information regarding your claim (developmental letter). This letter usually arrived within 30-45 days after you submitted your claim.

This hasn't been happening lately. For reasons we cannot control, the status letter is received much later or not at all by the injured carrier.

Just because you filed a claim; this doesn't make it an approved claim. If you haven't received anything from the DOL within 45 days of your injury, you need to contact them at (216) 902-5600 and speak to your OWCP claims examiner. This is your claim, and regardless on how long it takes to receive things by mail, it is on you to ensure that the DOL has everything they need to approve your claim. Regardless, when or if you receive a developmental letter the time limits do not change. You only have 30 days from the date on the DOL letter to respond.

In order to continue to get treatment for your injuries you must have an approved claim. Do not assume since you haven't heard anything, that everything is okay, and the claim is approved. You need to stay on top of your claim and get confirmation that the case was approved.

If you need assistance with your OWCP claim, please contact the union hall. We will be happy to assist you with the process.

-- Michele Szafran

Injury Compensation Specialist



Brookfield[®] Uniforms

Serving the Postal Industry for Over 40 Years

Support the Company that Supports Letter Carriers

- Brookfield replaces uniforms lost due to fire and natural disasters!
- Brookfield, along with State and Local NALC Branches, has raised over \$500,000 for the Letter Carrier Political Fund.
- Brookfield provides assistance for Conventions, Seminars, and Charity fund raising events!

Contact Your Brookfield Representative!

Denise Kreager

Retired Letter Carrier

4953 Sycamore Newport, MI 48166

313-478-5910 (voice)

Save it for When it Matters

It's late summer 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic continues. The United States has earned the dubious distinction of having the world's most pathetic response to the pandemic. Meanwhile, a National election is approaching even as the current administration engages in a politically motivated attempt to sabotage the Postal Service and its fundamental role in ensuring that American citizens can safely vote from home. Political demagoguery abounds and social media has become a cesspool of disinformation and dangerous conspiracy theories.

Many American citizens are angry and frightened and feeling insecure, including many Postal Service employees. Letter carriers in particular have daily contact with members of the public and the opportunity to interact conversationally, albeit briefly. Additionally, letter carriers, as well as many members of the public, are justifiably frustrated with USPS staffing and scheduling decisions as well as with delays in mail processing and delivery.

Letter carriers also encounter highly opinionated (and often misinformed) coworkers in the workplace. It seems inevitable that exchanges of opinion will occur, both inside and outside of the post office. However, that need not – and should not occur while you are on the clock.

From the Employee and Labor Relations Manual:

667.12 Employees in an active status must not engage in campaigns for or against changes in mail service. This regulation must not be construed to infringe on the rights to participate in labor organizations.

From the M-41 Handbook, City Carriers Duties and Responsibilities:

112.25 Be prompt, courteous, and obliging in the performance of duties. Attend quietly and diligently to work and refrain from loud talking and the use of profane language.

112.61 Do not engage in controversies with customers or other members of the public when on duty.

Additionally, letter carriers should NOT engage in any form of social media usage while on du-

ty, period. Put the phone down and just do your work.

But damn it, you've got something to say! Well, in fact we all have something to say. However, every American citizen will have the opportunity to express their opinions loudly and clearly in the forthcoming National election. Even better, you do not have to wait until November 3 to do so. Simply apply for and obtain an absentee ballot and complete it in the comfort and convenience of your home.

In the interim, don't allow your anger and frustration to adversely impact your job. By all means, become involved. Do your part to ensure a better future for you and for our nation. However, while you are at work, leave ALL of that alone. **Save it for when it matters!**

-- Joe Golonka
Vice President

Branch 2184 Web Site

www.nalc2184.org

Retirement Information
 CSRS & FERS Annuity Payments
 Branch Calendar
 "FMLA" forms
 OWCP Information
 Carrier Pay Chart
 Online Forms 3971, 3996, 3189
 CCA Information
 2184 Memo of Understanding
 National Agreement
 Grievance Forms
 Grievance Guidelines
 Grievance Issue Statements
 Defenses to Discipline
 JCAM, MRS, M-39, M-41
 Covid 19 Information
 Retirement Information

Contract Corner:

Q: Can a letter carrier holding a bid assignment make a deal with management to do another assignment on one of their regularly scheduled days?

Simply, NO. This is directly prohibited by the provisions of our Collective Bargaining Agreement, specifically Article 41, section 1.C.4. This reads

“The successful bidder will work the duty assignment as posted. Unanticipated circumstances may require a temporary change of assignment. This same rule shall apply to Carrier Technician assignments, unless a local agreement provides otherwise.”

The mere desire of management and/or an individual letter carrier holding a bid assignment to make an inside deal for their own personal convenience is NOT ever considered to be an “unanticipated circumstance.” Nor do individual employees have the authority to selectively renegotiate applicable Contract language.

Without this clear contractual language, the bidding and assignment rights of all letter carriers would be essentially voided and it would turn the post office work floor into a “choose your assignment” circus each day. The provisions of our Labor Contract with the Postal Service are negotiated with the intent of benefitting as many letter carriers a possible in any given situation. In some instances that might not be personally convenient to an individual letter carrier, but that is not what a Union is about.

