



The Hi-Lites



The official publication of Milwaukee, WI Area Local APWU, AFL-CIO

(Proud Postal Press Association National Awards Winner)

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Fighting for Workers

We fight together as a union for fair contracts and, when it comes to public policy, we fight alongside our allies in Congress and with President Biden to make the economy more fair for working people.

Over the past two years, we've worked together to:



Protect Workers' Rights and Create Jobs

- ★ Appointed pro-labor National Labor Relations Board
- ★ Sided with organizing and striking workers across the country
- ★ Passed an infrastructure law to create good union jobs and:
 - Repair roads and bridges
 - Expand broadband internet
 - Upgrade water and sewer systems



Help Families Make Ends Meet

- ★ Sent direct pandemic aid to workers of up to \$3,200
- ★ Enacted a child tax credit that cut the child poverty level by 30%
- ★ Secured \$90 billion to save pension plans that protected the retirement of more than 1 million workers



Save Public Services

- ★ Passed \$350 billion in funding to save the jobs of America's front-line service workers
- ★ Ensured essential services would remain available to communities
- ★ Reformed the Postal Service to keep it financially stable while maintaining six-day delivery

Milwaukee Wisconsin Area Local

Big Bend Brookfield Burlington Butler Cedarburg Cudahy Darien
Delafield Delavan East Troy Elkhorn Elm Grove Franklin Fredonia
Germantown Grafton Greendale Hales Corners Hartford Hartland
Jackson Kewaskum Lomira Milwaukee Menomonee Falls Mequon-Thiensville
Muskego Mukwonago New Berlin Oak Creek Oconomowoc Oakfield
Okauchee Pewaukee Plymouth Port Washington Salem Slinger S. Milwaukee
Sussex Wales Walworth Waterford Watertown Waukesha Whitewater



**Glenn Griggs
President**

I would like to wish everyone and their families a Happy New Year. 2022 was a challenging year for the American Postal Workers Union, but we ended up making some significant gains for our members on both the national and local level.

On the National Level, the APWU and the USPS reached a three-year (September 21, 2021 through September 20, 2024) Collective Bargaining Agreement. This contract secured three basic annual 1.3% salary raises (November 20th, 2021, November 19th, 2022, and November 18th, 2023) and six COLA adjustments (January 2022, July 2022, January 2023, July 2023, January 2024, July 2024). The COLAs received so far during the 2021-2024 National Agreement amounted to \$3,765.00 this past year.

PSEs will not only receive an additional annual 1% annual wage increase (in addition to the general wage increases for career employees) but also received a .50 cent per hour increase effective on April 9, 2022. In addition to securing automatic conversions for PSEs in level 20 and above, the Union also maintained and made gains in job security, holiday pay, health insurance, pay scales, uniform allowance, and work rule improvements for MVS, Maintenance

and PTFs.

At the local level we filed and processed over 1,500 grievances within the Milwaukee Installation and surrounding associate offices. We were also able to accomplish a long-standing goal of the Milwaukee Area Local. On December 28th, 2021, after many years of negotiations, we signed off on a five million dollar global settlement; the largest settlement ever negotiated at the local level. This settlement was paid out during the course of the 2022 year to both active employees and retirees from all crafts.

In addition to the global settlement, we continued to make it clear to upper management that supervisors and managers who engage in unlawful conduct, removable offenses, sexual harassment, disregard for employee safety and undue termination of USPS employees will not be tolerated and will be exposed by any means necessary. This led to more than a few much needed personnel changes on the workroom floor, including the reassignment of the worst serial abuser within this installation. Employees should never fear coming to work and we are hoping these changes have led to a less toxic and more productive workplace. The Union remains committed to do everything within its power to hold abusers and bullies accountable when their

Looking Back Pressing Forward

"There continues to be a lot happening as we move into 2023."

own management team does not.

There continues to be a lot happening as we move into 2023. One of our top priorities, at the moment, is to negotiate a final settlement for 204b violations at the city stations, MWA and Plant. These infractions go back to June 28th, 2021 and there is a significant amount of liability on behalf of management in these cases.

While there is no dispute that they are in violation of the National Agreement we have yet to agree on a final amount for remedy. We have met with their team several times and we are hoping that we may be able to come to an agreement soon.

