

# THE MAIL HANDLER

SUMMER 2020

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION



## MAIL HANDLERS JOIN MEMBERS OF HOUSE AND SENATE ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO PROTEST POSTAL CUTBACKS

4

COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS  
DEVASTATING EFFECT ON  
THE USPS

8

SURVIVING A PRESIDENTIAL  
ELECTION WHILE SAVING  
THE USPS

18

MAIL HANDLERS FIGHT  
INACTION AND CUTBACKS

# This Plan is Your Plan



Welcome new MHBP enrollees and returning members. Thank you for supporting your union-sponsored health plan. We appreciate the important work you do each day in service to this country and are happy to provide you with the health coverage you need.

**MHBP provides health coverage that truly sets the standard for all Federal employee health plans. You can count on us to be there for you with:**

- Superior customer service
- A nationwide network — freedom to choose your own doctors and hospitals
- 100% coverage for Network preventive care
- No referrals required to see specialists

Plus, Standard Option and Value Plan members can earn rewards for completing a Health Risk Assessment and a Biometric Screening.

Did you miss your chance to join your colleagues in enrolling in an MHBP plan? It's not too late! You can sign up the next time you have a qualifying enrollment opportunity.\*

No matter what job you do in the service of the U.S. public, this plan is your plan.

For more information, call **800-410-7778**  
or visit **MHBP.com**.



\*Qualifying life events allow individuals the chance to change their plan selection if one of the following life events occurs: marriage, birth, adoption, divorce, loss of health coverage, etc. This is a summary of the features of the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan (MHBP). Before making a final decision, please read the 2019 official Plan Brochures (RI 71-007 or RI 71-016). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations, and exclusions set forth in the 2019 official Plan Brochure. For more information about MHBP plans, please refer to [www.MHBP.com](http://www.MHBP.com).  
©2019 Aetna, Inc. All rights reserved.



# THE MAIL HANDLER

NATIONAL POSTAL  
MAIL HANDLERS UNION

## NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

### Paul V. Hogrogian

National President

### Michael J. Hora

Secretary-Treasurer

### June Harris

Vice President  
Central Region

### John A. Gibson

Vice President  
Eastern Region

### David E. Wilkin

Vice President  
Northeastern Region

### Lawrence B. Sapp

Vice President  
Southern Region

### Don J. Sneesby

Vice President  
Western Region

The Mail Handler, ISSN:1098-5689, is published quarterly by the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, 815 16<sup>th</sup> St, N.W. Suite 5100, Washington, DC 20006. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C. and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Mail Handler, 815 16<sup>th</sup> St, N.W. Suite 5100, Washington, DC 20006. Copyright 2020: National Postal Mail Handlers Union. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited. The Mail Handler is published for the members of our union. For additional copies please send \$2.00 to: National Postal Mail Handlers Union—National Headquarters, 815 16<sup>th</sup> St, N.W. Suite 5100, Washington, DC 20006, (202) 833-9095.

## CONTENTS

### 4 President's Report

COVID-19 pandemic has devastating effect on the USPS and all employees

### 8 Secretary-Treasurer's Report

A pandemic, a presidential election and efforts to preserve the usps and universal service

### 10 CAD Manager's Report

Local memorandum of understanding/ impasse procedures

### 14 Mail Handlers Deliver Our Message: Save the Postal Service

### 18 NPMHU Members Fight Inaction in the Senate and Cutbacks

### 24 MHBP

Chronic diseases in uncertain times

### 27 NPMHU Women's Committee Report

Time to make a change

### 29 Mail Handlers Across the Country

See pictures of various meetings and functions across the country



#### ON THE COVER:

Members of the House and Senate speak out on damaging changes made to postal service standards in front on USPS Headquarters. Pictured: Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA-08), Rep. Anthony Brown (D-MD-04), NPMHU NST Michael Hora, Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), John Sarbanes (D-MD-03), Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD-05), Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA), and Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)

THE QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE  
NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION

# COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS DEVASTATING EFFECT

ON THE USPS AND ALL EMPLOYEES

Paul V. Hogrogian, National President



**D**ear Members:  
The terms of our 2019 National Agreement have been finalized and ratified by our membership. Copies of the contract have been mailed to all members. It was a long and tough bargaining process, but I believe that we achieved many gains and benefits for all Mail Handlers, without making any significant concessions.

The Contract Administration Department is now focusing its efforts on the implementation of the terms of the new National Agreement. These efforts include updating the Contract Interpretation Manual (CIM) to incorporate new and modified contract provisions and language, as well as adding the National Arbitrations and Step 4 agreements that were issued since the last update. I am confident that we will soon have an updated CIM.

\* \* \*

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a devastating effect on the Postal Service and all of its employees. Mail Handlers and postal workers from around the country continue to courageously perform essential federal service under the extraordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

When I reported to you on June 11, 2020, the COVID-19 reports issued by the Postal Service showed that there were 765 postal workers who were confirmed to be COVID-19 positive and 284 employees presumed to be positive for a total of 1,049 infected employees.

Since June 11, 2020, the increase in the COVID numbers was significant. The September 1, 2020 report shows 1,695 postal workers who have tested positive and another 481 employees who have been presumed to be positive for a total of 2,176 infected employees (an increase of 107%). The number of postal employees in quarantine is 3,513. Unfortunately, at least 85 postal workers have died because of COVID-19, including 4 Mail Handlers. While the numbers in the Northeast and East continue to improve or remain stable, the numbers in other parts of the country, especially in those jurisdictions where face covering and social distancing policies are not strictly enforced, are worsening. The increase in the infection rate is occurring at precisely the same time as more and more postal employees are returning to work. The availability rates in many postal installations continue to rise and stands at 78% nationwide. The pre-COVID rate was 84% and the COVID low was 70%, although certain installations showed a much lower availability rate.

**This means that this COVID crisis is far from over. There is no real end in sight. We must remain vigilant and continue to protect ourselves and our co-workers. The stabilizing of the infection rate in the Northeast and East proves that the protocols put in place work. We must continue to follow these protocols, especially those concerning social distancing and the wearing of face coverings and masks.**

Complying with these protocols will protect yourself as well as your co-workers.

Please contact your Union representatives if your facility is not following any of these protocols (Face Coverings, Supplies, Social Distancing, Stand-Up Talks, Cleanings, etc.).

NPMHU representatives continue to meet on a regular basis with their counterparts in postal management to discuss the Postal Service's response to the outbreak of the virus and to ensure that the proper protocols are in place during ever-changing circumstances. The NPMHU, as well as the APWU, NALC, and NRLCA, have been in discussions with senior Postal Management to implement a "temperature taking" process in postal installations. The NPMHU feels that as more and more postal employees are returning to work, more protections need to be put in place. Details such as procedures when an employee exceeds that threshold, return to work protocols, and privacy concerns are still being finalized. Discussions are also taking place regarding which installations will implement "temperature taking" procedures. Finalizing these details has become more complicated than expected.

Discussions with the Postal Service are also taking place regarding making COVID-19 testing available for postal employees at postal facilities. The NPMHU believes that this would be a positive step in ensuring that Mail Handlers and all postal workers are protected from the COVID-19 pandemic. More details will be provided as these discussions progress.

# JOE BIDEN *for* PRESIDENT



# WE'RE WITH JOE



The NPMHU also reached agreement with the Postal Service to further extend the following Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and policy statements until September 25, 2020:

1. Sick Leave for Dependent Care (Child Care)
2. Liberal Leave Policy
3. MHA Leave
4. Temporary MHA Exception Period
5. Temporary Extension on Step 3 and Arbitration Appeals

The MOU on the Temporary MHA Exception Period contains a provision that protects the rights of those Mail Handlers who have signed the Overtime Desired List. “The MHAs will not be used to the detriment of Mail

Handlers on the Overtime Desired List.” This generally means that in those installations where temporary MHAs are hired in excess of the contractual MHA cap, the Overtime Desired List(s) should be maximized (12 hours per day/7 days per week).

The Liberal Leave Letter provides that “Leave taken for COVID-19 related reasons ... may not be cited in discipline for failing to maintain an assigned schedule under ELM 511.43.”

Our Regional Directors are in constant contact with their counterparts in the Postal Area Offices to discuss COVID-19 issues. If you are aware of any violations of the protocols listed above, please bring them to the attention of your local union representatives so that they may refer them to the Regional Directors. Our Regional

Directors have been extremely successful in rectifying problems brought to their attention. However, they cannot correct a problem of which they are not aware.

\* \* \*

The USPS under new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy issued several memos outlining his “expectations and plan.” These “expectations and plan” included the following:

- “Overtime will be eliminated. Again, we are paying too much in OT and it is not effective and will soon be taken off the table.”
- The USPS will no longer use excessive cost to get the basic job done: “If the plants run late they will keep the mail for the next day.”

The plans also included removal of mail processing equipment and the reduction of retail units.

Most processing plants are already extremely understaffed. Eliminating or even reducing overtime can only result in increased delays in the processing and delivery of mail and packages, including critical items such as prescriptions and election materials. Delaying mail and cutting services can only lead customers to seek alternate means of delivery and decrease much needed revenue.

The Postal Service is implementing these initiatives without notification, discussion, or negotiation with the NPMHU or the other postal unions. The NPMHU will fully enforce the provisions of the National Agreement and all negotiated MOUs as they apply to overtime and staffing.

