

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

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Volume 46 Issue 6



**FIGHTING TODAY FOR** **OCTOBER 1** **APWU** **A BETTER TOMORROW**  
**DAY OF ACTION**  
**WE WON'T BE SILENCED**

### 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**

*Hello everyone,  
I wanted to put my speech in this month high-lites for our National Day of Action we had on October 1, 2024. We had two different media outlets here to bring awareness to the public on what DeJoy's plan will do to the people post office.*

My name is Glenn Griggs and I'm the president of the American Postal Workers Union, Milwaukee Area Local. I would like to thank you all for joining us today as we sound the alarm to let everyone know that postal workers are just as angry as our customers about mail delays and the long lines your experience at your local post office.

For years, postal workers have been pulling off miracles to keep the mail moving and to serve our customers. We deserve a job where we can show up, safely do our work, and clock out knowing that we've contributed to the public good. But a vicious cycle of plant consolidations, short staffing and a toxic workplace culture is hurting postal workers, post offices and the communities we serve.

This damage has reached a crisis-point and enough is enough!!!! That is why, today, in 90 cities across America, postal workers and our al-

## We Will Not Be Silenced !!!

*"Our communities depend on the "prompt, reliable, and efficient" service as required by law..."*

lies are holding **"We Will Not Be Silenced"** rallies as we call upon the public's support in demanding better service and more postal workers.

Although USPS finances have improved after the passage of the Postal Service Reform Act, service delays are widespread and worsening. This is due to plant consolidations that are part of Postmaster Louis DeJoy's 10 year "Delivering for America" plan.

DeJoy's plan to "modernize" the Postal Service consists of condensing it. He has pushed to consolidate mail processing plants into fewer, bigger, more automated ones — this has led to the dismantling and disruption of our delivery network.



This is why it now takes a week or longer to receive Grandma's birthday card when you used to get it in one to two days. This is why your packages, bills and medicines are being sent to three different states, thousands of miles away and aren't delivered for weeks.

Before DeJoy's hit job, Postal workers used to deliver your mail on time more than 93% of the time. Yet, In the most recent quarter, USPS failed to meet its own national standards by delivering only 72.5% of its three-to-five-day letters on time, a 13.7% decrease from last year. Sadly, our own **Wisconsin District ranks second worst in the country** as only 70.5% of your two-day letters are being delivered on time.

Our communities depend on the "prompt, reliable, and efficient" service as required by law and postal workers are committed to provide an essential service to our communities.

Yet, while our competitors speed up, Louis DeJoy has slowed us down. Now you have to ask yourself...why would a leader of the People's Post Office undermine his mandate and who benefits from those actions because it surely is not the public that we serve.

Well...DeJoy knows that in order to carve up the postal service for his buddies on Wall Street he must first

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degrade our service, drive customers away and sour public opinion. Thus, it's not surprising that his sabotage has resulted in customers fleeing to competitors like Amazon, UPS and FedEx and that our favorable public opinion has dropped from 91% to 72%.

**“This is called “starving the beast before you kill it.”**

DeJoy's plan to obstruct our service under the trojan horse of “reform” has also led to thousands of unnecessary and reckless job reductions in plants and post offices across the nation. And guess what? Short staffing causes delays, long lines and shorter post office hours for our customers.

**The public deserves better than this!  
Post offices need to be open and the mail needs to be delivered on time!**

There is an institutional problem that effects staffing that is finally being exposed...Postal workers, especially new hires, at the USPS are often treated poorly and harassed by abusive supervisors and managers who frequently fail to provide them with proper training. These actions have led to one highest employee turnover rates in the United States.

A recent audit report from the USPS OIG on turnover of “non career” workers found that these workers had a turnover rate of 58.9 percent in 2022, an increase from an already unacceptable rate of 38.5 in 2019. The main reasons for this turnover cited in the OIG report were a lack of dignity and respect from supervisors and too many hours on the job. The OIG is correct in their findings as I can personally attest that USPS management is riddled with “serial abusers” who have bullied and harassed our members year after year with impunity and zero accountability. It is simply incomprehensible how some of these managers and supervisors are allowed to supervise employees, much less be gainfully employed.

I also cannot begin to tell you how many postmasters and managers I have spoken to in the last several years who oppose these job reductions because they know that their offices are grossly understaffed but they are helpless to provide adequate service because they must follow orders from headquarters. The union is deeply disturbed by the declining service that Americans are experiencing. Management ought to share that concern and immediately consider the union's proposals to fix the service problems, including the need for proper staffing. Instead of making cuts we should be growing the People's Post Office by investing more in workers and providing additional services the American people deserve.

Declining service jeopardizes our bond with the people of the country, drives away needed revenue and opens the gates for those who want to privatize the Postal Service. The end result of privatization will be an increase in mailing costs, especially for those in rural areas. We are calling on the United States Senate to confirm President Biden's nominees to fill the two vacant seats on the Board of Governors so they can finally hold DeJoy accountable and fire him for his “hit job” upon the USPS. The People's Post Office is a National Treasure that provides universal and affordable service to all. It must be saved at all costs.

***Thank you for all you do, and thank you for being such dedicated union members!!!***



**NOW: Postal workers protest in downtown Milwaukee; 'No closures, no cuts, no ifs, no buts!'**

# Postal Workers Protest In Downtown Milwaukee

## 'No Closures, No cuts, No ifs, No Buts!'

CBS 58 Newsroom

"No closures, no cuts, no ifs, no buts!" Chants could be heard in downtown Milwaukee on Tuesday, Oct. 1 as the American Postal Workers Union held a "Day of Action." Union members marched in front of the downtown main post office demanding the United States Postal Service (USPS) to stop cutting jobs and a better contract. They were not the only ones, 90 cities across the nation held "Day of Action" to promote vote-by-mail and demand first-class service year-round.

Milwaukee Area Local #3 President Glenn Griggs says because of the job cuts causing slow delivery, Wisconsin now is the second worst in the country. Griggs says he has a message for the postmaster. "Make sure the people's post office is staffed properly and provide the service this is a public service, provide that service that he signed on to do which is provide efficient mail to all our customers," said Griggs.

CBS 58 reached out to the postmaster for comment, and we have yet to hear back. Griggs says if you plan on voting by mail, get your ballot in as soon as possible. "We are going to do everything we can to get your ballot out," said Griggs.

Griggs says if there is any issue, call your city clerk.



SAVE THE DATE  
**OCTOBER 1** APWU  
**DAY OF ACTION**  
 WE WON'T BE SILENCED

WE'RE FIGHTING FOR:  
 PUBLIC RIGHT TO COMMENT  
 BETTER STAFFING  
 BETTER SERVICE  
 GOOD CONTRACT NOW!



## NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE: APWU and USPS Stop The Clock' to Continue Bargaining

APWU News

The Collective Bargaining Agreement (union contract) between the American Postal Workers Union and the United States Postal Service covers the wages, hours, and working conditions of 200,000 postal workers. Our current contract was due to expire at midnight, September 20, 2024.

We opened bargaining with the Postal Service on June 25. Since then, we have met frequently to exchange proposals and make progress toward the good, new contract postal workers deserve. In the last week, the APWU and postal management were “locked down,” engaging in around-the-clock negotiating sessions at the “main table,” the “craft tables,” and in other committees.

During the “lock-down” there has been some modest progress on a number of issues affecting all our crafts, including job security, protecting bargaining unit work, and a narrowing of differences on other important items, including the economic package. However, the APWU and management were unable to secure a negotiated agreement by midnight, September 20.

As expiration approached, your National Negotiating Committee (NNC) faced two options: either begin the process of mediation with the expectation that we would head to interest arbitration or seek mutual agreement with postal management to “stop the clock,” (meaning the contract does not expire on September 20) and continue negotiations for a period of time. It was the decision of the NNC to “stop the clock” and continue bargaining. We have secured an agreement from management that the negotiators will meet at least once a week going forward. It is also the position of the NNC that we will reevaluate progress on a regular basis and invoke mediation if further negotiations are not productive.

This decision is similar to the one taken by the NNC in our previous round of bargaining in 2021, when we “stopped the clock” and continued negotiations. In 2021, we reached a tentative agreement in early December, which the membership later ratified with a strong 94 percent “yes” vote.