Another top priority of the local right now is cleaning up the absolute fiasco that management has imposed upon PSEs who were converted since 9/24/22.

The Union has requested many times to be a part of this process in order to help them avoid this but management, as usual, feels they are better off without our input. As such, this process has been nothing short of an incompetence fueled debacle resulting in PSEs not being paid and/or not receiving all of the wages and benefits that come with being a career employee. Those managers responsible for depriving these employees of their paychecks, especially during the

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holiday season, ought to be absolutely ashamed of themselves. Rest assured, however, those converted employees will get what they are due.

As such, the Union has a class action grievance filed to make sure all converted PSEs from 9/24/22 to present are made whole for all lost wages and benefits. This includes but is not limited to wages, guarantee time, missed 4th quarter OT sign up, missed bidding opportunities, missed TSP and insurance (FEHB, FEGLI) sign up, missed holidays, and making sure seniority dates are correct. Please remember that if there was no Union here there would be no recourse for the wage theft these employees have endured. If you were converted 9/24/22 please contact the Union in order to provide us with your phone number and email so that we may keep you up to date with information regarding this case.

APWU National President Dimondstein recently stated, "We should never forget that our Collective Bargaining rights were won through the courage of our forefathers and foremothers in the historic 1970 wildcat strike. The lives of literally millions of postal workers and our families have been changed for the better over the last fifty years." Your local Union remains committed to honoring this past and fighting for you during the upcoming year. Thank you for your continued membership in this great union. Let's all get our Union brothers and sisters backs and make this a great 2023.

Two Beers A Month

Ed Brennan, former PPA Sec/Treasurer

Sitting here thinking about if I figured out that my union dues cost me about two beers a month. What a bargain. My dues pay for my representation. I can go to union meetings and speak to local union officers and find out what is going on in my office. I can let my representatives know about working conditions and problems on the workroom floor and my suggestions on how to make working conditions better.

I can voice my opinion to fellow members and the union's officers. I can even try to become a union representative. The choice is mine to make. My union dues also pay for contract negotiators and for the local officers to get valuable training. What an asset it is to have qualified and well-trained individuals to protect me when I need them. What a wise use of my union dues.

Without the benefit of my union dues and those of my fellow members we would not have educated and qualified officers to represent us. We would not have a contract with our employers. We would not have protection on the workroom floor. We would not have vacation, sick leave or our many other benefits. We wouldn't even have our retirement program.

Our past, present, and future benefits would not exist. That is what my union means to me. That is what every postal worker needs to understand. You get what you pay for. Imagine how many more benefits we would have if every postal employee joined the union. Just think of how much more funding we would have to build an even stronger union.

That is why I have been paying union dues for over 50 years. That is why I asked to pay union dues on my first day of work for the Postal Service. That is why I have paid full union dues ever since I retired over thirty years ago. My union gave me a wonderful postal career and a comfortable retirement.

Every postal employee in the eligible postal craft should be a member of the American Postal Workers Union.



Chris Czubakowski
Local Business Agent

A Veteran ID Card (ViC) is a form of photo ID you can use to get discounts offered to Veterans at many stores, businesses, and restaurants. When you have this card, you won't need to carry around your military discharge papers or share sensitive personal information to receive discounts.

If you have a VIC, you don't need to request another type of photo ID card to prove you're a veteran or to get retail or business discounts. You may be eligible if you meet both of the requirements listed below.

Both of these must be true. You:

- * Served on active duty, in the reserves, or in the national guard (including the coast guard), and
- * Received an honorable or general discharge (under honorable conditions)

If you received an other than honorable, bad conduct, or dishonorable character or discharge, you're not eligible for a Veteran ID card.

Also, if you have an uncharacterized or unknown discharge status, they'll have to verify your eligibility before they approve your application.

To apply for a VIC, veterans must first create an account at vets.gov and then click on the link that says

Save \$\$\$ With Your Veteran ID Card

"...photo ID card to prove you're a veteran or to get retail or business discounts."

"Get Veteran ID Cards."

What do I need to apply for a Veteran ID card?