After many days of non-stop media coverage and congressional attention on the Postal Service, and just days before testifying before key Senate and House Committees with jurisdiction over postal issues, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy issued a statement which included the following:

- Retail hours will not change
- Mail Processing equipment and collection boxes will remain where they are
- No mail processing facilities will be closed
- Overtime will continue to be approved as needed
- Longstanding operation initiatives that may have been put in place prior to his selection as PMG will be suspended

The above changes are only effective until after the November elections.

While on its face the Postmaster General's statement appears to be a step in the right direction, actions speak much louder than words.

The commitment that mail processing equipment will not be removed

rings hollow since the majority of over 600 mail processing machines to be removed have, in fact, already been removed. The Postmaster General testified before the Senate Committee that there are no intentions to reinstall any of the equipment that has already been removed.

The commitment that "Overtime will continue to be approved as needed" is meaningless unless the people in charge of the actual mail processing operations are given the authority to determine when overtime is necessary and to authorize such necessary overtime without waiting for approval from higher levels of management.

## While on its face the Postmaster General's statement appears to be a step in the right direction, actions speak much louder than words.

It is quite disturbing that the Postmaster General's statement did not strictly adhere to dispatch times. Trucks are now required to leave at the appointed time, without excuse, regardless of the circumstances.

The full resources of the National Office, all of its Regional Representatives, and certainly its Local Unions and representatives must continue to coordinate our efforts to preserve USPS operations, protect jobs, and maintain the great service that the American public has come to expect.

On July 21, 2020, during the first-ever virtual NPMHU nomination meeting, I was honored and humbled to be re-elected by acclamation as National President by the elected delegates to the 2020 National Convention. Also re-elected by acclamation were National-Secretary Treasurer Mike Hora and Regional Vice Presidents Lawrence Sapp (Southern), Dave Wilkin (Northeastern), and June Harris

(Central). Mail ballot elections will be held during September and October for the Eastern and Western Regional Vice President offices.

On behalf of myself and the other re-elected officers, I want to thank the delegates and the membership for the trust and confidence that they have shown in us. I am certain that the entire National Executive Board will continue to work hard, as we strive every day to represent Mail Handlers to the best of our ability.

Please read your bulletin boards and visit our website (NPMHU.org) and our mobile APP on a regular basis to obtain the latest information. We must

be vigilant about how we go about our business, but we must remain as calm as possible. We will all get through this together. Please stay safe.

If you have any questions, please contact your steward or another Union Representative.

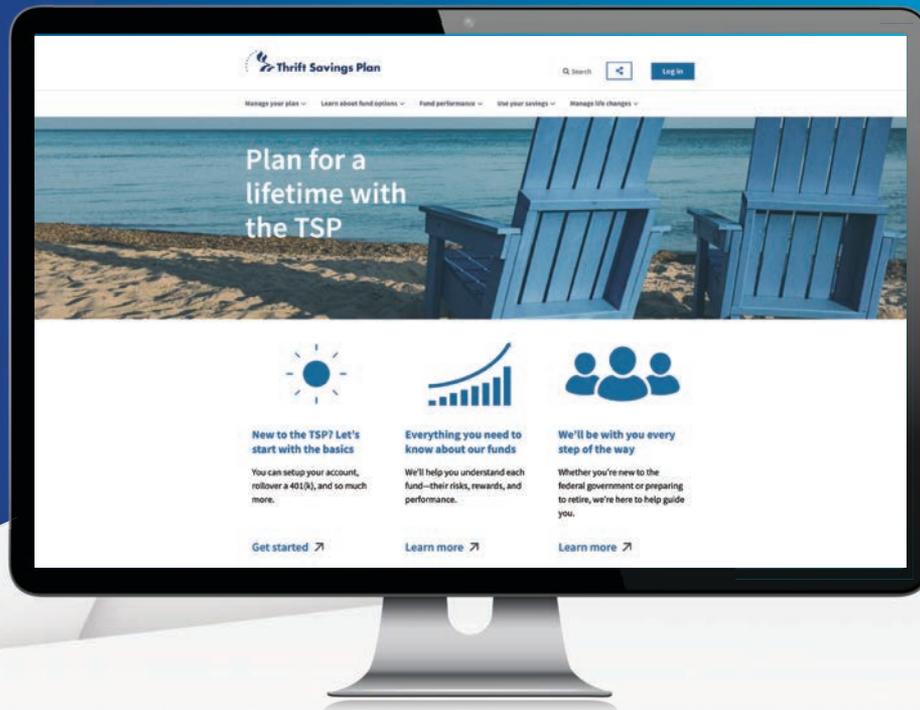
I remain confident that through the work of our Contract Administration Department and our legal representatives, and through the hard work of our Regional, Local, and Branch representatives, we can successfully meet any and all challenges that lie before us.

In these and other endeavors, the continuing support of all Mail Handlers is very much appreciated.

Fraternally,



**Paul V. Hogrogian**  
National President



# THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN

## CHANGES IMPROVING YOUR TSP EXPERIENCE

### MORE LIFECYCLE (L) FUNDS MEAN MORE INVESTMENT CHOICES

You are now able to choose among a new lineup of L Funds that allow you to more closely target when you'll need your TSP savings. As of July 1, 2020, you can invest in any of ten L Funds with target dates separated by only five years instead of ten, doubling the L Fund options previously available to you.

### WEBSITE REDESIGNED WITH YOU IN MIND

If you haven't visited [tsp.gov](https://tsp.gov) recently, you're in for a nice surprise next time you do. The TSP website redesign makes it easy for you to find information you need. Come explore the new navigation, compare funds, and brush

up on your TSP knowledge. They promise continued improvements based on user's feedback.

### CARES ACT AND COVID-19-RELATED CHANGES

We implemented several temporary options for participants affected by COVID-19, as authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. These include **temporary loan and withdrawal options** and **changes to 2020 required minimum distributions (RMDs)**.

### ON TRACK: AUTOMATIC ENROLLMENT PERCENTAGE INCREASE

Beginning October 1, 2020, new participants will be automatically enrolled in the TSP at 5% of their pay. This change

also includes Blended Retirement System (BRS) participants automatically re-enrolled in the TSP on or after January 1, 2021. The increase will allow new participants to get the full matching contributions from their agency or service.

If you are currently an active participant and are not contributing *at least 5%*, then **you're missing out on free money**. Increase your percentage today by logging in to your electronic payroll system and upping your contribution amount.



## A PANDEMIC, A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THE USPS AND UNIVERSAL SERVICE

WE ARE UP FOR THE FIGHT OF OUR LIVES.

Michael J. Hora, National Secretary-Treasurer



I would like to begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to the membership for the continued support shown to me as your National Secretary-Treasurer. I am humbled and honored to have been nominated and elected by acclamation on July 21, 2020. I greatly appreciate the continued opportunity and commitment to you and the organization. I would also like to offer congratulations to President Hogrogian and Vice Presidents Harris, Sapp, and Wilkin on their nominations and reelection by acclamation as well. I am honored to have an opportunity to continue working with them over the coming years. There will be elections this fall for Eastern Region Vice President and Western Region Vice President within their respective regions; I encourage all members of both regions to participate in our union's democratic process and vote.

If someone had told me a year ago that nominations would occur by way of a virtual meeting over the Internet, I would have not believed it. In fact, since the coronavirus, the NPMHU has embraced virtual SAMLU meetings, local Council and Board meetings, virtual local and branch membership meetings and even steward training sessions in many locals across the country. The pandemic and social distancing recommendations are not a reason to discontinue operations. The NPMHU has found a way to continue doing the union's work. I would like to commend the many locals that have stepped up, adapted and modified protocols to continue the work

of the organization. Out of an abundance of concern for the well-being of our convention delegates, guests, and staff, the National Executive Board made the decision to delay the 2020 Convention. The NPMHU Convention will be a shortened four-day meeting now set to begin on March 29, 2021. We have reached agreement to modify contracts with the convention hotel and off-site venues. The convention planning team is working on finalizing a modified program and will be sending updated guidance to all delegates in the coming months.

integrity of the services we perform. You cannot turn on the television without seeing a piece on the Postal Service. We are accustomed to being the line-item edit in legislation to which our issue is typically removed. Today, we are front and center because the American public is concerned about the degradation of service during a pandemic as we approach a national election. A significant number of Americans will vote by mail in the upcoming November election. We deliver prescriptions, checks, food, essential supplies and yes, ballots without regard to one's race,

**The USPS was a top-rated government agency before the coronavirus, with 91% of Americans expressing a favorable opinion of the Postal Service in an April Pew Research Center survey.**

Mail Handlers and all postal employees are on the front line performing the public's essential services in the grips of a pandemic. The USPS was a top-rated government agency before the coronavirus, with 91% of Americans expressing a favorable opinion of the Postal Service in an April Pew Research Center survey. But never before have we been moved to media's center stage like that which is occurring now. The spotlight cast upon the Postal Service is shining much needed light on the reckless operational changes seemingly meant to disrupt and cast doubt on the

religion, address, income or political leaning, but we do need some assistance. The attention shown to the USPS sends a message that folks are watching. Whether a rally at one's local post office or a demonstration at the gates of a processing and distribution center, we are getting the message out. Consider that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called for a day of action to save the Postal Service in the fourth paragraph of a Sunday afternoon press release and Dear Colleague letter. With two days' notice, our members scrambled into action, organized protests

and participated in more than 70 press events with Members of Congress throughout the country. Many postal employees and incidental witnesses took time to provide evidence of mail delays to congressional representatives and staff in preparation for two hearings that occurred in August 2020.