### What does “STOP THE CLOCK” Mean?

**ALL PROVISIONS of the 2021-2024 contract remain in force, including:**

- Current no-layoff protections and 50-mile limit on excessing
- Step increases and leave benefits continue as per existing agreement
- Bidding and seniority rights carry

***Future COLAs and general wage increases must be negotiated in new agreement.***

“The entire APWU negotiating team is united in our efforts to secure the good new contract that our members deserve,” said APWU Industrial Relations Director and Chief Spokesperson Charlie Cash.

“We all believe that continuing negotiations is in the best interest of our members as we continue to make progress towards our bargaining goals.”

“The APWU will not be deterred in our quest to win a contract that hard-working postal workers can be proud of,” declared President Mark Dimondstein. “It is crucial that as we continue to negotiate that our entire membership stay engaged, union proud, and union strong in our struggle for justice.”

The APWU will continue to keep the members updated, including regular messages on the negotiation “hotline” at (202) 642-9049, our website (apwu.org), and on our social media channels.



**Chris Czubakowski**  
**Local Business Agent**

### **FLEXABLE SPENDING ACCOUNT (FSA)**

The APWU was recently notified of the proposed change for the 2025 benefit year, Inspira Financial will replace FSAFEDS as the Postal Service's Flexible Spending Account (FSA) program administrator. Employee participation in FSAFEDS will end December 31, 2024. Thus, employees must use all FSA Healthcare, Limited Expense Healthcare, and Dependent Care funds for the 2024 benefit year before Dec. 31, 2024. *All FSAFEDS claims must be submitted no later than April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Any remaining funds will be forfeited.*

The APWU is actively monitoring the situation. President Dimondstein has raised our concerns to the Postmaster General's office. In addition, we are researching any possible legal action. So that employees have time to use their FSA funds, or guarantee any money left in FSA accounts will remain available to employees next year.

### **OPEN SEASON IS HERE!**

This Open Season, a login.gov account will be required to access the new Postal Service Health Benefits

## **Open Season, FSA, And The APWU Health Plan**

*"Open Season begins November 11, 2024, and ends December 9, 2024."*

System (PSHBS). The PSHBS is the system that employees must use to make changes or enroll in a health benefits plan under the new Postal Service Health Benefits System (PSHBS) Program. Login.gov is a secure sign-in service. Creating an account can be done in a few steps.

Visit login.gov for more information. Open Season begins Nov. 11 and will be here before you know it. Don't wait until the last minute to create your login.gov account.

This is your once-a-year opportunity to make changes to your benefits.

*Open Season officially begins November 11, 2024, and ends December 9, 2024.*

This season is unique because the new Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program takes effect on January 1, 2025.

### **APWU HEALTH PLAN**

Thousands of dollars in savings! Jerry McGuire and I have something in common because we both want to *"Show You Da Money"*. How so? Well, did you know that the USPS pays 95% of your premiums if you select the APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan (CDHP/United Healthcare) for Self, Self/One, or Self/Family? This is a negotiated benefit that many members

regret not taking advantage of once they understand the savings that can be had.

Let's do some simple math.

**APWU CDHP SELF ONLY** - You pay \$16.12 every 2 weeks. This means you pay \$32.24 a month. This means **you only pay \$386.88 a year in premiums.**

**APWU CDHP SELF/ONE** - You pay \$35.05 every 2 weeks. This means you pay \$70.10 a month. This means **you only pay \$841.20 a year in premiums.**

**APWU CDHP SELF/FAMILY** - You pay \$38.23 every 2 weeks. This means you pay \$76.46 a month. This means **you only pay \$917.52 a year in premiums.**

I have included a Premium Comparison Chart. Subtract the above amount from what you are currently paying a year in premiums in your current plan in order to see how much you will save in premiums alone.

There are other cost savings you will incur with the APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan regarding deductibles, discounts and 85% coverage for all medical expenses once the deductible is met.

The APWU Health Plan is the best plan for APWU members in the PSHB. Like I've stated, if you want to save thousands of dollars a year...

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Please contact me and I will be happy to share more information with you and help you make that change.

You are encouraged to use CHECKBOOK, a free online tool that allows you to compare health, dental, and vision plans available in your area to determine the best option for you and your family. To help you understand how your benefits work together, the Benefits and Wellness Team will host virtual educational presentations throughout Open Season. For webinar schedules, a link to CHECKBOOK's Guide to Health Plans for Federal Employees, and a link to the new Postal Service Health Benefits System (PSHBS).

You are encouraged to:

- Visit the Virtual Benefits Fair website to view the schedule of live events.
- Access plan provider booths, and listen to various on-demand webinars.
- Attend a live Benefits 101 presentation.

*go to [myhr.usps.gov/pay\\_benefits/benefits/open\\_season\\_enrollment](https://myhr.usps.gov/pay_benefits/benefits/open_season_enrollment).*

## PREMIUM COMPARISON CHARTS

Plan	Option	Enrollment Code	Enrollment Type	2025 Biweekly Empl. Pays	2025 Monthly Empl. Pays	Biweekly APWU Rate
APWU Health Plan	High Option	23A	Self	109.86	238.03	
APWU Health Plan	High Option	23B	Self & Family	277.28	600.77	
APWU Health Plan	High Option	23C	Self Plus One	213.05	461.61	
APWU Health Plan	Consumer Driven Option	23D	Self	80.62	174.68	16.12
APWU Health Plan	Consumer Driven Option	23E	Self & Family	191.16	414.17	38.23
APWU Health Plan	Consumer Driven Option	23F	Self Plus One	175.23	379.66	35.05
BCBS	Basic Option	33A	Self	114.12	247.26	
BCBS	Basic Option	33B	Self & Family	317.62	688.18	
BCBS	Basic Option	33C	Self Plus One	280.99	608.81	
BCBS	Standard Option	33D	Self	174.13	377.28	
BCBS	Standard Option	33E	Self & Family	435.43	943.43	
BCBS	Standard Option	33F	Self Plus One	388.04	840.75	
BCBS	FEP Blue Focus	35A	Self	59.17	128.21	
BCBS	FEP Blue Focus	35B	Self & Family	139.92	303.17	
BCBS	FEP Blue Focus	35C	Self Plus One	127.21	275.63	
GEHA Benefit Plan - HDHP	High Deductible Health Plan	39A	Self	78.60	170.29	
GEHA Benefit Plan - HDHP	High Deductible Health Plan	39B	Self & Family	207.66	449.92	
GEHA Benefit Plan - HDHP	High Deductible Health Plan	39C	Self Plus One	168.98	366.13	
GEHA Benefit Plan - High and Standard	High Option	37A	Self	128.19	277.75	
GEHA Benefit Plan - High and Standard	High Option	37B	Self & Family	365.22	791.31	
GEHA Benefit Plan - High and Standard	High Option	37C	Self Plus One	293.04	634.92	
GEHA Benefit Plan - High and Standard	Standard Option	37D	Self	74.36	161.11	
GEHA Benefit Plan - High and Standard	Standard Option	37E	Self & Family	197.53	427.99	
GEHA Benefit Plan - High and Standard	Standard Option	37F	Self Plus One	159.88	346.41	
GEHA Indemnity - Elevate Plus and Elevate	Elevate Plus Option	58A	Self	162.69	352.50	
GEHA Indemnity - Elevate Plus and Elevate	Elevate Plus Option	58B	Self & Family	406.16	880.01	
GEHA Indemnity - Elevate Plus and Elevate	Elevate Plus Option	58C	Self Plus One	364.67	790.12	
GEHA Indemnity - Elevate Plus and Elevate	Elevate Option	58D	Self	68.14	147.63	
GEHA Indemnity - Elevate Plus and Elevate	Elevate Option	58E	Self & Family	200.12	433.60	
GEHA Indemnity - Elevate Plus and Elevate	Elevate Option	58F	Self Plus One	164.38	356.17	







**Jim Arneson**  
**Maintenance Director**

The Postal Service formally notified the APWU on June 20, 2024, that they believed the Eagle Clean (e4776) pilot program was a success and they would begin implementing it across the country. Maintenance Division leadership has been meeting with the Postal Service to discuss the program and any violations and unintended consequences that might result from its implementation.