When you apply, be sure to have these on hand;

- * Social Security number
- * Digital copy of DD214, DD256, DD257, or NGB22 that you can upload. This could be in .pdf, .jpeg, or .png file format.
- * A copy of a current and valid government-issued ID, such as a driver's license, passport, or state-issued ID card.
- * You'll also need a digital color photo of yourself from the shoulders up. The photo should follow all these standards:
- * Show a full front view of your face and neck (with no hat, head covering, or headphones covering or casting shadows on your hairline or face) and

- * Be cropped from your shoulders up (much like a passport photo), and

- * Show you with your eyes open and a neutral expression, and
- * Be taken in clothing you'd wear for a driver's license photo, and

- * Be a square size and have a white or plain-color background (with no scenery or other people in photo),

and

- * Show what you look like now (a photo within 10 years), and
- * Be uploaded as a .jpeg, .png, .bmp, or .tiff file.

What happens after I apply for a Veteran ID Card?

- * Once you've submitted for your VIC application, the VA will check your eligibility and verify that;
- * Your character of discharge meets eligibility requirements, and
- * The ID you submitted (driver's license or passport) is valid, and
- * The image you've chosen to appear on the card meets the photo requirements

The VA will send you an email of the status of your application after your eligibility has been verified. They will then email you a digital copy of your Veteran ID Card.



Update To APWU Members On LiteBlue Fraud

APWUNews

APWU National Officers continue to warn postal workers to be on the lookout for a fraudulent online scheme that has resulted in stolen direct deposit payments from USPS employees. The scam involves either a phone call from someone claiming to be a Postal Inspector or a fraudulent website that looks like LiteBlue, but sends workers' log in details to the fraudsters.

Once workers have provided the scammers with their security information, such as passwords and EINs, the scammers can log into their victims' LiteBlue accounts and change their net-to-bank payroll information. USPS management warned workers about the fake LiteBlue sites in a Stand-up Talk on Dec. 23.

On Dec. 29 the USPS disabled access to change PostalEase on external sites. Employees can still login through external computers, but can only view their direct deposit and other information. Employees who need to change their information will have to either login to PostalEase through an ACE computer at a postal facility or call the Human Resource Shared Service Center (HRSSC) directly at 1-877-477-3273 to make any necessary direct deposit or benefit changes at this time.

An updated Stand-up Talk was posted on the subject on Dec. 30. However, it has been reported from the field that the Stand-up Talks are not being done in many locations and that managers are denying workers access to postal devices in order to log into their accounts.

If you have not received the Stand-up talks regarding LiteBlue fraud, or are denied access to PostalEase through a USPS issued device, please contact your steward or other local/state officer for resolution. If local management refuses to resolve the problems, local and state leaders can inform the Industrial Relations Department to address the problem with Postal HQ management.

APWU national officers are monitoring the situation and demanding that the Postal Service provide full updates on what has happened, what is still happening, and what is being done to remedy the situation, including the reimbursement of stolen funds.

Postal Service management will implement a Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) system, which will add an extra layer of security by requiring a code sent via email or text to log in. It is recommended that everyone ensure the Postal Service has a good email or phone number that can receive a text on file. The email or phone number provided to the Postal Service for MFA will only be used for this purpose.

- ***It is important that you should never share your LiteBlue/PostalEase login information with anyone. The Postal Inspectors will not call or ask for this information over the phone'***
- ***If you are concerned that you might have entered your LiteBlue information on a fraudulent website or have provided that information from a phone call, please attempt to log in and check your LiteBlue/PostalEase account immediately.***
- ***If you can't log in, see unauthorized changes, or if anything seems suspicious, contact HRSSC immediately at 1-877-477-3273.***

U.S. Approval Of Labor Unions At Highest Point Since 1965

Justin McCarthy, Gallup

- 71% of Americans now approve of labor unions
- 40% of union members say their membership is "extremely important"
- Employee engagement higher among nonunion workers

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Seventy-one percent of Americans now approve of labor unions. Although statistically similar to last year's 68%, it is up from 64% before the pandemic and is the highest Gallup has recorded on this measure since 1965.

These data are from Gallup's annual Work and Education survey, collected Aug. 1-23.

The latest approval figure comes amid a burst of 2022 union victories across the country, with high-profile successes at major American corporations such as Amazon and Starbucks. The National Labor Relations Board reported a 57% increase in union election petitions filed during the first six months of fiscal year 2021.