It is concerning that Postmaster General DeJoy has stated during recent testimony that the USPS does not need the additional \$25 billion in funding that is included in H.R. 8015, the Delivering for America Act. This is in direct contradiction to the opinion of the USPS Board of Governors. Moreover, the PMG negotiated some very troubling terms with the United States Department of Treasury regarding access to the \$10 billion of borrowing authority provided in the CARES Act. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin incorrectly stated last month that USPS doesn't need the money because of a surge in package revenue. And President Donald Trump previously threatened to hold up the loan unless USPS agrees to significantly raise package delivery rates for e-commerce giants such as Amazon, a commonly espoused mantra intended to impact his arch nemesis and Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos.

Frankly, the USPS does not need another loan; the Postal Service needs funding through emergency appropriations without strings attached that enable the organization to function and satisfy our universal service obligations to every address in the entire country as required by statute. We are a service just like law enforcement, defense, or transportation. It is time to stop pretending that we are self-sufficient and can function without the support of the federal government. As a result of the pandemic, mail volume and revenue have plummeted. This does not change the fact that we still process mail and deliver to every address in the country.

It is often stated that the USPS should be run like a business. I could

agree if the Postal Service had the same liberties and options of those afforded to a traditional business. Our pricing and product structure is strictly controlled by oversight from the Postal Regulatory Commission. The USPS cannot make timely pricing adjustments to account for market changes. Have you ever purchased a cruise vacation and discovered that the cruise line placed a fuel surcharge on the price of your ticket? The USPS cannot impose a fuel surcharge to address market conditions like other carriers such as FedEx and UPS. To take this one step further, the USPS often delivers the last mile for FedEx and UPS, in part because it is not cost effective for private carriers to travel to every single house in the United States no matter how remotely located. So, other carriers rely on the USPS because we have the infrastructure and delivery network in place to make that delivery, and we are required to do so by law. Those that reside and operate businesses in densely populated metropolitan areas enjoy the competition of multiple carriers fighting for their business. However, those that reside or run a business in a small isolated community appreciate the obligation of a funded and operational Postal Service, often unaware that the USPS may be losing money servicing their community.

We are in the fight of our lives. President Trump has referred to the Postal Service as a joke, but the public knows different. We must accomplish several things from all this noise. Our very existence is in doubt and we must take steps to protect our future. We are continuing to meet with Members of Congress, we will attend events that keep postal issues on the front burner, and we must register and vote in the upcoming election. The attendees of our National Convention typically take up the matter of the NPMHU's formal candidate endorsements; however, because the 2020 convention has been

rescheduled to after the election, the task of presidential endorsement has been moved to the National Executive Board's next meeting, set for September 2020. There is no doubt about the endorsement, so I strongly encourage you to vote for the candidate that is not trying to eliminate or destroy the company that issues your paycheck every other week. We're with Joe.

Over the past few weeks, the NPMHU printed and mailed 2019 contracts to every dues paying member. We relied on Pay Period 15 of 2020 for purposes of this mailing. Extra contracts were mailed to each local union headquarters. Please direct individual requests for contracts to your local union.

Finally, a word about union dues and retroactive wage payments. The National Office recently implemented a regular membership dues increase in the amount of one dollar (\$1.00) per pay period - of which the Local Union will receive eighty cents (\$.80) per pay period. This dues increase was scheduled to be implemented in PP19-2020, to be reflected in paychecks issued on September 18, 2020.

The retroactive amount for the dues increase will result in a **one-time** collection of an additional \$21.00 representing the increase from PP25-2019 through PP19-2020. Most mail handlers will be debited \$47 on September 18, 2020 and dues will return to the new amount, \$26.00 for most, in PP20-2020. Additionally, the USPS has notified the NPMHU that the retroactive wage payment is tentatively scheduled to be paid in PP 22-2020.

Please remain focused on safety, and thank you for your continued support.

In Unity,



**Michael J. Hora**  
National Secretary-Treasurer

# LOCAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING/IMPASSE PROCEDURES

Teresa Harmon, Manager, CAD



In this issue I will go over the process for negotiating the Local Memorandum of Understanding and the Impasse Procedures governing that process. I originally wrote about this topic earlier this year, but there has since been a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the parties on April 9, 2020 to extend the timeframes that were established in the 2019 National Agreement due to the impact of the COVID pandemic.

The National Agreement under Article 30 allows for local negotiation of 20 specific items provided that no local memorandum of understanding may be inconsistent with or vary the terms of the National Agreement.

These items include the following:

- a. Additional or longer wash-up periods
- b. Guidelines for the curtailment or termination of postal operations to conform to orders of local authorities or as local conditions warrant because of emergency conditions
- c. Formulation of local leave program
- d. The duration of the choice vacation period
- e. The determination of the beginning day of an employee's vacation period
- f. Whether employees at their option may request two selections during the choice vacation period, in units of either 5 or 10 days
- g. Whether jury duty and attendance at National or State Conventions should be charged to the choice vacation period
- h. Determination of the maximum percentage of employees who shall receive leave each week of the choice vacation period
- i. The issuance of official notices to each employee of the vacation schedule approved for such employee
- j. Determination of the date and means of notifying employees of the beginning of the new leave year
- k. The procedures for submission of applications for annual leave during other than the choice vacation period

- l. Whether "Overtime Desired" lists in Article 8 shall be by section and/or tour
- m. The number of light duty assignments to be reserved for temporary or permanent light duty assignment
- n. The method to be used in reserving light duty assignments so that no regularly assigned member of the regular work force will be adversely affected.
- o. The identification of assignments that are to be considered light duty
- p. The identification of assignments comprising a section, when it is proposed to reassign within an installation, employees excessed to the needs of a section
- q. The assignment of employee parking spaces
- r. The determination as to whether annual leave to attend Union activities requested prior to determination of the choice vacation schedule is to be part of the total choice vacation plan
- s. Those other items which are subject to local negotiations as provided in the following Articles:
  - Article 12, Section .3B5
  - Article 12, Section .3C
  - Article 12, Section .3E3g
  - Article 12, Section .4
  - Article 12, Section .6C4a
  - Article 13, Section .3
- t. Local implementation of this Agreement relating to seniority, reassignments and posting.

The April 9, 2020 MOU that extended the period for negotiating the Local Memorandum of Understanding now identifies the time-frames for negotiations of the Local Memorandum of Understanding as a thirty (30) consecutive day bargaining period during the sixty (60) day period commencing on September 2, 2020 and ending on October 31, 2020. The default bargaining period, if the parties cannot agree to the exact thirty (30) day period, is October 2, 2020 through October 31, 2020.

Either party can open negotiations with notification to the other party on or before September 15, 2020. Thereafter, the key time-frames to remember regarding Local negotiations are as follows:

1. The deadline for notification of intent to open negotiations is September 15, 2020. If neither party provides written notification of its intent to invoke local implementation procedures by September 15, 2020, presently effective Memoranda of Understanding that are not inconsistent or in conflict with the 2019 National Agreement shall remain in effect during the term of the Agreement. The 2019 National Agreement will be in effect from September 21, 2019 through September 20, 2022.

2. Initial proposals must be exchanged by the parties within the first twenty one (21) days of the thirty (30) consecutive day local implementation period.

3. In the event that any issue(s) remain in dispute at the end of the thirty (30) consecutive day implementation period, each party shall identify such issue(s) in writing. Initialed copies of this written statement and copies of all proposals and counterproposals pertinent to the issue(s) in dispute shall be appealed within fifteen (15) days after October 31, 2020 to all of the following:

- LR Service Center
- Installation Head
- Local Union President
- NPMHU Regional Representative

4. The appropriate management official at the Area office and the Regional Union representative shall attempt to resolve the matters in dispute within seventy five (75) days of October 31, 2020. The appropriate management official at the

Area office and the Regional Union representative will have full authority to resolve all issues at dispute.

5. If the parties at the Area/Regional level are unable to reach agreement by the end of the seventy five (75) day period, the issues may be appealed to final and binding arbitration within twenty one (21) days of the seventy five (75) day period. The issues may be appealed by either the Union or the Postal Service's Vice President of Labor Relations. An appeal by the Union is done by the National Office.

6. Once the case is appealed to arbitration, it will be returned to the Local Union for processing. The appeal will be given priority scheduling on the District Regular Contract Docket, meaning that that it will be moved to the top of the arbitration docket for contract/non-disciplinary cases.

If you have any questions, please talk to your Local Union officials for more information.

## MAILS ACCESS

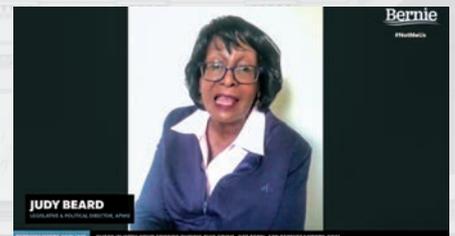
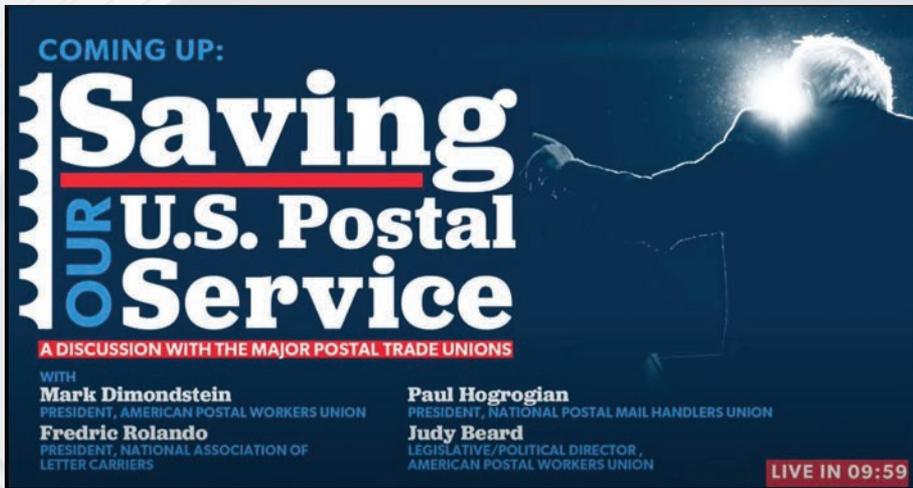
I also want to remind everyone how you can register and access our MAILS System.