The Postal Service notified the APWU of its intent to pilot the Eagle Clean (e4776) program on May 30, 2023. The Postal Service's reasoning behind the pilot program was to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of completing and submitting the PS Form 4776 using a Mobile Delivery Device scanner (MDD).

Custodians would utilize the MDD scanner daily to record the time spent working on various custodial tasks. Once completed, the data would be reviewed by the supervisor and uploaded to be stored on the Retail and Delivery Application Recording platform (RADAR). The pilot program officially began on July 1, 2023, in five facilities in Maryland, and expanded shortly thereafter to facilities in Lexington, KY and Tampa.

## USPS Eagle Clean (e4776) Pilot Program

*"To be clear, the APWU has not agreed to the Eagle Clean program..."*

As a brief recap, the APWU and the Postal Service have always had existing Step-4 agreements and national Questions and Answers that required the use of the PS Form 4776. The Postal Service claimed that the e4776 would contain the same information as the hard copy PS Form 4776, and that custodians would complete the e4776 in the same manner as the hard copy – the only thing that would change is that instead of using a pen and paper, custodians would now use a scanner with text input.

PS Form 4776, also known as Preventive Custodial Maintenance Route, contains information detailing what, when, where, and how custodians should perform their work in different areas of each facility. Historically, management has failed to use these forms, but it now appears they are attempting to come into compliance, and then some.

Using the MDD, it appears custodians have several options after logging in, such as: begin tour, in and out to lunch, end tour, move to different operation numbers, move to travel operation, and track training. In addition, custodians can select daily routes (routine tasks) and track the time spent performing those routes. They can also select work orders (periodic tasks) for tasks required to be done on a monthly, quarterly, annually, etc.

basis. Lastly, they can select odd-and-end tasks (Ad-Hoc) to track time spent performing work that is not necessarily contained within the custodial staffing package.

As always, we must reinforce the importance of the individual employee and the way they complete their paperwork (or, in this case, data). If custodians get pulled away from their daily tasks to perform something unanticipated and never get the opportunity to return and complete the original task, the original task should not be submitted as completed. If custodians find themselves in a situation where local management instructs them to falsify data, they should quickly request a steward.

To be clear, the APWU has not agreed to the Eagle Clean program, and we are still having meetings and discussions on this matter.

There are several pieces of the Eagle Clean program that the APWU is concerned about and that we hope to resolve in a timely manner. Local and state unions should advise their custodians to keep a notebook and track all time they spend performing work not contained in the staffing package (this includes time spent performing tasks above and beyond the estimated times and frequencies). Custodians should also be advised to keep track of all the work that, for a variety of reasons, they are unable to complete or even begin.





**John Miceli**  
**Treasurer**

Another goal when setting a retirement date is to increase the value of your unused annual leave. There are rules governing when you can retire and when your annuity begins. In short, FERS employees must retire no later than the last day of the month to be on the annuity roll in the following month. CSRS employees can retire up to the third day of the month and be on the annuity roll in that month.

This time we want to focus on three factors involved in picking a retirement date that produce the most pay-off to you. Two involve increasing the value of your annuity through the two elements that go into the calculation: your high-3 average salary and your creditable service time, which includes credit for unused sick leave. The other involves the value of the lump-sum payout for unused annual leave.



## Picking A Retirement Date Under CSRS & FERS

*“When you meet the age and service requirements to retire, any unused sick leave will be added to your actual service time.”*

As a rule, your high-3 gets higher the longer you work. Note, though, that your high-3 number reflects the average of your highest paid 36 consecutive months of work, not the average of your last three annual salary rates.

Therefore, putting off retirement from, say, the end of December to wait until after a raise kicks in—typically in mid-January—would have little impact. That said, most employees who retire do so when they have come as close as possible to spending a full year at their highest pay level.

That’s one reason there are so many retirements around the turn of the year as opposed to, say, mid-year.

When you meet the age and service requirements to retire, any unused sick leave will be added to your actual service time.

### ***Here’s how that works.***

Your basic annuity will be determined by a formula that includes your years and full months of service. Any hours of service that don’t add up to full month will be added to any hours of unused sick leave.

For example, if the combination adds up to 174 hours, your length of service will be increased by 1 month, 338 hours 2 months, 2087 hours 1 year, and so on.



Therefore, don’t “burn off” your sick leave in the run-up to retirement. Anecdotal, some employees do that by coming up with dubious conditions; management is supposed to prevent that but again, anecdotally, in some cases it doesn’t.

Another goal when setting a retirement date is to increase the value of your unused annual leave. When you retire, you’ll be given a lump sum payment for that leave. Since it will be projected forward as if you were still at work, it will be paid to you at the hourly rate in effect at that time.


Even if you retire before a new annual pay adjustment goes into effect, any unused annual leave that crosses over into the new pay year will be paid at that higher hourly rate.

Therefore, if you have more unused annual leave than you can carry into the next leave year, you likely would want to retire before the new leave year begins.

With these tips at hand, you should be able to pick a retirement date that improves the dollar value of your retirement.

## APWU President Mark Dimondstein Responds To Trump's Truth Social Post



Donald J. Trump   
@realDonaldTrump

The United States Postal Service has admitted that it is a poorly run mess that is experiencing mail loss and delays at a level never seen before. With this being the FACT, how can we possibly be expected to allow or trust the U.S. Postal Service to run the 2024 Presidential Election? It is not possible for them to do so. HELP!

6.59k ReTruths 21k Likes

Sep 15, 2024, 7:29 AM



Reply



ReTruth



Like



...

On September 15, former President Donald Trump said that the Postal Service could not be trusted to deliver election mail, an attack on the 650,000 dedicated public servants that make up the United States Postal Service. Donald Trump, when President, planned to privatize the Postal Service and sell it off to his friends on Wall Street. In 2020, when postal workers were risking our lives to keep the country connected, Trump called us “a joke.” He spun dangerous and baseless lies about postal workers and the 2020 elections. In 2020, postal workers accepted, sorted, transported and timely delivered 69 million ballots as part of our public service.

For generations, the Postal Service has helped millions of people safely and securely vote by mail – no matter what party or candidate they may support.



Trump is once again spouting lies about the Postal Service in an attempt to dissuade people from voting by mail. This is voter suppression, plain and simple.

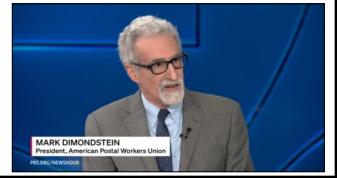
Postal workers take seriously our commitment to the serving the public – the entire public, no matter their political convictions.

The public should have every confidence that postal workers will once again stand with the people and are ready to timely and securely deliver election mail again this fall.





## APWU President Mark Dimondstein On PBS News Hour



Mark Dimondstein:

We believe they are. Postal workers are absolutely dedicated to our mission in general, and specifically around making sure that the people of this country have that kind of access to the ballot box and their cherished right to vote on a non-partisan basis that the Postal Service can bring to the people of this country.

It's interesting. In 2020, almost half the people in the country voted by mail. In the midterms, about a third of the people voted by mail. It works. It's not fraudulent. Everything says that, the audits, the recounts. Vote by mail is a great way to vote, increases participation, makes it easier for people to vote. I'm a lucky one. I get a ballot automatically to my home in Washington, D.C., and my wife and I can vote at the kitchen table.

And so we encourage people to have full confidence in the Postal Service and the postal workers that will get their ballots there through the system, on time. The Postal Service has put in a lot of extraordinary measures to make sure it gets done. So the people of this country can have absolute trust and confidence in us that we will be there, just like we were in 2020 and 2022.

Well, in a moment, it might, but it's such an important aspect of the public Postal Service's role in our society, that we accept that election mail, they are putting in what they call extraordinary measures. And some of those include moving election mail ahead of other mail. Now, those measures also include more overtime, more transportation, more clearing the election ballots. And that's all part of why we have the confidence and the people of this country should have the confidence that we're going to come through.

But we also are saying yesterday, part of our message yesterday, is, as good as election mail is going to be, as important as it is, and as how much trust and confidence the people should have in it and will have in it, we want the people's mail to be treated that way every day of the year, because however we choose to use the Postal Service, that's important to us as a postal customer and patron. So part of our message is trust election mail, we're confident, but let's make sure that postal management puts into place those kind of things and make sure people get this kind of service every day of the year. We need more staffing, for example. We can't serve the people of the country unless we have better staffing.