Support for labor unions was highest in the 1950s, when three in four Americans said they approved. Support only dipped below the 50% mark once, in 2009, but has improved in the 13 years since and now sits at a level last seen nearly 60 years ago.

About One in Six Americans Live in a Union Household

Sixteen percent of Americans live in a household where at least one resident is a union member. This includes U.S. adults who report that they themselves are a union member (6%), those who say someone else in their home is a member (7%), and those who say they and someone else in their household belong to unions (3%).

The net 16% union household figure is within the 14% to 21% range Gallup has recorded since 2001. Gallup also polled union members and nonunion members June 13-23 in a separate online Gallup Panel survey about union membership.

Membership is highest among front-line and production workers, of whom one in five (20%) are union members. About one in 10 workers in healthcare and social assistance (13%), white-collar positions (11%), and administrative and clerical roles (10%) are union members. Workers in managerial roles (6%) are the least likely to be members of unions.

Two in Five Union Members Say Membership Is 'Extremely Important'

Among union members, two in five (40%) rate their membership as "extremely important," or as a 5 on a five-point scale, with another 28% rating it a 4. In contrast, just one in 10 rate it as "not important at all," a rating of 1 on the scale.

Union members were also asked which of various potential reasons for joining a union are most important to them. Their top answers are better pay and benefits (65%) and employee rights and representation (57%).

More than a third of union members cite job security (42%) and better pension and retirement benefits (34%) as reasons for joining a labor union. Meanwhile, about one in four list improving the work environment (25%) and fairness and equality at work (23%).

Few members select health and safety (9%) or unions having a positive effect on the country (5%) as reasons to join.

Most Nonunion Workers Disinterested in Unionizing

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While many union members truly value their participation, those who are not members don't generally feel they are missing out.

A majority of nonunion workers in the U.S. (58%) say they are "not interested at all" in joining a union. About one in 10 say they are "extremely interested" (11%).

Engagement Higher Among Nonunion Workers, but Flight Risk Is Greater

Union members' attachment to their union does not carry over to their jobs. Rather, the data show that workers who are union members are less engaged at work (27%) than are nonunion members (33%). Gallup defines employee engagement as the involvement in and enthusiasm of employees in their work and workplace.

The engagement gap between union and nonunion workers could be significant to employers because highly engaged employees tend to be substantially more productive, less likely to leave and safer at work than their less engaged counterparts, and they tend to have better personal wellbeing.

On the flip side, about one in four union members (24%) are actively disengaged at work, compared with 17% of nonunion workers. Actively disengaged employees are not just unhappy at work -- they tend to be resentful that their workplace needs aren't being met and often act out their unhappiness.

Union workers are less of a flight risk for employers, however; they are less likely to be actively looking for a new job (43%) than are nonunion workers (50%).

Bottom Line

The low unemployment rate that developed during the pandemic altered the balance of power between employers and employees, creating an environment fostering union membership that has resulted in the formation of unions at several high-profile companies. While already on an upswing, public approval of unions has only increased further during the pandemic and is now at a level not seen in nearly six decades.

Many union members greatly value their membership, with most naming benefits and employee rights as key reasons for joining. But for all the membership benefits they enjoy, this doesn't necessarily translate to employee engagement among unionized workers. It is not clear, however, whether lower engagement among unionized employees is a result of dissatisfaction they harbored before joining a union, or if joining a union foments tension between workers and their employers.

It is a challenging environment for employers -- and many are pushing back against unionization efforts despite unions' improved public image. While most nonunion workers are uninterested in joining a union, an increase in unionization efforts is still taking place, and employers of these unionized workers will need to find ways to improve their engagement.





**Larry Brown Jr
Vice President**

I was working on the DBCS machines with Recording Secretary Pamela Walker last month and we were frustrated at the fact that every APC of mail that the mail handlers brought to us had the wrong mail in it. How hard is it to put the mail into the appropriate container?

We then started to discuss the entry exam for the Post Office. This exam was called the Battery 470 and it had four parts. The first part of this exam was called like and dis-a-like. We laughed about it. We remembered studying for this test that would ultimately decide if we got hired for the Post Office. This led to discussions of how the USPS doesn't test anymore.