To access MAILS, go to our website at <https://www.npmhu.org>,

- Go to Member Resources,
- Click on Mails and Shop Steward Resources, and
- Register as a new user.

This will give you access to thousands of arbitration awards, and hundreds of other crucial documents, including the current and past National Agreements, the current and past Contract Interpretation Manual, USPS Handbooks and Manuals, all prior CAD Reports, and documents concerning jurisdictional issues under RI-399. As often has been said, knowledge is power.





# Senator Bernie Sanders

HOLDS VIRTUAL TOWN HALL WITH POSTAL UNION LEADERS ON HOW TO SAVE USPS

Senator Bernie Sanders (VT-I) led a virtual town hall with the leaders of the country's top postal unions to discuss how to save the U.S. Postal Service, as the nation's most popular government institution faces major financial challenges while grappling with the coronavirus pandemic. Senator Sanders was joined by NPMHU President Paul Hogrogian, APWU President Mark Dimondstein with Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard, and NALC President Fred Rolando. The panel discussed the fate of the 640,000 postal workers and the operating status of the Postal Service.

Sen. Sanders kicked off the session with the important question, "What happens to the country if the Postal Service went out of business?" He went on to consider what a privatized mail industry might look like when comparing rural small-town delivery to service in major metropolitan areas. The panelists spoke about the importance of the universal service obligation, plummeting postal revenue, and the necessity of financial relief in the form of congressional legislation. Senator Sanders also raised the importance of voting my mail, acknowledging the challenges presented by current pandemic.

# John Lewis

## CIVIL RIGHTS ICON MAKES FINAL TRIP TO CAPITOL HILL

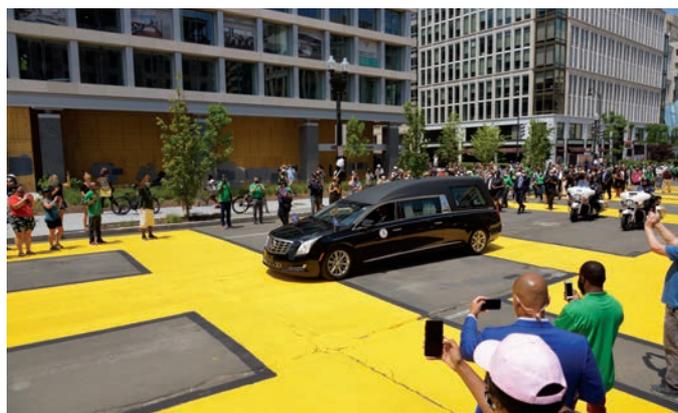
**N**ational President Paul Hogrogian, National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora, and the entire National Executive Board are saddened to note the passing of John Lewis, a civil rights legend, who for the past three decades has served as the representative of Georgia's 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.

Although Lewis rightfully was recognized as the conscience of the Congress during his years in Washington, during the thirty years before he was elected to Congress he became an American hero as one of the youngest, and bravest, leaders of the fight for civil rights and voting rights during the 1960s. Working with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other leaders of his day, Lewis showed the tenacity and the courage necessary to help forge the moral and political support needed to get the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act through a previously recalcitrant legislative branch. He was a Freedom Rider in the early 1960s, a keynote speaker at the historic 1963 March on Washington, and is most frequently remembered for his role in the march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama in 1965, when he helped spur enactment of the Voting Rights Act, notwithstanding the tear gas that was released on the marchers and the billy clubs that fractured his skull.

As former President Barack Obama said, John Lewis "loved this country so much that he risked his life and his blood so that it might live up to its promise. And through the decades, he not only gave all of himself to the cause of freedom and justice, but inspired generations that followed to try to live up to his example."

Congressman Lewis first visited Black Lives Matter Plaza with Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser on June 7, 2020. Seven weeks later, the motorcade carrying the body of the late Rep. Lewis (D-Ga.) stopped at the Black Lives Matter Plaza, as it made its way to Capitol Hill one final time. The funeral procession for the longtime Congressman briefly paused as it reached the plaza. Hundreds gathered in the area to pay tribute and witness the procession.

May John Lewis rest in peace, so that others can continue the "good trouble" needed for continued progress towards justice and the American ideal.







**M**ail Handlers and other postal employees from across the country organized and participated in press events with Members of Congress at post offices and facilities small and large, calling attention to the plight of the USPS. At the direction of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the Postal Service was center stage on the days preceding congressional hearings in which Postmaster DeJoy was called upon to answer questions about the operational capabilities of the United States Postal Service. Members delivered our message of concern by written word in newspapers and magazines, radio interviews and television news coverage with the single message, “Save the Postal Service — let us do



our job.” The public was assured that postal employees only want to do our jobs. We are ready, willing, and able to handle the upcoming rush of electoral mail. Give us the necessary employees and equipment, don’t tie our hands, and we will get the job done.

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy vowed that the USPS can and will handle the election volume and mail-in ballots. He did, however, encourage voters to request ballots and to cast their votes early. DeJoy agreed to freeze the operational changes and stop the removal of mailboxes and sorting equipment but stated that he has no intention of reinstalling any machines. The PMG faced scrutiny from the House Committee on Oversight and Reform and U.S. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs in August 2020. He made clear during these hearings that any freeze on USPS changes would only last until the national elections on November 3, 2020.





# NPMHU MEMBERS FIGHT INACTION IN THE SENATE AND CUTBACKS

FROM USPS HEADQUARTERS

Katie Maddocks, Legislative and Political Director



**T**he United States Postal Service recently has been getting more media attention since the coronavirus pandemic began back in March 2020. We've been seeing reports on the evening news and our local newspapers on the financial difficulties the Postal Service is facing due to losses of volume and revenue, notwithstanding (or perhaps because of) the nation's increased reliance on services for delivery of medication, stimulus checks, and government correspondence, in addition to letters between family members and greeting cards sent to friends. As the Postal Service and the work of its dedicated employees have gotten more attention, the public is beginning to fully understand the necessity and value of a public post office that is able to reach every American household and business at an affordable rate.

While we have seen increased support from the public during this unprecedented time in postal history, elected officials have fallen short. As I mentioned in the last magazine, the House of Representatives passed the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act (H.R. 6800) back in May, and that bill, among other things, would have provided \$25 billion in emergency funding to the Postal Service; remove borrowing restrictions imposed on USPS by the Department of Treasury; and, allot hazard pay of \$13.00 an hour to all postal employees and other essential personnel who worked the front lines during the pandemic.

The HEROES Act was quickly stalled in the Senate, however. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) stated that the language in the HEROES Act was a non-starter for Senate Republicans and that House Democrats were demanding too much at too big of a price. The Senate left DC for their August recess, without developing a plan for the next stimulus package. The silver lining to this issue is that a group of bipartisan Senators have introduced the Postal Service Emergency Assistance Act, S. 4174, which would provide the \$25 billion in emergency funding and remove the borrowing stipulation, while also setting up the ground work for future postal reform.

Adding to the problems of the Postal Service, new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy instituted a new pilot program impacting the delivery times of over 300 postal facilities across the country. The pilot program calls for operational changes that

would limit carrier trips out of processing centers to deliver mail, resulting in mail being left behind and delivery delays. Additionally, PMG DeJoy examined the elimination of using overtime and documents from the Postal Service, stating, "the USPS will no longer use excessive cost to get the basic job done. If the plants run late they will keep the mail for the next day. If you get mail late and your carriers are gone and you cannot get the mail out without OT [overtime] it will remain for the next day." Obviously, as these "next day" delays cascade into each other, this has resulted in major delays in mail processing and delivery of mail, to the frustration of NPMHU members and other postal employees, as well as postal customers.

These shared frustrations resulted in congressional inquiries from members of both the House and Senate to the PMG, asking for an explanation for the need of the pilot program. The office of the PMG responded stating the pilot program is within the PMG's authority and the pilot program is a means to address the Postal Service's financial challenges. Not satisfied with the response, Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Gary Peters (D-MI), Tom Carper (D-DE), Ron Wyden (D-OR), and Tina Smith (D-MN) along with Representatives Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12), Steve Lynch (D-MA-08), Gerry Connolly (D-VA-11), and Brenda Lawrence (D-MI-14), requested that the USPS Office of Inspector General conduct an audit of these changes; how these changes affect delivery and service; and, whether there is a conflict of interest based on PMG DeJoy's financial assets invested in the USPS competitors and contractors.

Additionally, members of Congress met with NPMHU members at facilities impacted by the pilot program to gain first-hand knowledge about how implemented delays are impacting our work. To list just a few examples, Senator Peters and Representative Lawrence met with Local 307 Branch President Derek Douglass at the Michigan Metroplex, while a few days later Representative Carolyn Maloney met with Local 300 Vice President Yvette Johnson and Treasurer Willie Delgado.