We have 10,000 less postal clerks who we do represent now than we did a few years back, and we got tons and tons of more packages to move because that's part of the way the mail is changing. So there is a lot of work ahead of us to fix the problems. And management has to do that.

After the success of Tuesday's rallies, we're continuing to assert our fight for better staffing, better service, better wages and a good contract NOW. That's why we're proud to share President Mark Dimondstein's recent interview on PBS News Hour, where discusses these very issues and underscores the critical role we play, especially as we head into the election season.

In the interview, President Dimondstein reinforces for the public what we already know: that postal workers are dedicated to the mission: no matter where we live, no matter who we are, we should get the same good service. He makes it clear that we need management to step up and ensure we have the resources we need to do the job, not just during election season, but every day of the year. To all who showed out on Tuesday, we're incredibly proud to have stood side by side with you in solidarity. Remember that, whether you attended a rally or not, our solidarity now is more important than ever! Wear your union gear every Thursday until we've won a good contract, and show management that we're...

***UNION PROUD, SAY IT LOUD ! SOLIDARITY FOREVER !***



**Larry Brown Jr**  
**Vice President**

*I wrote an article a while back called, "Batteries not included." In that article I talked about how management did away with the Battery 470 exam that so many of us, pretty much everyone here that did not start their career as a PSE, had to take. I talked about the final part of that exam called following oral instructions. This was the easiest/hardest part of the test depending on who you are.*

Some people can follow instructions very easily, while others just seem to want to make things difficult. Being a steward for the short/long amount of time that I have been really makes me understand the reason this was the most important part of that test. Here are some instructions/information that I need people to pay attention to. This information is regarding discipline and the discipline process.

If you have never been in a day in court, I will explain what it is. A day in court is exactly what it sounds like. This is your opportunity to explain whatever behavior/deficiency management is attempting to correct. Listen to what management is attempting to charge you with, whether it be failure to follow instructions or be regular in attendance, etc. If you have a reason or an explanation for your

## Following Oral Instructions

*"I cannot truly explain to people how much easier their postal careers would be if they would simply follow instructions."*

actions, state the reason! This is not the time to say how you don't want management all in your business. They're in your business already. This is not the time to say you have better things to do right now than to be sitting in a day in court. This is also not the time for me to go off track with what I am trying to convey in this article right now! So, with that being said, my apologies.

If you have never been in a day in court with me, the one thing you will always hear me say, before that day in court ends, is exactly what you are supposed to do when the discipline comes back.

1.) Sign it. Whether you agree with it or not, it literally says that signing it only acknowledges receipt of the discipline.

2.) Get it to a steward immediately. A steward does not have to be present at the issuance of a discipline.

Now, in typical Larry Brown, Jr. fashion, I will explain why I give you these instructions. Easy instructions if you want the help of the Union. I do not think I'm being unfair in making this very simple request of you. Again, sign it and get it to a steward immediately.

I am looking at a discipline right now, issued to an employee by someone other than their immediate supervisor. That in itself is wrong, but we'll save that story for another day. The issuing supervisor signed

this discipline 7 days prior to the day the employee actually claims to have received it. We all know that as a postal employee filing a grievance, we have 14 days to file, correct? We all know that right? So, this person brings the discipline to me on the 14th day after they received it, not immediately as I asked them to do, and they didn't sign it as I asked them to.

What do you think Management is going to say when I approach them and attempt to initiate this grievance at step 1, 21 days past the only signature and date on the discipline? They are going to say that the employee, or the grievant, received it on the day that the supervisor signed it and that the time limits are blown.

Now, I have to prove that it was not issued on that day, and that it was actually given to the grievant 7 days after. You are making the job more difficult than it has to be.

Why, because you don't want to follow instructions. Then, when I ask why didn't you sign it, you say because I didn't want to; because I didn't do what they said I did; because the supervisor made me mad when they brought me in the office anyway; because I didn't think I had to and my favorite of them all, I don't know.

Every excuse in the book except, I just didn't want to follow the simple instructions you gave me in order to

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help myself, because I love making things more difficult for myself and you. At least they brought the discipline, whether it was on the 14th day or not, at least they brought it. Literally the last words that I have said in the day court is, when this discipline comes back, sign it and bring it to me immediately. Once again, let me explain the scenarios that I encounter from the failure to follow this simple request.

I am asked to sit in on an issuance for an employee. When I get there, they read what the discipline states. They are asked to sign their copies; I tell them to sign it and give me their copy right then and there. Then I ask them why this discipline is a 7 day or 14-day suspension? Because if they haven't been disciplined before, and this wasn't an egregious action that warranted discipline outside the realm of progressive, this should be a letter of warning. So, I have to ask, "Have you been written up/disciplined in the past? I just want to hear from the employee before I start investigating for myself.

After I do my digging, I find out the employee has live discipline on record that was never grieved. It was never taken to a steward. So, now I have to go back and ask why they never grieved it. I forgot is the typical answer. I didn't know who to take it to is the most unacceptable answer that I've heard, but the answer that I got a while ago really took the cake. Someone refused to sign the paper and when they walked out of the office, they just threw it on the ground. They refused to accept it. They literally said; "I wasn't taking that because I didn't agree with it. I didn't accept the write up." Ok, so you didn't accept that write up, but that still does not "un-write" you up. You were disciplined and your failure to give that discipline to a steward effectively blew your 14-day time limits to file a grievance.

I cannot go back and address that discipline that you never filed a grievance on no matter what the circumstances are. It could have been a 100% total lie, but if you didn't grieve it, it will remain on your record as such. Why would management take a copy of your discipline to a steward so that a grievance could be filed on your behalf? A better question is, why would you choose not to listen to the last thing said in that day in court? Sign it and bring it to me immediately. If there was a problem with those instructions, then why not say it then?

I have too many instances in which I give someone instructions and they either fail to do what I asked them to do or make up their own version of what I asked them to do and do that. Then come back to me and tell me that they did exactly what I said as if I don't remember the conversation. A perfect example of this is the obey now grieve later rule. Everyone has heard me say that you cannot tell your supervisor no. You must first carry out the orders you are given, and you can file a grievance on it later. Only if the orders are unsafe, or demeaning, can you decline to follow a supervisor's instructions.

Everyone has heard me, or another steward say this. Why do we get so many calls from supervisors asking us to come and talk to an employee that just told the supervisor what they were not going to do? Then when we come out and attempt to settle the situation down, now all of a sudden, they need to go home. Next thing is the union is not on our side, they are on management's side, like I'm supposed to give you an instruction to not listen to your supervisor.

At the end of the day, I cannot truly explain to people how much easier their postal careers would be if they would simply follow instructions. Everything about this job comes down to simply following instructions. Standard Operating Procedures, the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Memorandums of Understanding, FMLA law, OWCP, Zero Tolerance Policies and so on all comes down to the simple fact of, can you follow instructions. I can see why it was the most important part of the Battery exam. I guess following instructions can be the easiest/hardest part of the job depending on who you are. You tell me.





**Larry Victory**  
**Motor Vehicle Director**

**2024 MVS Director's Conference /  
National Convention**

*Locals wanted updates on the monetary compensation award for the MVS craft from the DAS 110 Arbitration Award. A resolution was made to give a report within 60 days of the convention's end. Here is the update from Mr. Foster:*

"Consistent with my report at the conference, no money has been paid, nor are there any agreements for any of the DAS110 remedies to be paid to the national union. Because the DAS 110 only insourced this HCR work to PVS for a 4-year regular contract term, which has expired, the national officers have been and regularly participate in discussions with postal management on permanently insourcing this work to PVS.

Our commitment remains to negotiate the insourcing of this work and the remainder of the remedy going to the MVS members. If the parties fail to reach an agreement on the permanent insourcing of the work, we will identify the PVS employees to be paid and proceed with the disbursement of the settlement." I agree with Mr. Foster.

In our Craft we always need to secure work first (It would be nice to get a

## Arbitration Award / MVS Notes

*"We need to do a better job at safety. I have watched as management seems to do less about it."*

good size payout like the clerks) for long term stability in the craft as PVS and VMF are threatened by contracting. I have known Brother Foster for over 15 years. He will guide us the best that he can...Even if he is a Lions fan.