Anyone hired around the time I was, back in '98, should remember having to take the Battery 470. Back then, working at the Post Office was a big deal. "That job pays well and has some great benefits," is all you would hear around the time the test was being offered. The Post Office never really publicized it either, as they do now with advertisements everywhere saying we are hiring, you either knew someone who could let you know to "go and take the Post Office test," or you didn't.

My mother, who had worked here for around 9 years at that time and was still a casual employee, encouraged

Batteries Not Included

"We need everyone on the same page to succeed in the future... and we all have an obligation to do everything that we can to protect our work and protect our jobs."

me to sign up. Really, she just wanted me to go so that she could have someone with her as she attempted to take the test again.

We signed up at a station. I was just turning 18 and had to put my name on the register, in case of a draft. She begged me to sign up for the Battery test. I had no intention of coming to work for the Post Office. I was in college and had my whole life planned out, as I'm sure every other 18-year-old, that carefully considered what their major was going to be, does.

After we signed up, my mom started to come home with all these dates and places where people were studying to pass this test. This wasn't her first time attempting to pass it. She kept scoring in the 70s and that was never high enough to get hired. People that scored 100 were pretty much automatically hired, proceeding to the next highest score as needed.

On test day we met at Serb Hall. It was located on the southside of Milwaukee. This place was big enough to hold about 1000 people at the minimum. The parking lot was packed and the line to get in was almost wrapped around the building. After proving identification and getting inside, we all sat in what was set up as a huge cafeteria by the way the tables were aligned. A few instructions were given and the test was administered.

The first part of the test was called like and dis-a-like. Here, they gave

you a list of addresses on the left side of the page and on the right side of the page is the exact same address, only not exactly. Your job was to state if the addresses were the same or if there was a discrepancy. It could be something that was as simple as 2217 N. 40th Street and 2217 N 40th Street. Although it reads the same, those addresses are not exactly correct, so that answer would be dis-a-like.

You wouldn't have enough time to finish all the addresses in this first part, so you were encouraged to skip the ones you may have had trouble figuring out as you were penalized more severely for a wrong answer.

The second part of the test was math, but it was more like number sequencing. They would give you three or four numbers in order, and you would have to finish the number sequence.

1,2,3,4, _ , _ , _ would be followed by 5,6,7,8 of course, but what is 1,10, 5, 3, _ , _ , _ followed by? Let me know, when you see me on the workroom floor, if you figured this one out? Once again, you get more points deducted for a wrong answer than if you were to leave it blank.

The third part of the test was memorization skills. They would give you either 4 or 5 boxes, I can't remember exactly, labeled A,B,C,D,E. Numerous addresses would be in each box. You would get about 15 to 20 minutes to study all of the boxes, then they would have you turn the page and only addresses would be

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listed. Now, you must associate the addresses with the appropriate boxes. Again, you won't finish all the addresses, but you'll get more points deducted for a wrong answer. So, if you didn't really remember that 2217 N. 40th Street was in box (b) then you should skip it and find an address that you know for sure belongs in the correct box.

The last part of the test was following oral instructions. Here, the instructor would give instructions to complete the last part of the test. How well you listen will determine how well you do. I believe when I took the test the instructor said, "Look at the top of the page. Where it says name, do not write your name here." I could imagine how many people wrote their name and took a significant hit on their test scores.

You can see how the like and dis-a-like portion of the test plays right into sortation of mail. Can you put a tray labeled 53208 into the container labeled 53208 instead of 53205? Obviously, we cannot do that or the mis-sent trays wouldn't happen on a constant basis. The memorization portion is self-explanatory. Last month, I volunteered to help train a young lady that was on the verge of losing her job. The supervisors said she was a good worker but she couldn't remember the next day what she was taught the day before. How many people just seem to be unable to follow instructions? What am I getting at? If this test was still a prerequisite to being hired, today, a lot of people that have a job now would never have gotten in. Nothing personal with anyone here, but this is a fact.

Now why did I write this article? (...Besides the fact that I must, because it is a part of my job duties as Vice-President of this local...) I need the PSEs, and junior regulars, to understand that the jobs that they just walked into after taking a 12-question questionnaire, are the same jobs that were kept from a lot of people before them because an 88, instead of an 89, was scored on a test. I need them to understand that a lot of the senior people, myself included, were at risk of losing their jobs if they could not memorize 1000 addresses, or more in some cases, and properly throw, or sort if you will, them to the correct carrier.