On August 18, members of the House and Senate held press conferences in front of postal facilities across the country, in which NPMHU members participated, to bring attention to the implemented delays. As a result of the pressure from this media attention, from congressional push-back, and from the public outcry, DeJoy issued a statement that he would roll

back changes to operations and service standards, other than insisting on adherence to transportation or truck schedules; even this partial rollback, however, would only apply to election mail and would only last past this year's November 3, 2020 election. But for most members of the House, this action was too little, too late. Representative Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, introduced H.R. 8015, the Delivering for America Act. If adopted into law, this bill would provide the Postal Service with \$25 billion in emergency appropriations; suspend any changes to service standards between January 1, 2020 through the end of the COVID-19 pandemic; prohibit the ban on overtime to ensure deliveries are made on time; and, treat election mail as first class mail. Knowing the significance of this legislation, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-12) called all 435 Representatives back to Washington, DC to vote on the bill during a special session of the House on Saturday, August 22. NPMHU National Headquarters sent a letter of support on the bill to every member of the House, and our membership was encouraged to contact their Representatives, also asking for a yes vote on H.R. 8015.

Needing direct answers from USPS management, the House and Senate held separate hearing with DeJoy and Board of Governors Chairman Robert Duncan. DeJoy used the time to explain that his actions were a means to cover costs and address the Postal Service's long financial problems. While assurances were given that election mail would be protected, questions arose regarding other operational changes and their impact on service standards. DeJoy was asked to account for the delays of medication and the drop in service standards, on which he often hesitated, or could not provide complete explanations or reasoning for any delays.

This pilot program and its resulting delays implemented by PMG DeJoy cannot be thoroughly or accurately discussed without reminding NPMHU members that DeJoy's history with the Postal Service lies solely outside of the agency as a subcontractor that made his money by undercutting and eliminating postal jobs. Furthermore, PMG DeJoy and his wife have given over \$2 million to the Trump campaign and other Republican candidates, and was previously named the financial chair for the 2020 Republican Convention. It therefore is not surprising that PMG DeJoy is promoting policies that reflect the anti-Postal Service beliefs of President Trump, instead of policies that are in the best interest of the Postal Service, its employees, and its customers. Previous Trump Administration attacks against the USPS and its employees have included the following:

- [Calling the Postal Service a "joke";](#)
- [Insisting that use of the mail to vote in this November's national elections will cause a "rigged" election or allow for fraud in the election results;](#)

- [Increasing postal rates, including quadrupling pricing on package mail. This could potentially price some postal customers out of the market.](#)
- [Moving away from six-day delivery, negatively impacting delivery schedules;](#)
- [Expand third-party relationships and moving towards a privatized system;](#)
- [Removing the current bargaining rights of postal employees, taking away labors' say in how employees are compensated; and,](#)
- [Utilizing a defined contribution retirement plan instead of the current defined benefit plans, putting the burden and risk of retirement planning fully on employees.](#)

The NPMHU asks that its members take these attacks into consideration when it comes time to cast your vote in November. Not only has President Trump attacked Postal Service, but there have also been many Members of Congress who have targeted USPS: calling for its privatization; denying emergency funding during the current crisis caused by COVID-19; belittling the service that USPS now provides to every American household and business; and, undermining the dedicated men and women of the postal workforce.

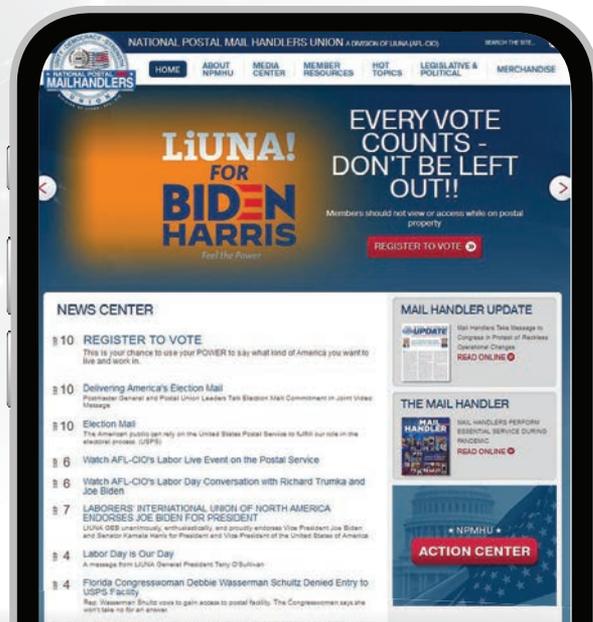
Fortunately, there are also postal friends and champions on both sides of the aisle in the House of Representatives and Senate. As NPMHU members recall, the USPS Fairness Act, repealing the mandate for the Postal Service to prefund its retiree healthcare benefits, passed in the House with support from representatives from both political parties. During debate on the House floor, original cosponsor Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01) commented on H.R. 2382 by saying the following: "This bipartisan bill will restore the USPS' financial health by shoring up that funding and ensure it has the resources to improve the Postal Service for all Americans. And I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation." Following his remarks, fellow original cosponsor Rep. Xochitl Torres Small (D-NM-02) stated, "I represent one of the most rural districts in the nation. And in Southern New Mexico, post offices and postal workers are an integral part of our communities, connecting businesses to customers, pharmacies to patients, and families to friends. Congress created this prefunding crisis, so I am pleased the House of Representatives took the first step to solve it." It is important that all of these and similar postal friends and champions get our support at the ballot box between today and November 3.

In order to help understand what legislative issues are important to NPMHU and what members of Congress are supportive of our cause, the NPMHU has a new Legislative & Political website, found at [www.npmhu.org/legislative](http://www.npmhu.org/legislative). There, all NPMHU members can find a list of supported legislation that contains

links to legislative text and cosponsors. You'll be able to track if your Representatives or Senators have cosponsored vital postal and labor legislation, and how they voted on the issues. If you have questions about NPMHU supported legislation, or need more information on your Representative or Senator, please feel free to reach out to me at [kmaddocks@npmhu.org](mailto:kmaddocks@npmhu.org).

NPMHU members need to elect those who advocate on our behalf, and on behalf of the public Postal Service, to ensure that such supporters remain in office, and to ensure that those politicians who want to dismantle or privatize the Postal Service don't gain any power over this special institution and its dedicated employees.

# NPMHU LAUNCHES GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGN TOOL



**N**PMHU is excited to announce our new grassroots campaign tool on the Legislative & Political section of our website, the NPMHU Action Center. This tool will allow NPMHU Headquarters to better educate our members on legislative issues impacting Mail Handlers and the Postal Service, and provide for you and your fellow NPMHU members to directly connect with your elected officials. You will be able to effectively advocate on issues impacting the Union, encouraging elected officials to keep the Postal Service in mind when voting on legislation. To view the new grassroots campaign tool, please visit the national website at [npmhu.org](http://npmhu.org).

The campaign tool will inform NPMHU members of legislative activities happening within Congress that have a direct impact on Mail Handlers. By submitting your name and address, you'll be connected with your Representatives and Senators. From there, you can submit a prepared statement, asking your elected officials to take action in support of NPMHU, by voting in a way that will promote NPMHU, the postal workforce, and the USPS, or by sponsoring legislation that is aligned with our legislative agenda. These advocacy efforts strengthen our voice on Capitol Hill and show the power of NPMHU members. If you have questions about grassroots campaigns and advocacy, please reach out to NPMHU Legislative & Political Director Katie Maddocks at [kmaddocks@npmhu.org](mailto:kmaddocks@npmhu.org).

# 2020 PAC

## INCENTIVE AWARDS



### 2020 PAC INCENTIVE AWARDS

LEVEL	DONATION	AWARD
Member	\$26 (\$1 per pay period)	PAC Pin
Sponsor	\$52 (\$2 per pay period)	PAC Hat
Activist	\$100	PAC Polo Shirt
Leader	\$250	PAC Wine Tote
Ambassador	\$500	PAC Sunglasses

## YOU TOO CAN BECOME AN 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 on page 22 of 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 in to the incentive award program that entitles you to an award based on your contribution level. There are five distinct PAC membership levels and awards. Awards are distributed based on membership level and will be mailed after the end of the year; awards will vary year to year.



## NOTICE CONCERNING 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.

## PAC CONTRIBUTION BY PERSONAL CHECK, MONEY ORDER, OR CREDIT CARD:

You can contribute directly to the Mail Handlers PAC by filling out the following information and mailing it to:

**Mail Handler PAC**  
P.O. Box 65171  
Washington DC 20035

*Please enclose your check or money order, or provide authorization to charge your credit card.*



(Cut here and return to NPMHU PAC)



## YOUR CONTRIBUTION HELPS PRESERVE POSTAL JOBS

This is to certify that I, \_\_\_\_\_, have voluntarily contributed the amount listed below, to the NPMHU PAC. I understand that this voluntary contribution is not a condition of membership in the union; I have the right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal; if specific contribution amounts are mentioned they are merely suggestions and I am free to contribute more or less; the Union will not favor or disadvantage me because of the amount of my contribution or my decision not to contribute; NPMHU PAC will use the money it receives to make Political expenditures and contributions in connection with federal elections; and only U.S. Citizens and lawful permanent U.S. residents are eligible to contribute.

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Local \_\_\_\_\_

Employer (if other than USPS) \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution Amount: (Please check one):

- \$26 (Member)     \$52 (Sponsor)     \$100 (Activist)     \$250 (Leader)     \$500 (Ambassador)  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose your check or money order, or authorization to charge your credit card.