### **SAFETY**

We need to take care of one another while at work. We need to be safe for our families, our coworkers and ourselves. Your goal should be to return home safely each day. If you see something unsafe (plastic straps on the ground, oil spill on ground, defect to a vehicle) fix it if you can. If you can't, report it to someone immediately. Fill out a 1767 Hazard report.

We need to do a better job at safety. I have watched as management seems to do less about it. When was the last time you had a safety talk? Sticking a piece of paper on the wall or clipboard is not a safety talk. Management does not want to hear about safety concerns from us. If they did, it would be another thing they have to do and they don't want to have to address issues brought in the safety talks.

This is why we need to work safely while on the clock. If they add stops to your run, or there is bad weather, or unsafe conditions on the dock/shop we need to slow down and remain in control. Drive the speed limit. Use proper technique when moving equipment. Resolve unsafe conditions if you can.

No one has been disciplined for being too safe but we have had accidents for driving too fast. We have had people hurt for use of improper technique while moving equipment. Take your time. Management uses the fact that people want to go home after 8 hours. You have to be willing to call dispatch or the supervisor to let them know you can't finish in 8 hours.

If you are going to go past your 8 hours, ask them if they want you to skip your last stop. Do they want you to have someone finish your tow job if you are recovering vehicles? Remember your job is to get home safely to your family. Think about them and not about making your supervisor happy.

If you don't want to fill out the 1767 hazard report, I get it. We worry about what management might do to you. Tell me or Kevin about what is going on. I will fill the forms and it could be a grievance as well. Fall driving is here with winter right around the corner. Be Safe.

### **204B's**

When you are a 204B representing management the Union does not have a say in who management picks and it can be the most junior employee.

There is no seniority for being a 204B. The union's job is to protect the craft employees ( Drivers/mechanics, clerks, dispatchers, DSI and stockroom).

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We have too many people doing managements work. I know of 3. That is 3 too many. Then they are complaining they are not being paid properly. That's not our concern. Stop doing the work!!! Stop trying to get favors from management. Who is doing your bid job while you do this stuff? We, the Union take care of the craft employee's issues. You are not a craft employee when performing management duties. Stop doing the work. If you are not being paid properly or you feel you are being taken advantage of by management...end your 204B status and come back to craft.

If you have any questions or need talk about issues feel free to reach out to me:

I am in the VMF during tour 2 in room 110  
Lawrencevictory@gmail.com  
Work Phone 414-270-2155  
Cell Phone 414-305-5802

**APWU Retiree's Department Presents...**  
**"FERS, CSRS and CSRS Offset Retirement Planning**  
**Seminar on ZOOM" Nov. 23, 2024**

APWU News

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Saturday, November 23, 2024 - 11:00PM Central Time

Hosted by APWU Retirees Department

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/joining/register/tZYqde6uqj0tHNEA3F1ZLMossHp4IJwQiPGf>

**SPECIAL NOTES:**

1. Participants must be an active APWU member.
2. Participants cannot register with a USPS email address, i.e. @usps.gov.
3. Each participant must register individually and not as a group.
4. Participants should not attend this training on the Postal Service time clock.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

**Attend Your Union Meetings !**

## **Consolidation Threatens to Rip ‘Service’ Out of Postal Service**

Labor Notes

Workers are battling an overhaul of the U.S. Postal Service that would cost thousands of jobs and slow the mail for half the country. In the name of efficiency, a letter mailed within Cheyenne, Wyoming, would travel to Denver and back. And if you miss a package, your local post office would no longer have it. It might be 45 minutes away.

In March, Buffalo became the first place to fend off the closure of its mail processing plant, in a team effort by Letter Carriers (NALC) Branch 3 and Postal Workers (APWU) Local 374. The unions turned out 300 people to picket in front of the plant, and 700 to pack a public hearing, said Branch 3 President David Grosskopf. They deluged USPS with feedback in its online survey. They lined up the support of their state reps and city council; they got neighboring town councils to pass resolutions too. They even got their senator to call the Postmaster General personally—and it didn’t hurt that their senator was Majority Leader Chuck Schumer. Within a few weeks, the plant consolidation was canceled.

### ***ROBOTIC MEGA-PLANTS***

Postal workers are the nation’s biggest union workforce—585,000 strong, split across four unions. They’re half women, 30 percent Black, and 16 percent veterans. Thousands of their jobs are at stake under Postmaster General Louis DeJoy’s 10-year “Delivering for America” modernization plan, which would close 200 mail processing plants and funnel all mail to 60 mega-plants called Regional Processing and Distribution Centers (RPDCs), each with a football-field-sized parcel sorting machine—a series of conveyor belts, scanners, and chutes that can sort 5,000 packages an hour.

USPS is chasing its competitors Amazon, UPS, and FedEx, which already have bigger and more automated facilities like the UPS Worldport hub in Louisville, Kentucky, the size of 90 football fields, where a package touches human hands only twice—on its way in, and on its way out—traversing 13 minutes of conveyor belts in between.

The Buffalo mail plant would have been downgraded to a Local Processing Center, handling only incoming letters and flat mail. APWU and Mail Handlers (NPMHU) members no longer needed in the pared-down plant wouldn’t technically be laid off, but “excessed”: Of course there’s still a job for you, 75 miles away at the new mega-plant in Rochester! That’s how USPS gets around contractual anti-layoff protections, knowing many workers won’t uproot their lives.

Wyoming has only two mail plants, and both are slated to be downgraded, so all the mail (and many of the jobs) will travel out of state to the nearest RPDC. It used to be that local mail could get there overnight, said mail handler Ricci Roberts, president of the Cheyenne branch of NPMHU Local 321. Now it will take at least two days, but more likely three or four, she says, as letters travel to Denver and back. There will be no way to separate local mail, because her plant will lose its AFCS machine—the one that sorts raw letters, cancels the stamp, and adds the barcode, all at a speed of 36,000 items an hour. They’ll keep their DBCS machine, which sorts incoming mail (at a similar clip) to get it ready for carriers to deliver. The machines for sorting flats, such as magazines, are also being removed from plants around the country—so don’t be surprised if your copy of Labor Notes arrives later than ever.

### ***DISASTROUS CHANGES***

The first RPDCs have already opened, with disastrous results. Machines malfunctioned; the plants were seriously understaffed; the schedule was chaos; managers had no idea what they were doing. Mail piled up, and on-time delivery rates plummeted. Local news outlets and Congress members sounded the alarm on mail delays. In Richmond, Virginia, colon

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cancer screening tests for 870 veterans sat so long in the plant that they expired. A museum reported it was missing \$300,000 in membership renewal checks.

In Atlanta, trucks waited three or four hours for their turn at jammed loading docks; the line got so long it backed up onto the highway. In Houston, an anonymous worker tipped off the press that the new sorting machine wouldn't fit in the new building.

USPS says these are just growing pains. But it has had to slow down, faced with protests and Congressional pressure—especially over how mail delays could affect the election. In May, DeJoy announced he would pause any further plant consolidations until the new year. In September, USPS canceled the downgrading of another eight plants besides Buffalo.

### ***A PUBLIC TREASURE***

Postal Service competitors are all in the package sector. There's nobody else delivering birthday cards and pension checks—because this is a public service, not a money-maker. True, you can send a document by UPS or FedEx, but it's going to cost you dollars, not cents, and even more for a remote or rural address. Only USPS has a mandate to provide universal service at universal rates. Only USPS visits every doorstep, every day. Demand for this service has declined in our era of email and electronic payments—but it's still significant. Last year USPS carried 59 billion pieces of first class mail, 3 billion periodicals, and 7 billion packages.

USPS is also still the biggest package shipper, though probably not for long. Last year Amazon leapfrogged UPS, and it is close on the Postal Service's heels. Muddying those figures is the fact that USPS actually completes the "last mile" of delivery for a substantial share of Amazon and UPS packages. Even as Amazon expands its subcontracted, nonunion delivery force, it's likely to keep leaning on USPS wherever deliveries are too far-flung and labor-intensive to be profitable. Competition from USPS also keeps a lid on the rates that UPS and FedEx can get away with.