This was known as scheme training. Imagine getting a job and being fired because you couldn't pass another test that was given to you after you were hired. Some PSEs look at the Senior people like it has always been as easy to get in and stay in as it is now. I remember when you couldn't call in one time while on probation without being terminated, now PSEs are getting converted to regular with horrible attendance. It is a slap in the face, whether anyone wants to admit it or not, to the people that remember just how hard it was to get in here.

But it goes both ways. I also need the Senior people to understand that the amount of attention given to them, to make sure they succeeded, is not afforded to the PSEs. We were trained to do our jobs. We were taught why something needed to happen. We used to get jobs, and get two weeks of training, before we had to do the job on our own. PSEs now, walk in the door and are expected to do everything that a regular employee does in two weeks, after not getting the appropriate training. They are expected to run a machine by themselves after a day or two. I cannot speak about what happens at stations and other places because I only experience automation daily, but I'm sure there is not much of a difference there either. Let me know if I'm wrong. Not only do PSEs not get the appropriate training but we, as senior employees are not so quick to lend a helping hand. We just complain about not wanting to work with a PSE because they don't know how to do anything.

At the end of the day, we are a Union and that is not stressed enough. Who cares about what we went through as Senior employees. Our goal should be to make sure we help the PSEs and junior regulars accomplish what we are all trying to accomplish, make money and retire.

Once again, it goes both ways. In order to do that, the PSEs and juniors need to understand that no one wants to be bothered with you once you disrespect their history. You can't ask for help after you just disregarded the help that someone tried to give. When attempting to train someone, it is normal to talk about how you were trained. You are going to get a story or two about what someone had to deal with. That is not the time to say, "I don't want to hear that," or, "That doesn't concern me," or the all so famous, "I don't care about nothing that none of you old people had to deal with back in your day." Pay attention and learn something.

Notice how after every explanation for the different portions of the test, I stated that you'll get extra points deducted if you answer the question wrong, instead of just leaving it blank. Why do you think that plays such an important role in the test? What is that ideology attempting to show you? The answer is, no one is expected to know everything. A lot of

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Batteries Not included...
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times, when working with someone new, the moment they learn a little bit they take offence to the fact that someone is telling them anything about the job. Maybe they take offence to it because they don't want to be put in that category of another employee that doesn't know what they are doing. Whatever that reason is, they can't just leave the answer blank.

So, they do what they think is right, and end up messing up, which results in more serious consequences than if they would have just told you I don't fully understand this. A perfect example, how many times has a newer PSE told you they know how to combine the mail, only to end up combining it wrong and now the whole 1st pass of DPS has to be rerun. Not trying to be a know it all is called being trainable, and being trainable is the most important part of the test.

We need everyone on the same page to succeed in the future. The Union is going to face many hurdles in the upcoming years, the jobs are going to change, and we all have an obligation to do everything that we can to protect our work and protect our jobs. The constant bickering back and forth between the PSEs and Regulars must stop. We are all on the same team and we need to act as such.

Since it's Christmas time, I'll end with this. You're in the store with your kid about to buy that new toy, I'm the guy that is going to inform you that the batteries are not included with that toy you're purchasing. Are you going to get upset with me for volunteering that information to you? I just wanted to make sure you were going to be able to enjoy what you just spent your hard earned money on. Will you be grateful that, *even though I didn't have to say a word to you, I did?* For you, not for me. Now apply that to your job.

Thank you for reading the Battery, 470, is not included. Neither are drug tests by the way, but that's another article for another day.

January General Membership Meeting

Nominations / Election Committee Announcement

The *Hi-Lites* staff would like to remind the membership that nominations for elected office (2023-2026 term) will be held at the January General Membership Meeting.

Please refer to the posted minutes from November's GMM... Monday, January 30th at 6:00pm.

The Chairman of the Election Committee as well as the committee itself, shall be the judges of all elections. No member of the committee shall be a candidate for election while serving on the committee. The election committee shall be responsible for the conduct on union elections and shall decide all controversies arising out of the election.



Kenni Ligan
Customer Service
Director

First, I would like to send my condolences to the Cross family for the senseless act that happened on December 9th, 2022, to one of our own. May the family find Justice and Closure.