VISA     MASTERCARD    Acct.# \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions to the NPMHU PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income purposes.

# You also can make your PAC contribution by bi-weekly salary allotment through PostalEASE (access by phone or on the web):

## PostalEASE by TELEPHONE:

1. Dial **1-877-4PS-EASE**—(877-477-3273) and follow the prompt for the Employee Services Main Menu.  
.....
2. When prompted, press **#1** for PostalEASE
3. When prompted, enter your eight-digit USPS employee identification number.
4. When prompted again, enter your USPS PIN number.  
(This is the same as the PIN number you use for telephone bidding and/or other payroll allotments.)  
.....
5. When prompted, choose option **#2** (to select payroll allotments)
6. Then choose option **#1** (to select allotments)  
.....
7. When prompted, press **#2** to continue
8. When prompted, press **#3** to add the allotment
9. When prompted for the routing number, enter **054001220**
10. When prompted for the account number, enter the following:  
**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).
11. Press **#1** if correct
12. When prompted, press **#1** for “checking”  
.....
13. When prompted, input the bi-weekly dollar amount of your PAC allotment.
14. Press **#1** if correct
15. When prompted, press **#1** to process
16. You will be provided a confirmation number as well as the start date for the salary allotment.  
.....
17. For your records:
  - Record the confirmation number
  - Record the start date of the salary allotment  
.....
18. Press **#1** to repeat, or press **#9** to end call

## PostalEASE on the WEB:

To initiate your bi-weekly PAC contribution on the web, simply go to **[www.liteblue.usps.gov](http://www.liteblue.usps.gov)**

1. Enter your eight-digit USPS Employee ID Number and your USPS PIN
2. Follow the link to PostalEASE—you will again be asked to enter your Employee ID Number and USPS PIN
3. Follow the link for PAYROLL – Allotments/NTB
4. Continue to the ALLOTMENTS section
5. Your ROUTING TRANSIT NUMBER is: **054001220**
6. 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).
7. For ACCOUNT TYPE—please select “CHECKING”
8. When prompted, please input the AMOUNT that you would like to contribute to the PAC each pay period.
9. 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.

# CHRONIC DISEASES IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

BE PREPARED AND PLAN AHEAD

Nina Gallauresi, Executive Director, MHBP



**C**oping with emergencies is challenging in the best of situations. During the coronavirus pandemic, many of us are just trying to get by each day. For people with chronic (long-term) health conditions—like diabetes and chronic kidney disease—the challenges can be even greater. But with planning, you can prepare what you'll need to make things more manageable.

“Thankfully, people with chronic medical conditions have tools to help maintain their health, even during difficult times,” says Dr. Griffin P. Rodgers, director of NIH’s National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. Managing these conditions well can help lower your risk for complications and other diseases.

Keeping on top of health problems can take extra effort during uncertain times. First, be sure to follow the CDC’s latest public health guidance <https://www.coronavirus.gov>. That awareness is especially important in a pandemic. As we’ve seen with COVID-19, information about new diseases can quickly change.

Rodgers also says it’s important to keep in touch with your health care providers. They can help you to adapt and maintain your normal disease management plans.

Be sure to eat well and safely participate in physical activity as much as possible during these difficult times. That can help you prevent or delay health problems.

Some people with chronic conditions need to follow a special nutrition plan.

For example, people with diabetes should follow a healthy eating plan prescribed for blood sugar control. Talk with your health care provider about your physical activity and eating routines.

Eating healthy and staying active can also help lower stress. Coping with uncertainty is stressful for anyone. People with health conditions may feel more stress when their normal routine and health care are disrupted.

There are many ways to lower stress and relax. Ideas include deep breathing, taking a walk, meditating, listening to music, or doing a hobby. Getting enough sleep (seven to eight hours each night) can have tremendous health benefits, including helping to reduce stress and control weight.

Your health care provider can help you find ways to lower your stress and screen for anxiety and depression. Depression is common among people with a chronic illness. And it can get in the way of managing the condition.

“Ask for help if you feel down or need help managing stress,” Rodgers says. “It’s always important to learn ways to lower stress and improve health.”

Preparing for the unexpected will help you manage a chronic health condition during a crisis. Consider packing a specialized “go-kit” for emergencies.

Maintaining your health doesn’t erase the risk for getting other diseases. But each healthy day is a day closer to better treatments for diseases.

Contact your health care provider with any questions or concerns about how to prepare for natural disasters and emergencies.

## PREPARING FOR DISASTERS WITH A CHRONIC DISEASE

Create a “go-kit” for emergencies:

- At least one week’s worth of medical supplies and equipment.
- Contact information for health care providers and emergency contacts.
- A medication list with doses and dosing schedules.
- A list of your allergies.
- Information about any medical devices you use.
- At least a three-day supply of any foods needed to manage your condition.
- Copies of your insurance card and photo ID.
- Copies of recent lab work you might need.

## MHBP RESOURCES TO ASSIST YOU

To help you get through this, MHBP is offering the following programs at no cost to you:

- 24x7 access to the Informed Health Line. Call 800-410-7778 anytime
- Health Coaching through TrestleTree. Health Coaches can discuss:
  - + Your stress symptoms and how to monitor them
  - + How stress and health are related

- + How to build a personal “toolbox” of stress management techniques
- + Where to find COVID-19 information
- + How to find good social support – even with “social distancing”

## INFORMED HEALTH® LINE — TALK TO A REGISTERED NURSE ANYTIME

With the Informed Health Line, you can speak to a registered nurse about health issues that are on your mind — whenever you need to.\*

### Plus —

- It's toll-free. Call 800-410-7778 and select the prompt for the 24-hour nurse advice line.
- You can call as many times as you need — at no extra cost.
- Your covered family members can use it, too.

## YOU COULD SAVE TIME, MONEY AND A TRIP TO THE ER

You can turn to the Informed Health Line for helpful information — instead of an unneeded trip to the emergency room (ER). That can be a money-saver.

Plus, you'll be able to make smarter health decisions. You'll have reliable information you can trust — and it's only a phone call or click away.

\*While only your doctor can diagnose, prescribe or give medical advice, the Informed Health Line nurses can provide information on more than 5,000 health topics. Contact your doctor first with any questions or concerns regarding your health care needs.

## MORE REASONS TO USE THE INFORMED HEALTH LINE

You can:

- Get information on a wide range of health and wellness topics
- Make better health care decisions

- Find out more about a medical test or procedure
- Get help preparing for a visit to your doctor
- Receive emails with links to videos that relate to your question or topic

## YOUR ONLINE SOURCE FOR HEALTH INFORMATION

Prefer to go online for health information? Check out the Informed Health Line page on your secure Aetna Member Website.

Here's what you can do:

- Send us an email.
- Use our symptom checker.
- Learn about treatment options and health risks.
- Research a medicine, and more.

It explains things in terms that are easy to understand. And it's easy to get to — once you're a member, just go to **mhbp.com** and select Aetna Member Website and log in.

## TWO WAYS TO GET HEALTH INFORMATION FAST

1. Call a registered nurse anytime toll-free.
2. Visit Aetna Member Website, your secure member portal.

Get health information — when and where you need it. Put the Informed Health Line to work for you.

**Telehealth consultations are available to for the following specialties through our telehealth vendor, Teladoc®:**

- Doctors of Medicine (MD)
- Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine (DO)
- Nutritionists
- Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW)
- Psychiatrists
- Psychologists
- Dermatologists

Benefits of using Teladoc:

- US board certified doctors
- Prescriptions sent to pharmacy of choice, if necessary
- No appointment necessary
- Private and secure
- Skip waiting rooms

Teladoc can be used any time, day or night. It's perfect when your doctor's office is closed, you're too sick or busy to see someone in person, or even when you're traveling. You can address most common issues such as: colds, fever, rash, ear infections, and migraines. You can also see a therapist for ongoing counseling for concerns such as: depression, anxiety, and stress, as well as a dietician for diet and nutrition help. This service is available 24/7.

You can contact Teladoc by phone, web or through the Aetna Health mobile app and receive treatment within minutes for non-emergency medical needs. For more information regarding telehealth consultations, please call 855-Teladoc (855-835-2362) or visit [teladoc.com](http://teladoc.com).

## ADDITIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TELEVIDEO SERVICES

Behavioral Health Televideo Services is a rapidly growing and evolving form of treatment. Licensed health care professionals provide services using real-time video conferencing. With this state-of-the-art communications technology, health care professionals can provide services to members who may not have been able to access services in the past. Health care professionals who provide Behavioral Health Televideo Services comply with all relevant laws in the jurisdiction where they and the member getting services are located. We expect health care professionals providing Behavioral Health Televideo Services to comply with the Clinical, Technical

and Administrative Guidelines of the American Telemedicine Association.

The following Behavioral Health Televideo Providers are available to you depending on which state you live in:

MDLIVE provides services to members in all 50 states. To register and schedule a session, call 1-855-824-2170 or go to [www.mdlive.com/BHCOMM](http://www.mdlive.com/BHCOMM).

Inpathy provides services to members who live in California, Delaware, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, or Virginia. The toll-free number for Inpathy is 800-442-8938.

Arcadian Telepsychiatry provides services to members who live in a state not covered by Inpathy. The toll-free number for Arcadian Telepsychiatry is 866-991-2103.

If you have any questions or would like more information about these programs, please call MHBP at 800-410-7778.