### ***HUBS AND SPOKES***

Under DeJoy's plan, some of the downgraded plants would also house Sorting and Delivery Centers (S&DCs), another new type of facility: home base for letter carriers from five to 10 zip codes. Till now, letter carriers have always reported directly to the post office in their zip code. Many work at their own neighborhood post office, Grosskopf said, where they enjoy the benefits of a short commute and know they can make it to work in any weather. "You gotta remember, this is Western New York," he said. "We get this little thing called snow every now and then."

There are 31,000 post offices in this country—one per zip code—more than there are Starbucks and McDonald's locations put together. Think of post offices as a web: 99 percent of us have one within 10 miles of home. The new setup would be Amazon-style hubs and spokes. Many carriers would commute 30-45 minutes to pick up the mail from an S&DC, then drive straight back to their delivery neighborhood in a rickety USPS delivery truck—and reverse those steps again at the end of the day.

### ***ANTI-RURAL DISCRIMINATION***

Another prong of DeJoy's plan, "Regional Transportation Optimization," will eliminate end-of-day mail pickup from post offices farther than 50 miles from an RPDC—which is three-quarters of all post offices, covering half the population—adding another day to delivery times. "He wants to have full trucks only," Roberts said. "From a rural lens, looking at it here in Wyoming, we never get full trucks. We don't have the population to sustain that. So the only way to do that is to delay the mail."

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**Consolidation...**

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A map released in September shows the areas where service will be slowed, a dark sea—punctuated by a few dozen light spots around the RPDs, where it will supposedly improve. Delivery gets worse in every rural area as well as some major cities, like Columbus and New Orleans, that would have their mail plants downgraded. “It’s discrimination against the rural communities, without coming out and saying it,” Roberts said.

***PIECEMEAL PRIVATIZATION***

What’s behind all the attacks on the postal service? Unlike other public services that are perennially on the chopping block, USPS already gets zero tax dollars. Yet a string of right-wing politicians, Donald Trump among them, have called for privatizing it. Some European countries have actually done that, to the detriment of customers and workers. The U.K., for instance, privatized the Royal Mail a decade ago; now its parent company plans to resell it to a Czech billionaire. So far the U.S. public seems unwilling to stomach wholesale postal privatization. But piecemeal privatization started long ago, and the low-hanging fruit have already been picked.

Eighty to 90 percent of letter mail is presorted by private companies, who get a hefty postage discount for taking away union postal work. USPS also contracts out a lot of trucking—some of it to DeJoy’s old company, XPO Logistics. Steve Hutkins, a retired English professor who runs the excellent blog [savethepostoffice.com](http://savethepostoffice.com), sees USPS undergoing a “gradual process of corporatization,” so that it is run more with the values of a profit-making business rather than a public service. Service cuts, he has observed, generally end up saving less money than anticipated. “Most things that save money involve cutting services,” he said. “There’s no magic to just being more efficient.” And when you slow down the mail, some dissatisfied customers go elsewhere—so you lose revenue, eating into any cost savings.

***A BETTER WAY***

Interestingly, this summer DeJoy moved to eliminate some of the presorting discounts for package consolidators. Perhaps this simply makes business sense now that USPS can do the work more cheaply in-house, by replacing workers with machines. Still, in a press release, APWU President Mark Dimondstein called it “a welcome early step in the right direction” to undo rampant outsourcing. Postal unionists have their own vision for modernizing USPS: rather than cutting costs, raising revenue by expanding services. Since letter carriers are already visiting every door, why not offer an option where they check in on elderly residents?

Since post offices are already in every community, why not make them hubs for internet access, fishing licenses, passport renewals, electric vehicle charging, and even basic banking as an alternative to predatory check-cashing stands? “If I were running the Postal Service, I wouldn’t want trying to save money to be my top consideration,” Hutkins said. “If the emphasis were on improving service rather than cutting costs, you could start talking about what else can the Postal Service do. Jobs are a good thing; they’re good for the community. I wouldn’t look to be replacing jobs with machines.”





# 960 Dispatch

Volume 17, Issue 1

October / November 2024

## DeJoy = DeStroy Demise of the Postal Service is Upon Us

Larry DeNayer, Editor

The time has come to get rid of this guy. It has been four years since the Grim Reaper has nestled into his web of deception as Postmaster General of the United States Postal Business, I mean Service. With his uncaring attitude towards the delayed delivery of mail to the citizens of this country, he continues to scoff at any congressional requests to substantiate his 10-year plan "Delivering for America."

What he is delivering is a path to privatization. Did everyone forget that this guy was a logistics executive with New Breed and XPO and had no postal experience prior to his appointment. Has everyone forgot his removing mail processing machines from facilities during the 2020 elections(DeJoy abandoned his initial attempts to slow down mail delivery ahead of the 2020 elections after he faced lawsuits and backlash), changing delivery standards from three days to five, cutting overtime, ordering postal vehicles to start their rounds before they had been fully loaded, raising first class postage rates seven times in four years from 55 cents in January 2021 to 73 cents as of July, and giving postal contracts to XPO.

He relishes the fact that mail is delivered across this country by truck. Yes, from one Sorting & Delivery Center (SDC) to another. In addition, the Postal Service has reduced its volume moved by air transport by 90%. That explains why there is such a delay in moving America's mail.

So what's next. Continual changing the delivery standards to meet the transportation network delays. Oh, and continue to reduce work hours nationwide, which hinders postal workers from all crafts to do their jobs in a safe and efficient manner.

The PMG arrogance towards a steady deterioration of postal service performance and reputation is a slap in the face to the entire nation for failing to tie the nation together with an efficient and reliable postal service.

The next question is, where are the postal unions? Normally, we would be marching in the streets to have this guy ousted. We would be having rallies and informational picketing educating the public on how the PMG is delaying their mail and how to address their concerns with their elected representatives.

All three major postal unions are in contract negotiations, and it seems that if we raise any ruckus, then that will hinder any settlements. Well, I was a postal employee for thirty-seven years and guess what: **Management did not give a rats ass then nor do they now.**

We have fought long and hard for everything that we enjoy today as postal workers as we take pride in full filling our oath to the American public to deliver their mail in a timely, reliable and efficient manner.

The unions mantra has always been, "*The struggle continues.*" Well, if this guy remains, there might be no struggle to fight for.



# OPM Retirement Quick Guide

## A Reference for Voluntary Retirement

Timelines in this document are current estimates as of Jan 2024. View the most current version of this document at [opm.gov/retirement-center/quick-guide](https://opm.gov/retirement-center/quick-guide).

### Congratulations on your upcoming retirement!

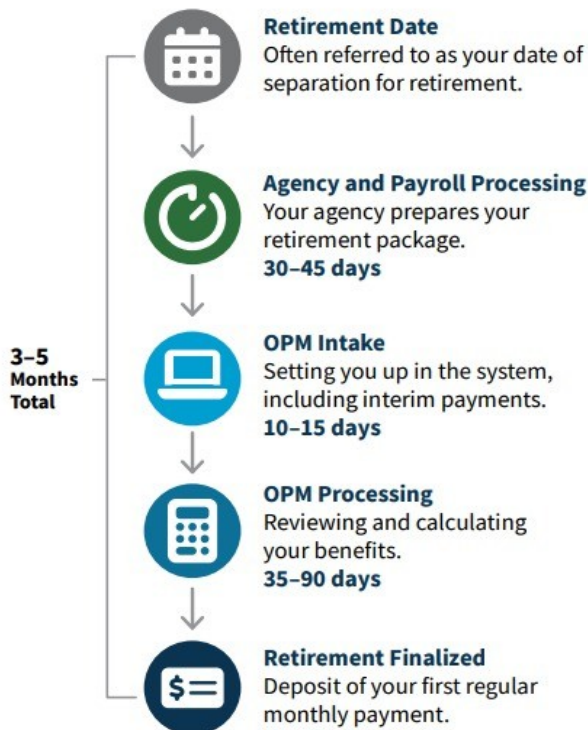
This guide will walk you through what to expect as your retirement application is processed and your benefits are determined. Most retirees will receive their first full annuity check within 3-5 months of retiring.