Of importance, letter carriers working **outside of their regular schedules** such as ODL carriers being brought in on their nonscheduled days are not necessarily be entitled to work their regular bid assignments in some situations. The work rules for filling assignments in such situations have been negotiated by Branch 2184 and the Postal Service and are found in our Branch 2184 Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU).

Q: I recently was converted from a CCA to a part time flexible (PTF) position. How is this different than a fulltime regular position?

A: Part Time Flexible (PTF) positions in the letter carrier craft are not new, and in fact prior to the Jan-

uary 2013 Das Contract Arbitration award, all letter carriers began their USPS career level employment as PTFs. This USPS career position was originally known as a “substitute carrier” but it was changed to “part time flexible” during the 1970s. PTFs are members of the Regular Work Force, per Article 7 of our Collective Bargaining Agreement. This is comprised of two categories of employees, full-time and part-time. Article 7, section A.2 of the Contract provides that **“Part-Time:** Employees in this category shall be hired pursuant to such procedures as the Employer may establish and shall be assigned to regular schedules of less than forty (40) hours in a service week, or shall be available to work flexible hours as assigned by the Employer during the course of a service week.”

So, what does all of that mean? PTFS are career letter carriers with all the rights and benefits of all career carriers, including but not limited to: the career City Carrier pay scale, step increases, contractual wage increases including all COLA increases, the accrual of career craft seniority, earning both sick leave and annual leave, full participation in the Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) plans, full participation in the Thrift Savings Plan including USPS matching contributions, employer paid life insurance, and career service credit toward the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).

Additionally, although PTFs are not contractually guaranteed a schedule of 40 hours a week, they typically do work that many hours, and more. PTFs have priority scheduling consideration for straight time work hours over non-career employees. Specifically, Article 7, section 1.C.4 of the Contract states that “Over the course of a service week, the Employer will make every effort to ensure that qualified and available part-time flexible employees are utilized at the straight-time rate to prior to assigning such work to CCAS working in the same work location and on the same tour, providing that the reporting guarantee for CCA employees is met.”

This means that PTFS must be scheduled for work paid at the straight time rate up to 40 hours a week (but not necessarily 8 hours a day) prior to assigning this work to CCAs. Finally, PTFs also have the right to request hold downs (opts) on vacancies of 5 days or more in accordance with their career craft seniority, per the provisions of Article 41, section

2.B of the Contract. Such temporary vacancies are filled by career PTFS that have requested them in accordance with their seniority prior to CCAs that have requested them.

Q: My supervisor told us that were required to notify management in the morning if I was going to have "undertime." Is that correct?

A: No, that is not at all correct, and there is no contractual support for the supervisor's stated position, which is outside management's scope of authority. Specific Letter carrier reporting requirements are found in the M-41 Handbook, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities, section 131.4. These state that "It is your responsibility to verbally inform management when you are of the opinion that you will be unable to case all mail distributed to the route, perform other required duties, and leave on schedule or when you will be unable to complete delivery of all mail " (131.41); and "Inform management of this well in advance of the scheduled leaving time and not later than immediately following the final receipt of mail. Management will instruct you what to do" (131.42).

Note that this language specifically requires

letter carriers to notify management only when the carrier believes that they have more than 8 hours or work, not less.

Moreover, the contrived term "undertime" is not even a legitimate English word, so what does that even mean? Although management can assign additional work (up to eight total hours of work) where a letter carrier actually has less than eight hours of work on their assignment, the determination of this alleged situation is solely management's responsibility, not that of a letter carrier.

Moreover, letter carriers do not have magic powers of prediction, and the nature of letter carrier work is such that countless unexpected and variable factors can and will impact actual delivery time each day. If management persists with such bogus reporting requirements, this should be immediately challenged through the grievance procedure.



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Branch Uniform Bank Now Open!

As our new CCA Brothers and Sisters join us as new members, Branch 2184 is asking our retired and active carriers to donate new or used uniforms that they no longer need. If you would like to donate please bring them to the Branch office or give them to your Steward to drop off.

Thank you to **Terri Theeck** (Taylor), **Michele Manley** (Wayne), **Al Swinteck** (Dearborn Heights), **Jennifer Rake** (Northville), **Kim Hency** (Dearborn Annex), **Angeleta Eaton-Hicks** (Canton), **Lasonya Ware** (Ypsilanti), **Dave Rowland** (Ypsilanti), **Patty Neely** (Ypsilanti) for their donations.

CCAs please contact your steward to get your size clothing from the branch
Lets make our new members feel welcome.

For more information call
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ELECTION NOTICE

WESTERN WAYNE COUNTY, MI

This is official notice to all members of Branch 2184 that nominations for Branch President, Executive Vice-President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary-Treasurer, Health Benefits Representative, Sergeant-at-Arms, Retirees' Officer who shall be a retired member, three (3) Trustees, and all station Stewards; as well as State and National Convention delegates for the 2021-2023 term will be taken during the October 7, 2020 regular Branch meeting at our Branch 2184 office building at 6969 Monroe Taylor, MI. All Branch officers by virtue of their positions are automatic delegates to the State and National Conventions. Elections will be conducted by mail and the results will be announced at the December 2, 2020 Branch meeting.

Jacqueline McGregory
Recording Secretary Branch 2184