---

#### **SOURCES:**

*National Institutes of Health*

<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/>

*MHBP.com*



## Dental and Vision Plans Available All Year!

Did you forget to enroll in a dental or vision plan during Open Season? Don't worry. You can easily enroll in MHBP Dental and Vision Plans at *any* time in the year—even if you aren't enrolled in an MHBP health plan!

#### **Our comprehensive dental benefits include:**

- Preventive Care covered 100% twice a year
- Coverage for services from basic to major
- Orthodontic benefits

#### **Our comprehensive vision benefits include:**

- Eye exam and lenses every 12 months for just \$10
- Up to \$120 for frames every 24 months or contact lenses every 12 months
- Nationwide coverage for eye exams, frames and lenses, contacts, laser vision correction discounts and more!

No matter what job you do in the service of the U.S. public, this plan is your plan.

For more information, call **800-410-7778** or visit **MHBP.com**.

**Open to Everyone**

**MHBP**<sup>SM</sup>

Brought to you by Aetna

## TIME TO MAKE A CHANGE

June Harris, Central Region Vice President,  
Local 306 President, Women's Committee Chairperson



**T**oday, more than ever, we have an awesome responsibility to vote in the upcoming election. It is crucial to our survival as a Union and as employees of the United States Postal Service. We are facing assaults on various levels and each assault can have a profound effect on our survival. This is not a time to be complacent, but we must act in a positive and definitive manner.

We can not sit back and believe that our jobs are secure and think that we have nothing to worry about. As a Local President to one of the largest Locals in the Union, I have seen first hand the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on our membership. I represent mothers who face new challenges in trying to provide adequate healthcare for their children, while the majority of schools and daycares are still closed or using remote learning. This is very difficult for working families, especially single-family homes. The caregivers for many of these kids were grandparents or other relatives who are now testing positive for COVID-19 or have to be quarantined due to possible contamination. Some of the kids have been exposed and thus our Brother and Sister Mail Handlers are feeling the stress. It's not because they cannot handle the task at hand, but it is because this "new" normal isn't normal. The adjustments are hard for both the kids and the parents. That's why it is important that you seek help during these times. Talk to your Union representatives when there is an abnormality with your pay or when there are circumstances out of your control that dictate your need to be off work. Familiarize yourself with all legislation that will affect your livelihood.

Each day, the governing interpretations of the various leave categories that were implemented to make this unsure time less stressful have begun to cause our members more stress than ever. We need to be supportive of one another and be willing to listen to each other, in order to determine if we can help reduce the stress and sense of loss that some people are feeling.

Unfortunately, the majority of us have lost family and co-workers to COVID-19. But we will get through this. We have to see that we are not hopeless and know that there are things that we can do. Though it looks like there is one thing after another, WE GOT THIS! We all are a positive component to the solution that we are seeking. We have to vote. We have to continue to think positive and stay focused. If you are not involved, become involved. A spectator comes to view the action. Whatever happens, happens. But that is not who we are. We are engaged, insightful, well-versed people who are energetic and focused on doing what is



*This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND*

best for our family and others. We are not selfish, but we are people who want what is best for ALL, not just one group of people. I was always told, "if you don't stand for something, you will fall for everything." It's time to take a stand and take advantage of the gift and right to vote.

There is a song by the Winans called "Time." Some of the stand out lyrics say "It's time. Time to make a change. We are the people who can do it!" This is the 100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage and we, along with our Brothers, plan to take full advantage of our opportunity to make a profound statement on November 3, 2020. Educate yourself and then go to the polls in record numbers to demand the change that we are seeking!

# CAREER MAIL HANDLERS TO RECEIVE COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT

**Effective August 29, 2020**, (Pay Period 19–2020) all career Mail Handler craft employees are scheduled to receive a cost-of-living (COLA) adjustment as outlined in Article 9.3 of the 2019 National Agreement. This is the second of six possible COLA increases under the terms of the current agreement. This COLA increase is based on the upward change in the relevant Consumer Price Index (CPI) following release of the July 2020 Index, using the July 2019 CPI index as a

base provides an annual increase of \$188 for all Steps in Table 1 and for Step P of Table 2. The remaining Steps in Table 2 will receive the proportional COLA increase percentages as outlined in Article 9.3 of the National Agreement.

Additionally, the National Office implemented a regular membership dues increase in the amount of one dollar (\$1.00) per pay period — of which the Local Union will receive eighty cents (\$.80) per pay period. This

dues increase is scheduled to be implemented in PP19–2020, to be reflected in paychecks issued on September 18, 2020. The retroactive amount for the dues increase will result in a one-time collection of an additional \$21.00 representing the increase from PP25–2019 through PP19–2020. Most mail handlers will be debited \$47 on September 18, 2020 and dues will return to the new amount, \$26.00 for most, in PP20–2020.

## MAIL HANDLER WAGE RATES — EFFECTIVE AUGUST 29, 2020 (PP 19-2020)

**Table 1 — Applicable to Career Appointments Prior to February 15, 2013**

GRADE 4							GRADE 5						
WEEKS IN STEP	STEP	ANNUAL	BI-WEEKLY	FTR & PTR HOURLY	OVERTIME	PTF HOURLY	WEEKS IN STEP	STEP	ANNUAL	BI-WEEKLY	FTR & PTR HOURLY	OVERTIME	PTF HOURLY
88	AA	40,050	\$1,540	\$19.25	\$28.88	\$20.03	88	AA	41,726	\$1,605	\$20.06	\$30.09	\$20.86
88	A	44,797	\$1,723	\$21.54	\$32.31	\$22.40	88	A	46,480	\$1,788	\$22.35	\$33.52	\$23.24
88	B	50,770	\$1,953	\$24.41	\$36.61	\$25.39	88	B	52,861	\$2,033	\$25.41	\$38.12	\$26.43
44	C	53,594	\$2,061	\$25.77	\$38.65	\$26.80	44	C	55,761	\$2,145	\$26.81	\$40.21	\$27.88
44	D	57,750	\$2,221	\$27.76	\$41.65	\$28.88	44	D	58,566	\$2,253	\$28.16	\$42.24	\$29.28
44	E	58,083	\$2,234	\$27.92	\$41.89	\$29.04	44	E	58,929	\$2,267	\$28.33	\$42.50	\$29.46
44	F	58,425	\$2,247	\$28.09	\$42.13	\$29.21	44	F	59,297	\$2,281	\$28.51	\$42.76	\$29.65
44	G	58,755	\$2,260	\$28.25	\$42.37	\$29.38	44	G	59,649	\$2,294	\$28.68	\$43.02	\$29.82
44	H	59,096	\$2,273	\$28.41	\$42.62	\$29.55	44	H	60,017	\$2,308	\$28.85	\$43.28	\$30.01
44	I	59,432	\$2,286	\$28.57	\$42.86	\$29.72	44	I	60,383	\$2,322	\$29.03	\$43.55	\$30.19
34	J	59,776	\$2,299	\$28.74	\$43.11	\$29.89	34	J	60,744	\$2,336	\$29.20	\$43.81	\$30.37
34	K	60,106	\$2,312	\$28.90	\$43.35	\$30.05	34	K	61,104	\$2,350	\$29.38	\$44.07	\$30.55
26	L	60,447	\$2,325	\$29.06	\$43.59	\$30.22	26	L	61,464	\$2,364	\$29.55	\$44.33	\$30.73
26	M	60,782	\$2,338	\$29.22	\$43.83	\$30.39	26	M	61,830	\$2,378	\$29.73	\$44.59	\$30.92
24	N	61,121	\$2,351	\$29.39	\$44.08	\$30.56	24	N	62,196	\$2,392	\$29.90	\$44.85	\$31.10
24	O	61,455	\$2,364	\$29.55	\$44.32	\$30.73	24	O	62,552	\$2,406	\$30.07	\$45.11	\$31.28
	P	61,794	\$2,377	\$29.71	\$44.56	\$30.90		P	62,915	\$2,420	\$30.25	\$45.37	\$31.46

**Table 2 — Applicable to Career Appointments on or after February 15, 2013**

GRADE 4							GRADE 5						
WEEKS IN STEP	STEP	ANNUAL	BI-WEEKLY	FTR & PTR HOURLY	OVERTIME	PTF HOURLY	WEEKS IN STEP	STEP	ANNUAL	BI-WEEKLY	FTR & PTR HOURLY	OVERTIME	PTF HOURLY
52	BB	35,491	\$1,365	\$17.06	\$25.59	17.75	52	BB	37,039	\$1,425	\$17.81	\$26.71	18.52
52	AA	37,040	\$1,425	\$17.81	\$26.71	18.52	52	AA	38,562	\$1,483	\$18.54	\$27.81	19.28
52	A	38,584	\$1,484	\$18.55	\$27.83	19.29	52	A	40,084	\$1,542	\$19.27	\$28.91	20.04
52	B	40,134	\$1,544	\$19.30	\$28.94	20.07	52	B	41,607	\$1,600	\$20.00	\$30.01	20.80
52	C	41,679	\$1,603	\$20.04	\$30.06	20.84	52	C	43,128	\$1,659	\$20.73	\$31.10	21.56
52	D	43,229	\$1,663	\$20.78	\$31.17	21.61	52	D	44,651	\$1,717	\$21.47	\$32.20	22.33
52	E	44,775	\$1,722	\$21.53	\$32.29	22.39	52	E	46,172	\$1,776	\$22.20	\$33.30	23.09
52	F	46,324	\$1,782	\$22.27	\$33.41	23.16	52	F	47,696	\$1,834	\$22.93	\$34.40	23.85
52	G	47,871	\$1,841	\$23.01	\$34.52	23.94	52	G	49,216	\$1,893	\$23.66	\$35.49	24.61
52	H	49,417	\$1,901	\$23.76	\$35.64	24.71	52	H	50,739	\$1,952	\$24.39	\$36.59	25.37
52	I	50,963	\$1,960	\$24.50	\$36.75	25.48	52	I	52,259	\$2,010	\$25.12	\$37.69	26.13
52	J	52,509	\$2,020	\$25.24	\$37.87	26.25	52	J	53,783	\$2,069	\$25.86	\$38.79	26.89
52	K	54,057	\$2,079	\$25.99	\$38.98	27.03	52	K	55,304	\$2,127	\$26.59	\$39.88	27.65
52	L	55,606	\$2,139	\$26.73	\$40.10	27.80	52	L	56,827	\$2,186	\$27.32	\$40.98	28.41
52	M	57,152	\$2,198	\$27.48	\$41.22	28.58	52	M	58,350	\$2,244	\$28.05	\$42.08	29.18
52	N	58,700	\$2,258	\$28.22	\$42.33	29.35	52	N	59,873	\$2,303	\$28.79	\$43.18	29.94
52	O	60,247	\$2,317	\$28.96	\$43.45	30.12	52	O	61,392	\$2,361	\$29.52	\$44.27	30.70
	P	61,794	\$2,377	\$29.71	\$44.56	30.90		P	62,915	\$2,420	\$30.25	\$45.37	31.46

