

# MEMO To The Branch 2184 Leadership Council, June 13, 2023



Walt McGregory  
Jackie McGregory  
Darryl Clay  
Mel MacDonald  
Cathy Tondreau  
Jim Powell  
Phil Ashford  
Tracy Mitchell  
Erik Venzke  
Felicia Davis  
Leonard Zawisa  
Dave Reise  
Joe Golonka  
Kris Shaw  
Mark Owen  
Scott Russell  
Karen Russell  
Tod Lilla  
Ryan Zyngier  
Bryon Hendricks  
Jillian Hudgins  
Symone Coleman  
Yvonne Jackson  
Karl Tamburro  
Damon Green  
Shaun Fowlkes  
Marwan Ghotemi  
Chanel Harrison  
Lillian Bogosian  
Rachel Stachulski  
Scherrie Lacey  
Scott Watts  
Valerie Watkins  
Kristie Nelson  
Diego Forshaw  
Keith Benedict  
Victor Siemiesz  
William Douglas  
Jeffrey Webb  
Casey Pennington  
Nakia Whitfield  
Katrina Jones  
Ananias Epps  
Ramon Robinson  
Paul Bordine  
Mike Tredway  
Danita Hill

This month's Leadership Council Memo will begin as usual with an update concerning Branch 2184 administrative matters. As we have reached the summer season, per our Bylaws there will be a break in our regularly scheduled Branch membership meetings for the months of July and August. Our next regular membership meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 6 at 7:30 p.m. at the Branch 2184 office. At the following month's membership meeting, on Wednesday, October 4, nominations will be taken for Branch 2184 officers, station stewards, and convention delegates for the 2024-2026 term of office.

Branch 2184's steward and executive board meetings will continue through the summer, as our core function of topflight Contract enforcement as well as the administrative functions of our Branch never take a break. Steward meetings in July are scheduled for Tuesday, July 11 and Monday, July 17. The July 11 Steward meeting will take place at the Branch 2184 office beginning at 7:00 p.m. **The July 17 Steward meeting will be conducted online by use of WebEx.** An executive board meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 31 at 7:30 at the Branch 2184 office.

Although the NALC and USPS had not reached agreement on a new Contract by the time the existing collective bargaining agreement was scheduled to expire at midnight on May 20, the negotiating teams agreed to continue talks and mediation with the hope of achieving a negotiated successor Contract. As such, all the terms and conditions of the previous (2019-2023) Contract have been carried forward and remain fully in force.

Should the parties subsequently reach a tentative proposed agreement, a ratification referendum will take place with copies of the proposed Contract and a ballot sent to all active (non-retired) members in good standing. If the NALC and USPS are still unable to reach an agreement, interest arbitration would occur with a neutral national arbitrator ruling on all unresolved issues. The decisions of the arbitrator would be final and binding on both the NALC and the Postal Service.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our members, family members and others, this year's NALC Food Drive was a success in Branch 2184, with a total of 240,437 pounds of food collected. A special note of thanks goes to our station Food Drive coordinators as well as out Branch coordinators for their time and effort with this year's Food Drive. The 2024 NALC Food Drive will take place on Saturday, May 11.

Next up on the Branch 2184 calendar of events is our premier social function each year. Branch 2184's highly popular annual picnic for members and their families will take place on Sunday, June 25 from 12:00 noon until 6:00 p.m. on the grounds of the Branch 2184 office. There will be lots of food, drink, music, pony rides and other activities for the children, and all kinds of picnic fun and union solidarity for everyone.

If you have not already volunteered to assist with this year's picnic, please do so ASAP. The more volunteers we have, the easier our collective effort on behalf of our members will be. Leadership in Branch 2184 and the NALC means walking the walk as well as talking the talk. We have many dedicated leaders in Branch 2184, both newer as well as our more veteran leaders. So, let's just do this!

A question arose about step increase deferrals, which can occur when excess leave without pay (LWOP) is used during the waiting period for the next step increase. As a reminder, step increases (beginning at Step A and ending at Step P) occur during the first 13 years and 4 months of career level USPS employment. A career employee that incurs more than 13 weeks of LWOP during the waiting period for their next step increase will have the step increase deferred (delayed), unless the LWOP resulted from time on the rolls of OWCP, on military leave, or while working fulltime for an employee organization such as the NALC. The duration of step increase deferral depends on the amount of LWOP used during the waiting period. 13 weeks or less of LWOP during the waiting period results in no deferral of the next step increase. 14 to 26 weeks of LWOP during the waiting period results in a step increase deferral of 7 pay periods. 27 to 40 weeks of LWOP during the waiting period results in a step increase deferral of 14 pay periods. For more on deferral of periodic step increases, see the ELM section 422.133.

Management continues to badger and misinform our members in many stations about nonexistent time "allowances" for nearly every aspect of letter carrier work. There simply is NO "one hour" allowance for office time, nor a "22 minutes" for loading time, nor a "5 minutes" time allowance for completion of necessary office duties upon return from the street. Additionally, and as always, there are NO established time allowances for any aspect of letter carrier street duties. Stewards, when you become aware that management has misinformed (lied to) a carrier or carriers in your station or has threatened disciplinary action for allegedly not meeting a bogus "time allowance" it absolutely essential that you immediately begin a grievance investigation, the first time and EVERY time. We cannot ever allow management to get away with misinforming and attempting to intimidate our members with this nonsense.

The NALC and USPS have renewed the bidding procedures outlined in Article 12.3.A of the National Agreement, effective May 21, 2023. The agreement is M-01994 in the NALC Materials Reference System (MRS). This renewal allows city letter carriers to continue bidding on, and subsequently be awarded, vacant job assignments during the ongoing contract negotiations and in the event the parties come to an impasse and proceed to interest arbitration. **Successful bids following May 21, 2023, will count toward the maximum bids established in the next National Agreement.**

A Branch 2184 member asked if there was a requirement to "speak English" on the post office work floor, apparently after being told by a steward that this was the case. To be clear, there is NO such requirement anywhere within the USPS, and employees can choose to speak in whatever language they choose. Additionally, there is no mandated "national language" in the United States, despite claims to the contrary made by some misinformed individuals. There is in fact more than 200 languages currently spoken in the United States. As the English language is the most common means of oral communication in the Postal Service, it is reasonable to expect that work-related discussions with management be conducted in the language understood by both parties. However, any personal or private discussions can be conducted in the speaker's language of choice.