During processing, you will receive:

- **Interim payments**, typically 60–80% of your estimated net annuity to help cover your expenses.
- Any **health insurance coverage** you elected to take into retirement.
- Access to **Services Online**, a website to track your retirement.

### Process at a Glance

Below are current estimates as of January 2024.



### Four Things to Do Before You Retire

1. **Sign all forms.** Missing signatures are one of the most common reasons for processing delays.
2. **Download your personnel records** if your agency uses eOPF and you want your own copies. You will lose access to eOPF once you retire.
3. **Complete payments** for any [open service credit accounts](#)<sup>1</sup> for [FERS](#) and [CSRS](#) eligible deposit or service redeposit. Honorable post-1956 Military Service deposits must be paid in full before you retire.
4. **Check Supplemental Documents.** Include all documentation required for your retirement application such as marriage certificate, military service records, court orders, etc.



### Understand Your Benefits Choices

Make sure to understand your elections for the categories below. Your choices can significantly impact your annuity amount. There are limitations on when you can make changes after your retirement is complete.

- [Health Benefit](#)<sup>2</sup>
- [Life Insurance](#)<sup>3</sup>
- [Survivor Benefits](#)<sup>4</sup>
- [Designation of Beneficiary](#)<sup>5</sup>



### Factors That Might Delay Your Retirement Processing

While most retirement cases will be straightforward, certain circumstances can significantly delay the process, including:

- [Court orders](#)<sup>6</sup> such as a divorce decree or property settlement. These require an additional step and are sent to the Court Order Benefits Branch for review.
- Experience as a Law Enforcement Officer, Firefighter, Air Traffic Controller, Capitol Police, Supreme Court Police, or Nuclear Materials Courier, as these cases use a special annuity computation.
- Past or active [workers' compensation claims](#)<sup>7</sup>.
- Experience as a part-time or intermittent federal employee.
- Federal service at multiple federal agencies.
- Missing documents and forms, or incomplete or incorrect information in your retirement application.
- Moving without updating your address with OPM.



U.S. Office of  
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# Tracking Your Retirement

Use this worksheet to keep track of where you are in the retirement process and to understand what happens during each phase.



## Date of Retirement

Processing your annuity cannot begin until after your date of separation from your agency. The entire process typically takes 3-5 months from this date. **Timelines are estimates as of Jan 2024.** View the most current version of this document at [opm.gov/retirement-center/quick-guide](https://opm.gov/retirement-center/quick-guide).

### Track Your Progress Here

Your date of separation for retirement:



## Agency & Payroll Processing (30–45 days)

### What's happening with your case

- Your agency completes your retirement package and submits to the payroll office.
- Your payroll office issues your final paycheck and lump-sum payment for any unused annual leave.
- Your payroll office assembles your retirement records and sends them to OPM.

### What you'll receive from your agency or payroll office

- Final paycheck
- Annual leave payment

### Where to get help

Your agency HR office

### Steps you can take

- Notify your agency if your address changes.
- Record HR Contact Information:



## OPM Intake (10–15 days)

### What's happening with your case

- OPM receives your retirement information from your agency payroll office.
- OPM assigns you a Retirement Claim number, also known as a CSA number.
- OPM issues your first interim payment, if eligible.
- OPM sends you information to access Services Online.

### What you'll receive from OPM

- Claim number with welcome letter
- First interim payment
- Password to access Services Online

### Where to get help

[opm.gov/support/retirement](https://opm.gov/support/retirement)

### Steps you can take

- Record your claim number:
- Note interim payment amount and date of first payment:
- Create your Services Online account.
- Notify OPM if your address or direct deposit information changes.



## OPM Processing (35-90 days)

### What's happening with your case

- OPM issues monthly interim payments, if eligible.
- OPM reviews your case and calculates annuity.

### What you'll receive from OPM

- Monthly interim payments

### Where to get help

[servicesonline.opm.gov](https://servicesonline.opm.gov)  
Retirement Information Office:  
888-767-6738 | [opm.gov/support/retirement](https://opm.gov/support/retirement)

### Steps you can take

- Manage your dental, vision, and long-term care coverage through [BENEFEDS.com](https://BENEFEDS.com).
- Log in to Services Online to confirm your case status.



## Retirement Finalized

### The wait is over!

- OPM issues any adjustment payment, if needed.
- OPM sends your first full annuity payment.
- OPM creates and sends you a personalized retirement booklet.

### What you'll receive from OPM

- Adjustment payment, if required
- First regular monthly annuity payment
- Personalized retirement booklet

### Where to get help

[servicesonline.opm.gov](https://servicesonline.opm.gov)  
Retirement Information Office:  
888-767-6738 | [opm.gov/support/retirement](https://opm.gov/support/retirement)

### Steps you can take

- Review your booklet for accuracy.
- Confirm deductions for your health, dental, vision, long-term care, and life insurance.
- Log in to Services Online to see annuity information and resources.
- Note adjustment payment amount and date received:



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# Key Terms

## Retirement Date

### Date of Separation for Retirement

Be sure to meet with your benefits office at least 60 days before your chosen date of separation for retirement. They can provide you with a calculation of your estimated annuity and any information you need to choose your benefits. Your agency and payroll office will start processing your case after your official date of separation for retirement.

## Agency & Payroll Processing

### Payroll Office

In addition to issuing your final paycheck and any payment for unused annual leave, your payroll office also plays an important role in assembling documentation for your retirement. Many payroll offices are external, which can increase the time needed to assemble and send your records to OPM for processing.

## OPM Intake & Processing

### Interim Pay

[Interim pay](#)<sup>8</sup> is a portion of your estimated annuity payment (approximately 60–80% of your finalized net payment for most people). It is intended to help cover expenses while OPM is processing your case.

- Interim payments do not include deductions for health benefits, life insurance, dental, vision, or long-term care.
- The only deduction taken from interim payments is for federal tax. State tax is not deducted from interim payments.
- You must manage your dental, vision, and long-term care insurance through BENEFEDS while in interim pay.
- Your interim payment does not take into account any annuity supplement you may be eligible to receive.

### Health & Life Insurance

Any health or life insurance coverage you have elected to take into retirement will be active while your case is being processed. The premiums for this coverage will be withheld from your adjustment payment once your case is complete.

### Services Online

You can manage many aspects of your annuity account online using Services Online. You will receive more details about logging into Services Online as soon as your case is eligible, which is typically during the Intake phase.

You can access [Services Online](#) to see updates on your case when you are assigned to a specialist and when your case is completed. You can also make changes to your mailing and email addresses and direct deposit information.

## Retirement Finalized

### Adjustment Payment

OPM issues an adjustment payment to make up the difference between your interim and finalized annuity amount. Any premiums due for health and life insurance since you retired will also be deducted. Please note that your adjustment payment information is not currently available on Services Online.

### Annuity Payment Date

The payment date for your annuity is always the first business day of the month and the payment is for the prior month. For example, annuitants will receive their May retirement payment on June 1.

## Helpful Resources

### OPM Retirement Support Center

[opm.gov/support/retirement](https://opm.gov/support/retirement)

Articles and information to help you prepare for retirement, including Frequently Asked Questions on a range of topics. If you require additional help, call the Retirement Information Office at 888-767-6738 and have your claim number ready.

### Services Online

[servicesonline.opm.gov](https://servicesonline.opm.gov)

Check the status of your case or make changes to your contact or payment information during OPM Processing.

### BENEFEDS

[BENEFEDS.com](https://BENEFEDS.com)

Manage your dental, vision, and long-term care coverage during processing.

### CSRS and FERS Handbook

[opm.gov/retirement-center/publications-forms/csrsfers-handbook/](https://opm.gov/retirement-center/publications-forms/csrsfers-handbook/)

Advises Federal agencies about benefits administration.