## MAIL HANDLER ASSISTANT (MHA) HOURLY WAGE RATES Effective November 23, 2019 (PP25–2019)

MHA Grade 4 — \$16.55

MHA Grade 5 — \$17.43

# MAIL HANDLERS

## ACROSS THE COUNTRY

### LOCAL 300 ARBITRATION ADVOCATE TRAINING

Local 300 held its Arbitration Advocate training over 2 days at their local office in NY. Local 300 President Kevin Tabarus along with Eastern Region Vice President and National Trainer John Gibson and Northeast Regional Director Tom Ruther led a socially distanced class through the sessions. Special guests making an appearance at the training were: National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora, Northeast Region Vice President David Wilkin and Local 301 President Dan St. Marie.



### LOCAL 300 SHOP STEWARD TRAINING

Local 300 held a socially distanced Shop Steward Training at its headquarters (Hoagie Hall) in New York. On hand to conduct the training along with Local 300 President Kevin Tabarus were: Eastern Region Vice President and National Trainer John Gibson and Northeast Regional CAD Director Tom Ruther. Special guests joined over ZOOM were: National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora and Northeast Region Vice President David Wilkin.



### SENATOR CHARLES SCHUMER PRESS CONFERENCE IN NY

Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) held a press conference at the Mid Island P&DC in Melville, NY. Local leaders and members of the NPMHU, APWU and NALC were all in attendance. Senator Schumer spoke briefly about the desperate need for funding of the USPS, and the greater need for more Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on the workroom floor. Schumer also spoke on the desperate times the Postal Service is currently in and the need for lawmakers to support and fund the postal service.



### LOCAL 323 INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Local 323 held its installation of officers over ZOOM with National President Paul Hogrogian swearing in the officers. Officer Photos: Top row: Jeff Larsen Local President, Dean Abatte Vice President and Minneapolis Branch President, Brian Newhouse Recording Secretary, John Frey Treasurer. Bottom row: Shane Ryden MN State Executive Board Member, Brock Engstrom ND State Executive Board Member and Fargo Branch President, Michael Straiton NDC Branch President, Edward Yun St. Paul Branch President.



### LOCAL 301 RECORDING SECRETARY PATRICK DONOVAN PARTICIPATES IN AFL-CIO LABOR DAY DISCUSSION

As part of its Labor Day "Labor Live" video series the AFL-CIO conducted a session titled "Protecting the Postal Service and Vote by Mail". The live video panel included reps from the APWU, NALC and NPMHU. Local 301 Recording Secretary Patrick Donovan spoke on the behalf of Mail Handlers and added valuable dialogue to the conversation.

# MAIL HANDLERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY



## LOCAL 309 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

National President Paul Hogrogian was on hand for the Local 309 Annual Membership Meeting. Standing (l-r) Northeastern Vice President and Local 309 President David Wilkin, Vice President Local 309 Lisa Pruchnicki, Branch President, Albany P&DC Tanya DeRouville, Branch President Rochester P&DC Jerry Smith, Branch President NW Rochester P&DC Rebecca Bicksler, Treasurer Local 309 Joyce Miskell, Branch President Syracuse P&DC John Esterdahl and National President Paul Hogrogian.



## LOCAL 301 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS

Local 301 has been conducting Executive Board Council meetings over ZOOM. Members of the National Executive Board are on hand to discuss the various topics of discussion on issues affecting the New England landscape. Both National President Paul Hogrogian and National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora engage with Local 301 President Dan St. Marie and his board to discuss various issues. Also in attendance periodically is NPMHU Legislative and Political Director Katie Maddocks to discuss political issues and legislation affecting NPMHU.



## LOCAL 301 SHOP STEWARD TRAINING

Local 301 held its LMOU Training over ZOOM. National Trainer and Eastern Region Vice President John Gibson conducted an engaging training while CAD Northeast Regional Director Tom Ruther and Local 301 President Dan St. Marie offered support. On hand for the training were: Top Row (L-R) Patrick Donovan, Sean Sweeney, Scott Lasell, Phill Alvarado, Mike Bisono. Second Row From Top (L-R) John Gibson, Bob Goggin, Dan St. Marie, Joe Robinson, Todd Bjunes. Third Row From Top (L-R) Shawn Holt, Paul Bureau, Neil Ryan, Tom Dunn, Lawrence Sapp. Forth Row From Top (L-R) Jared Norris, Tom Ruther, John Bessette, Christine Couture, Paul Hogrogian. Bottom Row (L-R) Diane Lackie, Scott Curtis, Tim Sullivan.



## LOCAL 301 STANDS IN SOLIDARITY WITH IAM.

Local 301 Mail Handler Branch 122 joined the International Association of Machinist and Aerospace Workers (IAM) on the picket line at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works in Bath Maine. Standing (l-r) Local 301 Recording Secretary Patrick Donovan, Local 301 SEBM Shawn Holt, and Local 301 Shop Steward Branch 122 Scott Surette.



## LOCAL 318 ZOOM MEETING WITH CONGRESSWOMAN DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (D-FL-23)

Local 318 President Nick Mosezar along with Southern Region Vice President Lawrence Sapp, Local 318 Vice President Ira Edelstein and Local 318 Recording Secretary Lynden Clarke joined other postal unions for a ZOOM Meeting to discuss postal issues hosted by Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL-23).



**CONGRESSWOMAN CARYLTON MALONEY (D-NY-12) VISITS MAIL HANDLERS AT NYC MORGAN P&DC**

Representative Carylton Maloney (D-NY-12) took time out of her schedule to pay a visit to the Morgan P&DC in Manhattan. Meeting and touring the facility with Representative Maloney were (l-r) Local 300 Vice President Yvette Johnson, Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12), Local 300 Branch President (Morgan P&DC) Irene Delgado and Local 300 Treasurer Wilfredo Delgado.



**CONGRESSWOMAN CARYLTON MALONEY (D-NY-12) VISITS MAIL HANDLERS AT NYC FDR STATION**

Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12) Stopped in at the FDR Station in New York to discuss postal issues with union members. The Mail Handlers were represented by **A)** Mail Handler Chief Shop Steward (Morgan P&DC) Joe Palau, Mail Handler Lesley-Ann-Shinghon, Local 300 Vice President M. Yvette Johnson, Congresswoman Carylton Maloney (D-NY-12) Mail Handler Steward (FDR Station) Annesia Williams, Mail Handler Steward (Morgan P&DC) Erika Williams and Mail Handler Steward (FDR Station) Yolanda Arena. **B)** (l-r) Local 300 Vice President M. Yvette Johnson, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-12) District Liaison for the NALC Branch 36 Carman Flores.



**CONGRESSMAN THOMAS SUOZZI (D-NY-3) VISITS MID-ISLAND P&DC IN MELVILLE, NY**

Local 300 President Kevin Tabarus along with Local 300 members gathered with fellow union members to join Congressman Thomas Suozzi (D-NY-3) for a press conference discussing postal issues.

**LOCAL 300 INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS**

The Local 300 Executive Board was sworn in over ZOOM. Members of the National Executive Board including National President Paul Hogrogian, National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Hora, Central Region Vice President June Harris, Eastern Region Vice President John Gibson, Northeast Vice President David Wilkin, Western Region Vice President Don Sneesby and Southern Region Vice President Lawrence Sapp were all on hand for the momentous occasion. Special guests including Retired CAD Manager Bill Flynn were also on the Zoom call to observe Local 300 President Kevin Tabarus and the remainder of his Executive Board win re-election unopposed.





# UNION PLUS CAN HELP

## COVID-19 has impacted all of us. **Union Plus can help.**

Our Union Plus program partners have accommodations for members struggling during this public health crisis. Participants in our Union Plus Mortgage, Credit Card, Personal Loan, or Supplemental Insurance programs may be eligible for additional hardship assistance through the Union Plus Mortgage Assistance Program and Union Plus Hardship Help.

Visit [unionplus.org](https://unionplus.org) and follow Union Plus on Facebook at [facebook.com/unionplus](https://facebook.com/unionplus) for ongoing program updates and resources.

Be well and stay healthy,

The Union Plus team

Learn more at  
[unionplus.org](https://unionplus.org)