With it being "Peak Season", please be aware of the carriers and management doing clerk work. Peak Season does not give management free range to utilize carriers or themselves to do our work. As I have wrote in the past, if you see

Peak Season

"Be prepared to write a statement..."

management or carriers performing our work, please contact your AP-WU steward right away.

The stewards for the city station are Kim Smukowski, Trent Canady and myself. We can be reached at the Union Hall at 414-273-7838.

Be prepared to write a statement which must include the carriers name or management team member, the job being performed by them and the amount of time they were doing it.

This information is necessary in documenting the repeating ongoing violations to file these grievances. Lastly, just a reminder there is no penalty overtime in the month of

December so volunteers as well as some non-vols must be prepared for management instructing you to do overtime.

The overtime could be at your station as well as the Hubs stations for Amazon. The overtime at the Hub station usually happens on Sunday's. With the busy peak season ongoing, please work smart and safe so we all can have a Happy Holiday Season.



Thrift Savings Plan 2023 Contribution Limits

The Internal Revenue Service has recently announced the 2022 Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) contribution limits. Postal Service employees can continue up to \$22,500. Employees over the age of 50 can take advantage of the TSP Catch Up option and contribute an additional 7,500.

If you are covered by FERS and contribute at least five percent of your basic pay to the TSP each pay period, the Postal Service will match the contribution by contributing four percent of your basic pay to your TSP account, in addition to the automatic one percent agency Contribution.

If you're not maxing out your contributions, consider increasing your contribution amount each chance you get to help reach your retirement savings goals.

To make changes to your TSP contributions, visit LiteBlue to access PostalEase.

To make changes to your investment fund, please visit www.tsp.gov.



John Miceli
Treasurer

(TSP.ORG)

Withdrawals and distributions

With the changes coming in June, the process to request a withdrawal or distribution will be more efficient and save time:

As with other transactions, we're introducing the ability to use electronic signatures and submit many requests entirely online.

You'll have the option to receive your money as direct deposit to your bank account or by check. The default payment option will be to receive a check by mail.

If you request a distribution in installments, you can choose a start date for installments within six months of your request. After the start date, subsequent installments go out on the fifteenth (or next business day) of the month they're due.

You can choose to receive automatic required minimum distributions (RMDs) electronically by including direct deposit information in My Account, even if you don't make a specific distribution request to receive your RMD amount.

And there are some other changes to withdrawals and distributions you need to know:

Thrift Savings Plan Fresh New Options

"In the new My Account, you'll be able to request transactions, upload forms and documents..."

If you make a distribution request for installments from your traditional or Roth balance and want to roll over the money to an IRA or eligible account, you'll be able to roll over the entire portion of the installment or specify a dollar amount for a partial rollover. If you want to specify a dollar amount for the rollover, you'll need to make that request through the ThriftLine.

If you request a financial hardship withdrawal and have sufficient funds available, you'll be able to increase your withdrawal to 125% of the financial need to cover tax withholding.

If you begin receiving installments based on life expectancy before you reach RMD age (currently 72), we calculate your payment amount using the Single Life Expectancy Table. When you reach the RMD age, you'll have the option each January to request that we begin using the Uniform Lifetime Table instead. If you do make this choice, you won't be able to switch back. If you begin receiving life expectancy installments after you've reached the RMD age, we must use the Uniform Lifetime Table.

Expanded support options

Beginning in June, you'll have more ways to get your questions answered with our expanded support options:

You'll have 24/7 access to support using a virtual assistant, called AVA, on our website and in the TSP Mobile App (coming in June). AVA will offer a secure way to ask questions about your account and will even connect you to a live ThriftLine representative through chat during business hours, when necessary.

As before, you'll be able to call the ThriftLine to speak with a representative when you need personal support by phone.

The Secure Participant Mailbox in My Account is where you'll receive messages, documents, and statements about your account.

You'll still be able to choose how you receive your statements: in My Account or by mail. The default delivery for quarterly statements will be My Account. The default delivery for annual statements will be mail.

You'll be able to add an alternate mailing address to your profile in My Account to receive mailed correspondence.