### URL Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> [opm.gov/retirement-center/how-to-make-a-payment](https://opm.gov/retirement-center/how-to-make-a-payment)

<sup>2</sup> [opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare](https://opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare)

<sup>3</sup> [opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/life-insurance](https://opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/life-insurance)

<sup>4</sup> [opm.gov/retirement-center/survivor-benefits](https://opm.gov/retirement-center/survivor-benefits)

<sup>5</sup> [opm.gov/retirement-center/my-annuity-and-benefits/life-events/#url=Designating-Beneficiary](https://opm.gov/retirement-center/my-annuity-and-benefits/life-events/#url=Designating-Beneficiary)

<sup>6</sup> [opm.gov/retirement-center/my-annuity-and-benefits/life-events/#url=Court-Order](https://opm.gov/retirement-center/my-annuity-and-benefits/life-events/#url=Court-Order)

<sup>7</sup> [opm.gov/retirement-center/my-annuity-and-benefits/related-federal-benefits/#url=Workers-Compensation](https://opm.gov/retirement-center/my-annuity-and-benefits/related-federal-benefits/#url=Workers-Compensation)

<sup>8</sup> [opm.gov/retirement-center/my-annuity-and-benefits/annuity-payments/#url=New-Retiree](https://opm.gov/retirement-center/my-annuity-and-benefits/annuity-payments/#url=New-Retiree)



## APWU Milwaukee Area Local Restarts Retiree Gatherings

*Greetings Brother and Sisters,*

*Congratulations to all of our Brothers and Sisters that are enjoying retirement. The Milwaukee Area Local hopes that you all will remain local retiree members. We will continue to make it easy to join, very inexpensive, and very worthwhile.*

Your \$10.00 membership fee ensures that you will receive the *Hi-Lites*. It also remains your “ticket” to six retiree socials. We have restarted hosting the socials on the second Thursday of the designated month. ( January, March, May, July, September & November) . During those months the retirees may hold the social but it may not necessarily be on the second Thursday. I would like to remind all retirees that any retiree dues paid during the 2024 calendar year will be applied to the 2024 calendar year. The current calendar year must be paid before any payment is applied to future calendar year(s). Please contact the APWU Union Hall with any questions.

To remain a local retiree  
please mail your  
\$10.00 retiree dues to :



APWU Retiree Dues  
Attention: Pam Walker  
P.O. Box 1995  
Milwaukee, WI 53201-1995





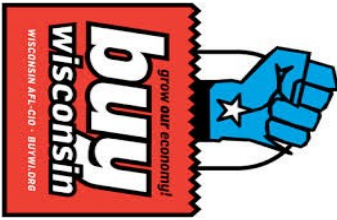
Friday, 7:00 am  
November 22, 2024

2024 GMM Meet-

January 29 - 6pm  
March 27 - 7pm  
May 31 - 7am  
July 29 - 6pm  
September 25 - 7pm  
November 22 - 7am



Time Dated



HI-LITES STAFF

John Miceli \_\_\_\_\_ Editor  
Sandy Miceli \_\_\_\_\_ Associate Editor

GENERAL OFFICERS

Glenn Griggs \_\_\_\_\_ President  
Chris Czubakowski \_\_\_\_\_ Local Business Agent  
Larry Brown jr \_\_\_\_\_ Vice President  
John Miceli \_\_\_\_\_ Treasurer  
Pam Walker \_\_\_\_\_ Recording Secretary  
Leonard Grant \_\_\_\_\_ Dir., North Sectional  
Trent Canady \_\_\_\_\_ Dir., South Sectional  
Marvin Rivera \_\_\_\_\_ Dir., West Sectional

CRAFT OFFICERS

Kenni Liggan \_\_\_\_\_ Dir., Customer Service  
Tkaita Conley-Burrell \_\_\_\_\_ Dir., Mechanization/Manual  
Chris Paige jr \_\_\_\_\_ Dir., Automation  
Jim Ameson \_\_\_\_\_ Dir., Maintenance  
Larry Victory \_\_\_\_\_ Dir., Motor Vehicle

Deliver To:



*Milwaukee Area Local 3*



*Providing representing postal workers for over 100 years*

*APWUMILWAUKEE.ORG*















## **EAP Employee Assistance Program**

- ♦ **What is EAP?** Employee Assistance Program is a confidential , pre-paid assessment and counseling service designed to provide you and your family with assistance in managing everyday concerns.
- ♦ **Who is it for?** All USPS employees and their families.
- ♦ **When is it available?** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- ♦ **What does it cost?** NOTHING!!!

You, as a USPS employee, have a wealth of information waiting for you...  
free of charge at <http://www.EAP4YOU.com>!!!

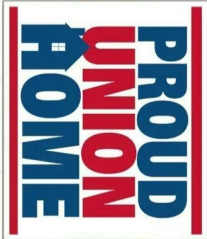
**Consider cutting out this wallet-sized card  
and keeping it on you just in case you need it.**



Wednesday, 7:00 pm  
March 27, 2024

2024 GMM Meet-

January 29 - 6pm  
March 27 - 7pm  
May 31 - 7am  
July 29 - 6pm  
September 25 - 7pm  
November 22 - 7am



Deliver To:



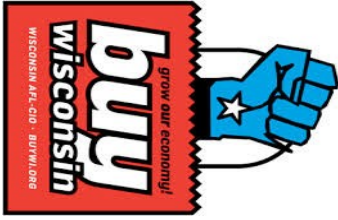
Milwaukee Area Local 3



Proudly representing postal workers for over 100 years

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## **January General Membership Meeting**

### **Nominations / Election Committee Announcement**

***January 22, 2021 - Friday at 7:00am***

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 for the date and time.

*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.*



**Dr. Jonathan Saigh**

## Injured On The Holidays?

### Advanced Care Specialists



With all the mail volume, mail weight and extended hours being injured around the Christmas Holiday is not uncommon. However, what is common in waiting to report the injury to your supervisor until the hustle and bustle of the holidays is over. Waiting is not the right move in many cases, just because you have up to three years to report the injury doesn't necessary mean you should wait.

There are a few reasons to immediately report your injury but one of the most important reasons is so as an injured work you are able to get a CA16 – this document allows you go receive the health care you need, no questions asked. In order to get a CA16 your CA1 injury must be filed within seven days if the date of injury. Keep in mind, CA2 injuries are not eligible for a CA16.

The second reason for ensuring timely filing of your injury is due to the fact that even the smallest injuries may be long lasting in nature. For example a minor back strain if not treated early and often may develop into a long standing degenerative condition.

Beyond getting your CA1 filled out early and obtaining a CA16 the next important topic is to make sure that box 'a.' is checked in section 15 of your CA1 – this allows you to collect COP if needed for up to 45 days.

The stress of filing these injuries has become fairly seamless with the use of ECOMP ([ecomp.dol.gov](http://ecomp.dol.gov)). ECOMP is a safe, government website for Federal Employees to file injuries, upload documents and review the status of your claim. You need your SSN/EIN and date of birth to create an account.

By filing your injuries this way you bypass the requirement of sitting down with your supervisor which can be nerve-racking in itself – you are also assured your injury is filed and does not end up at the bottom of a stack of papers.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact our office at 262-898-9000. Our staff is well versed in OWCP claims and we will direct you in the correct direction.

Happy Holidays and thank you for all of your hard work.

Advanced Care Specialists – DOL Experts





# Graduating Class Of 2019



Lauryn graduated with high honors from Carmen High School.

She will be attending Georgia State University this fall, with a major in Biology.

*Lauryn, we are both so proud of you and always will be. Love, Mom & Dad!*

**Lauryn is the daughter of Larry Brown jr.  
(APWU Automation Director /  
T-1 Automation Clerk)**



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## 2019 Milwaukee Area Local Scholarship Winners

### CONGRATULATIONS

- Michael Gorman is the recipient of the \$500.00 Milwaukee Area Local's John Akey Memorial Scholarship
- Griffin Lepak is the recipient of the \$500.00 Milwaukee Area Local Scholarship



GOOD LUCK !



**Pam Walker**  
**Recording Secretary**

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I would like to remind all retirees that any retiree dues paid during the 2022 calendar year will be applied to the 2022 calendar year. The current calendar year must be paid before any payment is applied to future calendar year(s).

Please contact the APWU Union Hall with any questions.

## Attention Retirees

"We are looking into bringing back hosting the socials..."



To remain a local retiree please mail your \$10.00 retiree dues to :

APWU Retiree Dues  
Attention: Pam Walker  
P.O. Box 1995  
Milwaukee, WI 53201-1995

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I need a APWU membership card ☐

**Reminder:** If you belong to the National APWU, this does **NOT** cover your local \$10.00 dues.

# LABOR'S LADEL



## RECIPES

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