Efficient online transactions

To save you time and reduce paperwork, we're introducing new ways to complete most transactions and requests entirely online:

In the new My Account, you'll be able to request transactions, upload

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forms and documents, and sign your name electronically. With account access at your fingertips in the TSP Mobile App (coming in June), you'll be able to scan and deposit checks for rollovers. We'll send you account-specific communications like statements, notices, and transaction confirmations through your Secure Participant Mailbox in My Account. You'll be able to opt in to receive text messages when transaction confirmations and statements are available in My Account.

Beneficiary information

You'll be able to submit beneficiary information entirely online through a new tool in My Account or by calling the ThriftLine. There are some changes to how designating beneficiaries will work:

You'll be prompted to confirm beneficiary information annually to make sure that it's up to date. The online tool for submitting beneficiary information through My Account will allow you to designate equal distribution to beneficiaries easily without having to list specific percentages, unless you choose to. Contingent beneficiaries will no longer need to be linked to primary beneficiaries. Contingent beneficiaries will only receive payment if all primary beneficiaries are deceased.

If you want to cancel a previous beneficiary designation, you'll need to submit a new one. You won't be able to choose the default statutory order of precedence once you've made a beneficiary designation. Non-spouse beneficiaries will be able to initiate payment online and select how they want to receive payment.

Update your mailing address and contact information

Keeping your address and contact information up to date with us is critical to maintaining your account security, so you can receive TSP messages and monitor account activity. You can update and validate your email address and phone number by logging in to My Account: Profile Settings. How you update your mailing address with us depends on whether or not you still work for the federal government.

If you're currently a federal employee, report your correct address to your agency. We can't accept address changes directly from you. If you're an active or a Ready Reserve member of the Air Force, Army, Navy, or Marine Corps, you can update your address through the myPay website.

If you're no longer a federal employee or uniformed services member, visit My Account: Profile Settings to change the address.



Mandatory Stand-Up Talk

Dec. 23, 2022

Fraud Alert:

Be on the lookout for fake LiteBlue websites

Securing the privacy of your personal data is a shared priority for you and the Postal Service. Any private information stored online is a potential target for criminals.

We have become aware of a fraud scheme by cyber criminals using fake USPS LiteBlue websites to target Postal Service employees.

These websites appear as near-exact replicas of the official LiteBlue website. Some sites use web addresses, with spelling variations of "Lite" or "Blue" instead of the correct website address.

Scammers use these fake websites to collect usernames and passwords. When you attempt to log in to a fake site, the scammer records your information. They can use this to enter PostalEASE — the self-service application reached through LiteBlue for employment-related services. There, scammers may access your sensitive data, which they can manipulate for their own financial gain.

The LiteBlue and PostalEASE applications have not been compromised. A limited number of employees have reported unusual account activity involving their PostalEASE accounts, which has been attributed to their prior interaction with the faked LiteBlue websites.

If you use a search engine such as Google or Yahoo to navigate to LiteBlue, you may find the fake websites in your search results. We are working with the internet service providers to remove the fake websites. However, they often reappear as quickly as they are removed.

Mandatory Stand-Up Talk

Dec. 30, 2022

Fraud Alert Update:

Net to Bank and Allotment Disabled Online in PostalEASE

The stand-up talk issued Friday Dec. 23, 2022, discussed a fraud scheme by cyber criminals using fake LiteBlue websites to target Postal Service employees.

When you attempt to log in to a fake site, scammers collect your username and password. Scammers can record this information and use it to enter PostalEASE — the self-service application reached through LiteBlue for employment-related services. There, scammers may access your sensitive data, which they can manipulate for financial gain.

The LiteBlue and PostalEASE applications have not been compromised. A limited number of employees have reported unusual account activity involving their PostalEASE accounts, which has been attributed to their prior interaction with the fake LiteBlue websites.

As an additional precaution, the Net to Bank and Allotment functionalities have been disabled online in the PostalEASE application accessed externally through LiteBlue via a personal computer as of Dec. 29, 2022, until further notice.

Employees may cancel allotments, establish net to bank, or make changes to net to bank via the PostalEASE Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. IVR is a telephone-based system and may be accessed by calling the Human Resources Shared Service Center (HRSSC) at 877-477-3273, menu option 1. Employees using the IVR system will need to have their employee identification number (EIN) and personal identification number (PIN).